

MISSIONS AND MISSIONARIES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH, U. S., AMONG THE CHOCTAWS—1866-1907\*

By Natalie Morrison Denison

The post-war period in the Indian Territory was a dark and difficult time for the Presbyterian missionaries. The war left a blight over everything. The United States penalized the former slave-holding Indian nations, for having sided with the Confederate States, by confiscation of a part of their lands and reduction in the powers of their governments. The Indian people suffered reconstruction with other communities in the South, and little material or spiritual progress was made among the Choctaws for many years.<sup>1</sup>

The work of the missionaries was made increasingly hard by a number of things. The railroads brought in additional white people and many were very undesirable. The Indian Territory became a refuge for criminals and deserters. During this period the exploits of Belle Starr and Cherokee Bill were notorious. Since the Federal Government provided no free schools, conditions were made worse. The Indians were supposed to be self-sufficient. In these trying times whiskey, feuds, and illiteracy abounded.<sup>2</sup>

When the General Assembly met in 1866, they were strongly in favor of continuing the Indian work. The Standing Committee on Foreign Missions made the following statement in its report:<sup>3</sup>

Nor must we bate one jot of heart or hope in the Indian field. The hands of the venerable Father Kingsbury, who has stood so long at the post of honor and danger, must be held up; the survivors of the noble band of brethren who have rallied around him, like a forlorn hope, must be cheered and supported. The vacancy that is occasioned by the retirement of Brother Byington must be filled. The treasury must be replenished and the work of the Indian Missions greatly extended and enlarged. The Red Man, no less than the black, is at our very doors crying for the gospel.

---

\* This article has been adapted for publication in *The Chronicles* from Chapter IV in *Presbyterian Missions and Missionaries Among the Choctaw to 1907*, a thesis submitted by Natalie Morrison Denison, of Oklahoma City, to the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, The University of Oklahoma Graduate School, in 1938. Mrs. Denison is a daughter of the late, Dr. William B. Morrison, Professor of History in Southeastern State College, Durant, Oklahoma, and well known Oklahoma writer and historian ("William Brown Morrison" by Robert L. Williams in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXII, No. 4 [Winter, 1944-45], pp. 402-04.)—Ed.

<sup>1</sup> Stanley Vestal, "The Indians of Oklahoma", *Southwest Review* (Dallas, Texas), Vol. XIV, Number 2, pp. 143-144; William B. Morrison, *The Red Man's Trail* (Richmond, Virginia: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1932), p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144.

<sup>3</sup> *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

But conditions were so unsettled that the Assembly could not assume responsibility for re-establishment of schools. Their chief interest was in sending ministers to labor in the churches.<sup>4</sup>

Urgent calls were sent by the missionaries in the Choctaw Nation for recruits. At a meeting of the Choctaw Mission in 1868 the following resolution was passed: "Resolved. That if two ministers be sent out to us the ensuing season one be directed to labor in the churches at Wheelock, Mountain Fork and Mt. Zion and the other in the churches of Kiamichi and Blue Counties."<sup>5</sup> This indicates the many churches which were without preachers. In 1869 the Mission was still sending out calls for additional workers: "Resolved, That if new missionaries are sent to the Choctaws one should be first settled at Good Land and the next at Bennington."<sup>6</sup>

Though impoverished, the Assembly's Committee of Foreign Missions did everything it could. However, it was hard to find recruits to take the places of the sainted, old missionaries, who were dying one by one. So the Choctaw Mission turned to the Indian men for leadership. Gradually the churches began to be supplied more and more by native preachers.<sup>7</sup>

The Indian Mission could not be continued on its large pre-war basis, for conditions would not permit it. After 1870 the work of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., among the Choctaws was confined to the churches of Indian Presbytery. The missionaries were anxious for the Committee on Foreign Missions to aid a school for boys and one for girls which was opened by the Choctaw Nation. They felt the most efficient way would be to furnish teachers and Superintendents. These schools were Spencer for boys and New Hope for girls.<sup>8</sup>

Almost the first reconstruction measure of the Choctaw government was with regard to education. On December 27, 1866, the Council passed an act putting into operation the neighborhood schools. So in January, 1867, these schools were opened, and the Choctaw children, who for five years had been without instruction, were once again in school. By 1871 New Hope and Spencer had been repaired, and put into operation. Spencer Academy was under contract with the Presbyterian mission board, while New Hope Academy was under the Methodist board.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Choctaw Mission Records*, II (April 13, 1868), p. 93.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, (September 11, 1869), p. 95.

<sup>7</sup> *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, p. 73; *Choctaw Mission Records*, (September 16, 1870), p. 96.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, (1871) p. 572; Debo, Angie, *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), p. 96.

When these two boarding schools opened, the neighborhood schools were reduced in number. Part of the school fund formerly used for them had to be used for two higher schools. Superintendent Forbis LeFlore reported that there were "Sunday Schools" being carried on by the different churches. According to his report the Indian people were anxious to educate their children, but lack of school funds hindered. By 1871 the Choctaw school system had been reestablished; however, the schools were inferior to those existing before the war.<sup>10</sup>

One of the principal evils in the Choctaw school system at this time was incompetent teachers. According to the report of A. Parsons, United States Indian Agent, a large number of the teachers were unfit for their positions. Progress could not be made until more efficient teachers were hired. The officers in charge of the schools were incompetent to a large extent. Mr. Parsons suggested that teachers be selected by some missionary board. If this were done, he felt there would be more religious, moral, and educational progress in the Choctaw Nation.<sup>11</sup> This idea is not surprising, for the schools under the care of religious bodies were the most prosperous and efficient in the Nation.<sup>12</sup>

The period beginning with 1870 and ending with 1889 was one of growth and expansion for the Indian work. New leaders came to carry on the work laid down by the old missionaries. By 1870 all the old veterans had passed on. They lived to see their dream fulfilled—a barbarous Indian Nation transformed into a civilized Christian people.<sup>13</sup>

The Reverend Cyrus Byington gave up his work at the close of the Civil War and went to Belpre, Ohio. By this time he was old and infirm, but anxious to continue his work of translating the Bible into Choctaw. He continued his work until his death in 1868. His last act was to finish the translation of the Pentateuch.<sup>14</sup>

In the preceding year on October 28, 1867, the Reverend Ebenezer Hotchkin had died while on a visit to the North. Though his death was unexpected, he had been feeble for a long time. In less than one month after his death Mrs. Hotchkin died. Their long years of service to the Choctaw Mission were deeply appreciated by all who knew them. The Minutes of Indian Presbytery contain the following tribute to them:<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>11</sup> *Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, (1873) p. 208.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, (1874) p. 70.

<sup>13</sup> *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, p. 74; R. M. Firebaugh, "History of Indian Presbytery," *Oklahoma Trails*, Atoka, Oklahoma, 1927, p. 80.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Records of the Indian Presbytery* (April 11, 1868), pp. 70-71.

The death of Mr. Hotchkin was a severe loss to this Presbytery and to the Choctaw people. The number of laborers in this field had been sadly diminished before the death of this dear brother, and those that are left are few indeed and very feeble. . . . He was a devoted laborer in his Master's vineyard, and bore a large share in the management of boarding and other schools for the education of Choctaw children. 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 & beauty of a well regulated Christian family and in death they were not long divided.

The Reverend C. C. Copeland, who came to the Mission in 1842 as a teacher, died in 1869. He had studied the Choctaw language and had written some translations. Instrumental in founding the station at Bennington, he named it after his old home in Vermont. During the Civil War he had to leave his station for a little while because of persecution over the slavery issue. When the General Assembly met at Memphis, Tennessee, in 1866, he was the first commissioner from Indian Presbytery after the war. He spent the last years of his ministry at Wheelock.<sup>16</sup> Mr. Copeland was diligent and faithful and his services were sorely missed.<sup>17</sup>

Doctor Cyrus Kingsbury, one of the most remarkable of the Choctaw missionaries, died on June 27, 1870, after fifty-two years of labor among the Indians. He kept up his work until a few months before his death. His unselfish labor for the Indians was an inspiration to all who worked with him. He died at Boggy Depot at the age of eighty-four years.<sup>18</sup> His services were of such magnitude that it would be difficult to estimate the scope of his influence.<sup>19</sup> The

<sup>16</sup> *The Red Man's Trail, op. cit.*, pp. 74-75.

<sup>17</sup> *Records of the Indian Presbytery* (April 11, 1870) pp. 90-91. Mr. Copeland's and Mr. Byington's death are jointly recorded:

- (1) "Resolved. That in the death of Rev. Cyrus Byington and Rev. C. C. Copeland, Indian Presbytery, has been sorely bereaved; The Choctaw Mission especially has met with a loss which can scarcely ever be made up.
- (2) "Resolved, that we testify to the diligence, faithfulness and devotion of these brethren; that they have placed the Choctaw people under lasting obligations; and that we will cherish their names in grateful remembrance and endeavor by the grace of God to carry on the work which they have so well begun and so long furthered themselves.
- (3) "Resolved. That we do sincerely and deeply sympathize with the families of the deceased in their bereavement and while we commend them to the all-powerful care of our God we are willing and anxious to do all that is in our power for their welfare and comfort."

<sup>18</sup> *The Red Man's Trail, op. cit.*, pp. 47-74; *Records of the Indian Presbytery* (September 18, 1870), p. 101.

<sup>19</sup> *Records of the Indian Presbytery* (September 17, 1870), p. 103. The following resolutions were passed on Dr. Kingsbury's death by Indian Presbytery:

"Therefore, Resolved. That in the death of Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury, D.D., we as a Presbytery have lost a kind and beloved co-laborer, a Christian brother, and a Father in Israel.

"Resolved, 2. That in his death the Choctaw Mission and the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ in this land have lost a firm supporter and defender of the truth once delivered to the saints.

Indian Presbytery accorded him a beautiful tribute when it learned of his death:<sup>20</sup>

Where as through the mysterious providence of God the Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury D. D. was called home from long, useful, and self-denying labors for the moral elevation and spiritual welfare of the Choctaw people, to the rest that remains for them that love God, . . . the present state of intelligence and prosperity of the Choctaws by being raised from degradation and gross superstition are through the influence of the preaching of the Gospel, entirely, of which Rev. C. Kingsbury, D. D. was one of the pioneer missionaries who brought light into this heathen darkness . . . from 1818 to 1870, the period of 52 years, Dr. Kingsbury performed incessant labors with disinterested benevolence; though he left no earthly honors and fame yet he left a sorrowing and afflicted people.

This pioneer missionary was indeed a man of extraordinary religious fervor and Christian character.

The Reverend Oliver P. Stark, the first regularly appointed missionary at Goodland, should be mentioned here. He left the Choctaw Mission in 1869, moving to Paris, Texas to carry on his work. The Presbytery sorely missed his services, for he had been very active in his work. He did not return to Indian Territory until 1881 when he took charge of New Spencer Academy.<sup>21</sup>

With these pioneer missionaries removed from the field it was no easy task to carry on the Indian work. Their places were very hard to fill. But in 1870 a new period opened. No longer are the records from the Minutes of the Mission; they are from the Minutes of the Presbytery. The missionaries now deal with churches instead of stations and schools.<sup>22</sup> A new era was before the workers among the Choctaw Indians.

A new leader came to Indian Presbytery in 1870. He was destined to work nearly forty years among the Choctaws, thus his name became as closely associated with the Indian work as Kingsbury's. William James Beard Lloyd was one of the most faithful and earnest of the workers after the war. He was born in South Carolina in 1834. At the age of eighteen he was converted after hearing a sermon preached by the great Texas preacher, Daniel Baker. When the Civil War started Mr. Lloyd enlisted in the Confederate Army. His family had moved to Arkansas just before the war, so serving in this section, he was badly injured in the Battle of Pea Ridge. After the war ended, he became a candidate for the ministry. He had many difficulties to overcome in preparing himself for service, as he had a family to support. But, on April 1, 1870,

---

"Resolved, 3. That in his death this Presbytery has sustained a great loss in a ripe scholarship which admirably fitted Dr. Kingsbury for the great work that the Master had committed to his trust."

<sup>20</sup> *Records of the Indian Presbytery* (September 17, 1870), pp. 102-103.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* (September 11, 1869), p. 84; *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

<sup>22</sup> "History of Indian Presbytery", *Oklahoma Trails*, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

Ouachita Presbytery licensed him to preach. When the call came to labor in the Indian work, he accepted, and moved to Bennington. He and his family made the trip in two wagons drawn by mules.<sup>23</sup>

Mr. Lloyd was examined by the Indian Presbytery before they ordained him as an evangelist. His trial sermon was preached on the following text, "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ" (Romans 1:16). His life among the Choctaws exemplified this, for he never lost an opportunity to tell others of Christ.<sup>24</sup>

Upon arriving at Bennington, Mr. Lloyd threw himself vigorously into the work. He had to preach through an interpreter in the beginning, but it was not long before he learned the Choctaw language. In riding a circuit throughout the territory he had every opportunity to come in close contact with the Choctaw people. He reached them, and won their love and respect as few missionaries have done. Often in these troubled post-war days, people brought their money to Mr. Lloyd's house for safekeeping. He was so good and generous that even the evil men respected him.<sup>25</sup>

However, a fine saddle horse he owned was stolen five or six times. Always it was returned to him. Sometimes the thief would bring it back, on finding out that it was Mr. Lloyd's horse. Other times his friends would redeem it, and return it. On one occasion a white thief took the horse. An Indian friend of Mr. Lloyd's killed the man and the horse was again returned to the missionary.<sup>26</sup>

Besides his ministerial work, Mr. Lloyd was interested in the educational field. He conducted Armstrong Academy for six years. In 1863 the Choctaw capital had been established at Armstrong Academy. Here it remained for twenty years until the Choctaw Council voted to erect a permanent capital at Tuskahoma. By the fall of 1884 the old Armstrong Academy building was vacant, so the boy's orphan school was situated there. This school provided for fifty orphan boys from six to twelve years of age who had lost one or both of their parents. They were allowed to remain at the school both summer and winter until they were eighteen years old. The boys received special work in agriculture and manual training, in addition to their academic work.<sup>27</sup>

Also Mr. Lloyd was connected with the early work of the Oklahoma Presbyterian College at Durant. He was a member of the

---

<sup>23</sup> Records of Indian Presbytery, *op. cit.*, (September 16, 1870), pp. 96-97; *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>24</sup> Records of Indian Presbytery (September 16, 1870), p. 97.

<sup>25</sup> *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-77.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>27</sup> Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (1884), p. 100 (1887), p. 106; *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic*, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-159; *Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

first Board of Trustees for the college, and helped in every way possible to promote its growth.<sup>28</sup>

The life of the Reverend W.J.B. Lloyd has been written by the late Dr. Davis Foute Eagleton of Austin College. He made the following comment on Mr. Lloyd's character, ". . . : with positive will power, decision of character, controlled by the dignity of conscious rectitude, unpretentious in demeanor, withal he possessed a very high sense of honor which was intimately associated with a loathing scorn of hypocrisy and cant."<sup>29</sup>

When Indian Presbytery was in session in 1916, Mr. Lloyd suddenly became ill. He died on April 15, 1916, and was buried at Bennington. Doctor S. L. Morris, Executive Secretary of Home Missions, at that time attending the meeting of Presbytery, was asked to preach the missionary's funeral sermon. People gathered from afar to pay homage to the memory of this wonderful man. Doctor Morris chose his text well, "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel."<sup>30</sup>

Mr. Lloyd's influence spread to the white as well as to the Indian people. One story, related often since his death, exemplifies this: Mr. Lloyd had an appointment to preach at a full-blood Indian church. Sunday morning dawned with a steady downpour of rain falling. When the time drew near for the service, he made his way to the church, but found it empty. After reading his Bible, he dropped to his knees to pray for those who were absent, for the work and the workers in Indian Presbytery, and for those in the darkness of sin.<sup>31</sup>

At this point in his prayer, a cattleman started to enter the church to get in out of the rain. This man had no regard for the Sabbath, even though he had been brought up in a Christian home. On coming to Indian Territory he had forgotten his Christian training. He stood at the back listening to Mr. Lloyd's earnest prayer. He went on, a little angry that he had listened, for he could not get the prayer off his mind. As he thought of his old home and his Christian parents, his heart softened. He decided that he would do better.<sup>32</sup>

Soon he felt the call to enter the ministry, and he became an untiring worker for the Baptist cause in Indian Territory. He had a great love for the Presbyterians, and most of all for Mr. Lloyd.

This story has come to be known in local tradition as "Father

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*; "History of Indian Presbytery," *Oklahoma Trails*, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>30</sup> *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-78.

<sup>31</sup> *The Presbyterian Survey* (August 1929), p. 505.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

Lloyd's Prayer."<sup>33</sup> It is characteristic of the man, for it shows the deep spiritualism which made him one of the most beloved of the Choctaw missionaries.

Another of the outstanding missionaries of this period was John Jeremiah Read. He did more work among the Chickasaws than among the Choctaws. However, he should be mentioned here, for he had charge of Spencer Academy from 1877 to 1882.<sup>34</sup>

Mr. Read was born in Hinds County, Mississippi, January 13, 1843. His elementary education was received in a private academy. The Civil War interrupted his education, and he served four years in the Confederate Army. Though his health was impaired to a great extent in these years, it was during this time that he was converted and decided to enter the ministry.<sup>35</sup>

After attending the Presbyterian College of Mississippi and Columbia Seminary, he worked at Port Gibson, Mississippi. Before he was ordained there, a call came from the First Presbyterian Church at Houston, Texas, which he accepted. Here he remained until 1876, doing a wonderful work.<sup>36</sup>

As his health began to fail, his physician advised a higher altitude. A call came for him to take charge of Spencer Academy, a Choctaw national school under the care of the Presbyterian Committee of Foreign Missions. This school was located in the southeastern part of Indian Territory in a mountainous section. As Mr. Read had always wanted to be a missionary, he accepted. With his wife and baby the trip to Spencer was made; the last forty miles of the trip was made in a wagon. School was opened on January 1, 1877.<sup>37</sup>

The climate was far from healthy. In a short time an epidemic of pneumonia broke out in the school. Many persons died among whom was Mr. and Mrs. Read's small daughter. But Mr. Read did not give up, and continued his labors for five years. Many Choctaw boys received instruction under him. One of these was Silas Bacon, who was later Superintendent of Goodland Indian Orphanage.<sup>38</sup>

The school progressed, for in 1880 John Tufts, United States Indian Agent, reported it in "a flourishing condition." There were sixty male students attending the school at that time. According to Mr. Tufts the Choctaws kept a careful check on their schools, for "those who manage their financial and educational interests attend strictly to their duties."<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> William B. Morrison, "Rev. J. J. Read," *Oklahoma Trails*, pp. 171-172.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>36</sup> *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>39</sup> *Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (1880), p. 96.



In 1882 the Southern Presbyterian Church relinquished Spencer Academy. The Choctaw Mission asked the Board of Home Missions to establish an orphan school for boys and girls at old Spencer. However, the old buildings could not be made suitable for permanent use, so the idea was given up. In 1883 new buildings were erected on a site seven miles north of the present town of Soper, in Choctaw County. Mr. Read was offered the Superintendency of the school in its new location, but refused. So the Reverend O. P. Stark came from Texas to take charge of the school, and died there within three years. The school operated until 1896, when the building burned.<sup>40</sup>

Mr. Read asked Indian Presbytery to locate him for service in the Chickasaw Nation. Where he was stationed there were no schools or churches. Working faithfully among the Chickasaws, he did a wonderful work. He was Stated Clerk of Indian Presbytery for fourteen years. He served as a trustee of Calvin Institute at Durant, Oklahoma, and Austin College at Sherman, Texas. He was attending a meeting of the Board of Austin College, when he died of pneumonia on February 4, 1898. He was buried near Wapanucka in the garden of his old home. His funeral sermon was preached by the Reverend W.J.B. Lloyd, who chose the text, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."<sup>41</sup> The work of this missionary was indeed blessed, for it bore rich fruit.

One of the most faithful of the later missionaries to the Choctaws was the Reverend Joseph Parker Gibbons. Though born in South Carolina in 1850, his parents moved to Arkansas when he was quite young. During the Civil War his father fought in the Confederate Army, leaving his son to look after the family. This did not give young Gibbons much time for education, which he desired very much. Since he was a cousin of the Reverend W.J.B. Lloyd, help was given him. Mr. Lloyd became his tutor, but this arrangement did not last long. In 1870 Mr. Lloyd was called to the mission work in Indian Territory. In order to continue his studies, Mr. Gibbons went to Indian Territory in 1872. Here he lived in the missionary's home. Naturally he had the opportunity to see the need of more workers in the Indian Territory. However, his education had to be finished before he could answer the call.<sup>42</sup>

It was a long hard road for Mr. Gibbons in getting the proper education. He did some high school work at Hope, Arkansas, and

<sup>40</sup> *Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People* by Joseph B. Thoburn and Muriel H. Wright (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1929), Vol. I, p. 224; "Wheclock Academy," in *The Oklahoma School Magazine* for April 1, 1932, published by Government boarding schools in Oklahoma (Printed at Chillico Indian Agricultural School), p. 7; "Rev. J. J. Read," *Oklahoma Trails, op. cit.*, p. 172; Mrs. J. P. Gibbons, "Goodland Indian Orphanage," *Oklahoma Trails*, p. 122.

<sup>41</sup> *Oklahoma Trails, op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>42</sup> *The Red Man's Trail, op. cit.*, p. 81.

then entered Arkansas College. He made his way by doing odd jobs for different people in Batesville. In the summers he worked as a laborer. At one time he hauled freight from Little Rock to Texarkana with an ox team. When his college course was finished, he married Miss Mary L. Talbot. The couple settled on a little farm, and Mr. Gibbons taught school during the winter. But in 1884 Mr. Lloyd came after him, and asked him to take charge of the school at Goodwater, Indian Territory. So he left his plow and came to the Goodwater Station.<sup>43</sup>

In the fall of 1884 he was licensed to preach and was ordained two years later. Solomon Hotema, an educated Choctaw, earnestly begged Mr. Gibbons to come to Goodland. So in 1890 he moved there; it remained his home until his death.<sup>44</sup>

Mr. Gibbons was a faithful worker. He served the Choctaws with no thought of personal gain. His salary never exceeded fifty dollars a month, yet he gave all of his children a college education. He worked hard on his little farm, in addition to his preaching and teaching. His service of thirty-four years has meant a great deal to the Choctaw people, especially his work at Goodland. He died on June 6, 1918, and is buried in the Goodland Cemetery.<sup>45</sup>

The old pioneer missionary, the Reverend Ebenezer Hotchkin, had a son named Charles E. Hotchkin. Born at the Goodwater Mission Station in 1846, he was brought up among the Choctaws. He learned the Choctaw language so well, that he became known as one of the best interpreters of his day. He really loved the Choctaws, preferring their language to his own.<sup>46</sup> Ebenezer Hotchkin saw to it that his sons got a good education. He took them to some of the best academies in the North.<sup>47</sup> Charles had this opportunity and came back to serve as a mission teacher among the Choctaws.<sup>48</sup>

On April 14, 1883 Charles Hotchkin was licensed to preach and on June 9, 1884 was ordained as a minister. He spent a very useful life among the Indians, becoming almost like them before his death. He preached to them from 1884 until his death in 1905, at Hugo, Oklahoma. He lies in an unmarked grave in the Goodland Cemetery. It was said of him: "His whole life was devoted to the Indians and there was never a call for help or advice night or day that he did not answer."<sup>49</sup>

<sup>43</sup> "Goodland Indian Orphanage," *Oklahoma Trails*, *op. cit.*, p. 124; "History of Indian Presbytery," *Oklahoma Trails*, *op. cit.*, p. 81; *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82.

<sup>44</sup> "History of Indian Presbytery," *Oklahoma Trails*, *op. cit.*, p. 81; "Goodland Indian Orphanage," *Oklahoma Trails*, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125.

<sup>45</sup> *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>46</sup> "History of Indian Presbytery," *Oklahoma Trails*, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>47</sup> *Choctaw Mission Records*, II, (May 5, 1854), p. 7.

<sup>48</sup> "History of Indian Presbytery," *Oklahoma Trails*, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>49</sup> *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

One of the interesting later missionaries was the Reverend Calvin J. Ralston. Born in Rockingham County, Virginia, he spent his early life there. He was too young to do any active fighting in the Civil War, but did help as an assistant in field hospitals. At one time he helped the great Confederate surgeon, Dr. Hunter McGuire. After the war had been over a number of years Mr. Ralston became the principal of Suffolk Female Institute, a school for girls. Upon deciding to preach he gave up this work and went to Union Theological Seminary. After graduating from the Seminary, he preached in Tennessee and Texas. When the call came to go to Indian Territory, he accepted. Taking charge of Armstrong Academy, he relieved the Reverend J.B.S. Lloyd, who had been Superintendent there.<sup>50</sup>

Under Mr. Ralston's control the academy did well. In 1892 the school sheltered and clothed seventy orphan boys. This was done at a cost of seven thousand dollars annually. The United States Indian Agent, Leo E. Bennett, felt that the teachers were efficient. He reported that "the salaries paid are liberal and the ability of the teachers is attested by the excellent attainments of the several schools."<sup>51</sup>

Mr. Ralston was always interested in the improvement of the Indian schools. Until his death at the age of seventy-eight he worked for their betterment. Also he was a strong preacher, and became known throughout the Indian country. His one drawback was his inability to attain complete mastery of the Choctaw language. Later on in life he lived at Caney, Oklahoma, and often preached at Indian churches thirty miles away. After Mr. Gibson and Mr. Lloyd died, Mr. Ralston's advice and help was needed at the Indian Presbytery meetings. His life and work will be long remembered, especially in connection with the Indian schools.<sup>52</sup>

These were the outstanding men who worked among the Choctaw Indians after the Civil War. However, one should not overlook the work of the "assistant missionaries" and those preachers and teachers who labored for shorter periods of time. These men and women worked hard to ingrain moral principles into their students. Many had to use interpreters before they learned the language, in order to discuss religious subjects. They deserve to be mentioned along with the regular missionary. Their work was quietly done, but none the less difficult. Many of these noble people lost their health while serving in the Choctaw Nation. Others died in the service, and are buried in unmarked graves in forgotten ceme-

---

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.* Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (1892), p. 255.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *The Red Man's Trail, op. cit.*, p. 84.

taries. Their heroic work should be placed high beside the preaching of the missionary.<sup>53</sup>

There were other preachers connected with the Indian Presbytery who did fine work. One of these was Reverend Stephen Foreman, who was received as a member of Indian Presbytery on September 25, 1864. He had been a member of the Creek Presbytery, but desired to come among the Choctaws to work.<sup>54</sup> Mrs. Foreman spent many years among the Choctaws, and did good work.

The Reverend Alexander Reid, who served as superintendent of Spencer Academy for a number of years, worked many years after the war. He had charge of the church at Spencer Academy, and later Caney Creek. He attended nearly every meeting of the Indian Presbytery during the reconstruction period.<sup>55</sup>

Another worker for many years among the Choctaws was James H. Colton. He was released from the Fayetteville Presbytery in Arkansas and joined the Indian Presbytery in 1870.<sup>56</sup> He supplied many churches in the Choctaw country, among which were Goodwater, Goodland, Pine Ridge, Wheelock, Mountain Fork, Spencer Academy, and Mt. Zion.<sup>57</sup> Mr. Colton served as Clerk of Indian Presbytery during 1870.<sup>58</sup>

The Reverend H. Balentine served for many years among the Indians. Before the Reverend W.J.B. Lloyd was added to the Mission, he supplied the Bennington and Chish-Oktak churches.<sup>59</sup> The records of the Indian Presbytery show that he was absent often from the meetings. He did most of his work among the Chickasaw Indians.<sup>60</sup>

J. M. Perryman and Thomas H. Benton presented themselves at the same time for licenses to preach. They were both accepted, and assigned texts for trial sermons.<sup>61</sup> Mr. Perryman worked for many years among the Indians, but Mr. Benton died in 1870. He worked faithfully the few years he had to preach.<sup>62</sup>

Many of the elders of the different churches met with the members of the Indian Presbytery. Some were urged to study and

---

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>54</sup> *Records of Indian Presbytery* (September 25, 1864), p. 52.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, (February, 1868), p. 66; (April 15, 1875), p. 184; (April 11, 1870), p. 121.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, (April 7, 1870), pp. 85-86.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, (September 17, 1870), p. 106.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, (April 11, 1870), p. 121.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, (October 24, 1866), p. 56.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, (April 18, 1873), 142; (September 4, 1873), p. 144; (September 17, 1874), p. 158; Muriel Wright, "Dr. Frank Hall Wright," *Oklahoma Trails*, p. 177.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, (September 17, 1868), pp. 73-74.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, (April 8, 1870), p. 117.

be licensed to preach. Elijah Brewer was an elder in the Living Land Church. The Reverend Allen Wright and the Reverend C. C. Copeland conferred with him in regard to being licensed. He was willing, and the Presbytery accepted him. He did good work in the churches at Chishoktak and Living Land. The records show that he faithfully attended the meetings of the Presbytery, taking an active part in the proceedings.<sup>63</sup>

Native preachers were needed badly, because of the lack of white workers. In the minutes for 1865 is this statement:<sup>64</sup>

"Whereas there are in the bounds of this Presbytery churches and neighborhoods in great need of the preaching of the Gospel, and native ministers & Licentiates, qualified and inclining to devote themselves to this work if they can be sustained; therefore, Resc That a Comee of three be appointed to raise funds for these brethren and to direct their labors."

Just as the older Choctaw missionaries had passed on, so were the native workers of pre-war days. One of the most outstanding was Reverend Pliny Fisk. He had worked for many years among his own people, and died on November 7, 1866. The minutes of the Presbytery state that,<sup>65</sup>

". . . . with profound regret and sorrow we have to record the death of our brother Rev. Pliny Fiske, a native ordained Choctaw Presbyterian minister, and co-laborer in the cause of our blessed Redeemer . . . . though his early advantages were limited, yet by diligent and close application while pursuing his studies for about four years at Marietta, Ohio—on his return by devoting his whole time and energy to the preaching of the precious Gospel—he was eminently useful as a preacher to his people."

There were many faithful native workers willing to fill his place. James Dyer was licensed to preach in September, 1875; he was ordained in April, 1879. He worked many long and useful years among his own people.<sup>66</sup> An interesting story connected with Mr. Dyer shows the unselfish spirit the natives had for one another. On one occasion, when Mr. Dyer had grown old, the Presbytery was discussing the problem of securing aid. Silas Bacon, who worked so faithfully for Goodland Indian Orphanage, arose and said: "My brethren, take my salary and give it to James Dyer. I am a young man and can work for my support. James Dyer is now old and infirm and needs help more than I do."<sup>67</sup> This wonderful spirit could hardly be equaled anywhere.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, (September 17, 1868), pp. 74-76; (September 12, 1872), p. 132; (April 17, 1873), p. 140.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, (September 26, 1865), p. 53.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, (May 11, 1867), pp. 60-61.

<sup>66</sup> "History of Indian Presbytery," *Oklahoma Trails*, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>67</sup> *The Presbyterian Survey*, (August, 1929), p. 509.

But perhaps one of the most noted and capable of the native preachers was Allen Wright. Born in Mississippi in 1826, he was only six years old when removal came. His mother died when his family was about ready to leave; his father died a few years later in the Choctaw Nation west of the Mississippi River.

Young Allen was placed in the school at Lukfata, which was then occupied by the Presbyterian missionary, Henry R. Wilson. The Reverend Cyrus Kingsbury became interested in the lad. In 1840 at the age of fourteen he went to live at Pine Ridge Mission with the family of Mr. Kingsbury. It is not surprising that these years influenced his character and inspired him to be a minister among his people.<sup>68</sup>

In 1848 the boy completed his preparatory studies at Spencer Academy. It was a custom of the Choctaws at this time to choose each year some of the most outstanding boys and girls in the nation, and send them east for higher education. In 1848 Allen Wright was selected and attended Union College, Schenectady, New York where he graduated in 1852. Then, still wishing to enter the ministry, he entered Union Theological Seminary, New York City in 1852. He completed the course here in 1855.<sup>69</sup>

On returning to the Choctaw Nation he was ordained as a minister by Indian Presbytery. His first position was as Superintendent of Armstrong Academy. This was the beginning of a life devoted to furthering education and Christian work among the Choctaws. He became a leader of his people, and a faithful worker for the Presbyterian Church.<sup>70</sup>

In 1857 Mr. Wright married Harriet Mitchell of Dayton, Ohio. Her parents did not want her to be a missionary, but in 1855 she began her duties as a teacher at Goodwater Female Seminary. Here she met Allen Wright. She wrote in her diary on February 9, 1857:<sup>71</sup> "I am about 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." Reverend C. C. Copeland married the young couple on February 11, 1857. They then departed for their new home at Mt. Pleasant station, several miles northeast of the present town of Caddo, Oklahoma.<sup>72</sup>

Mr. Wright was requested to take over the church at Old Boggy Depot in 1859. This was in the far western part of the mission

---

<sup>68</sup> "Dr. Frank Hall Wright," *Oklahoma Trails*, op. cit., p. 174.

<sup>69</sup> William B. Morrison, "Allen Wright," *Oklahoma Trails*, pp. 165-166.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> "Dr. Frank Hall Wright," *Oklahoma Trails*, op. cit., p. 176.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

field. It was here their noted son, Frank Hall Wright, was born.<sup>73</sup>

During the Civil War and Reconstruction the family endured many hardships. Mr. Wright was anxious to help his people out of political difficulties. He served twice as a member of the Choctaw National Council, twice as a treasurer of the Nation, and twice as principal chief. When the Civil War ended, he was a commissioner to help negotiate the treaty of 1866, and is credited with having suggested the name "Oklahoma" for the Indian Territory.<sup>74</sup>

In spite of all his work as a statesman, he did not neglect his missionary work. He served as the clerk of the Indian Presbytery from 1873 to 1875. Also he compiled and published a dictionary of the Choctaw language. His mastery of both English and Choctaw was remarkable.<sup>75</sup>

His death came on December 2, 1885, at his home in Boggy Depot. He was buried in the old cemetery there where Doctor Cyrus Kingsbury also was buried. In a memorial sketch on Wright after his death this tribute was given him:<sup>76</sup>

Except when absent from his post on business connected with these civil appointments, he steadily continued his work as a missionary preacher, finding time also to prepare and publish a dictionary of the Choctaw language, and to perform other literary work for the good of his nation. His life was one of continuous and unsparring activity in the Master's work, and one of great physical and mental fatigue. He was the very pillar of his Presbytery, punctual in attendance, and thorough and efficient in every duty. His culture and courtliness, his fine social qualities, and excellent good sense, won for him much consideration at Washington, whither he was called from time to time. His own people held him in high honor, and have mourned his death as a public calamity.

The son of Allen Wright and Harriet Mitchell Wright, Doctor Frank Hall Wright, followed in his father's footsteps. No account of the Presbyterian Home Mission work in Oklahoma could overlook his work. His was a noble character and he gave his life for the work of the Lord.

He was born on January 1, 1860, at Boggy Depot and on that day his mother wrote in her diary: "I feel the responsibility resting upon me. I know that much depends upon my training.—'Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.'"<sup>77</sup>

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 174-175. (For further biographical reference to the Reverend Allen Wright, see "Chief Allen Wright," by John Bartlett Meserve, in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XIX, No. 4 [December, 1941], pp. 314-21.—Ed.)

<sup>75</sup> *Records of Indian Presbytery*, (September 4, 1873—April 19, 1875), pp. 144-184.

<sup>76</sup> "Dr. Frank Hall Wright," *Oklahoma Trails*, *op. cit.*, p. 175; "Allen Wright," *Oklahoma Trails*, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-167.

<sup>77</sup> "Dr. Frank Hall Wright," *Oklahoma Trails*, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

Young Wright received good training at home and in school. His first teacher was the Reverend Hamilton Balentine, a missionary, who had been superintendent of Wapanucka Academy before the Civil War. Later his teacher was Miss Clara Eddy, who had been trained in the Emma Willard School at Troy. This Christian spirit about him brought him to an early conversion.

Later he attended Spencer Academy for his preparatory work, then, like his father, he enrolled at Union College, Schnectady, New York. After graduation, he too, attended Union Theological Seminary. He finished there the year of his father's death, 1885.<sup>78</sup>

Frank Wright had a wonderful baritone voice, which he used for evangelical purposes. He was urged to accept an offer to go on the operatic stage, which tempted him. But he thought of his father, and knew that he would want him to stay with the ministry.

He married a gifted pianist, who was a great help to him in his work, and immediately the young couple went to Boggy Depot where they made their first home and he began his missionary work. Indian Presbytery licensed him to preach. But after a few years he went to New York as an evangelist. In this work he contracted tuberculosis, but he finally overcame the disease and returned to Indian Territory to work among the Kiowas, Comanches, and Aarapahoes of Western Oklahoma.<sup>80</sup>

When his sudden death came in 1922, friends throughout the United States were saddened. His magnetic personality and wonderful voice had endeared him to many. His missionary work was very productive, for he reached white people as well as the Indians.<sup>81</sup>

All these missionaries working among the Indians were extremely interested in all educational work. However, at the close of the Civil War, the church was obliged to give up most of the educational work. When conditions had improved to such an extent that the church was ready to help the schools again, they found the task taken over by others. No school east of Goodland was ever opened again; historic old Wheelock was lost to the church. Armstrong Academy was conducted for some time by the Presbyterian Church, U. S.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 178-179. (For further biographical reference to Dr. Frank Hall Wright, see "The Missionary Work of the Reformed Dutch Church in America in Oklahoma," by the Reverend Richard H. Harper, in *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3 [September, 1940], pp. 253-56, and No. 4 [December, 1940], pp. 329-30.—Ed.)

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>82</sup> *The Red Man's Trail*, op. cit., p. 101. (In 1883, the Choctaw General Council provided for the re-opening of the school at Wheelock and new buildings were erected northeast of the old Wheelock Church. Though both small boys and girls



In 1889 the Indian work was transferred from the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions to the Executive Committee of Home Missions. This last named committee still conducts the work at the expense of six thousand dollars per year.<sup>83</sup> Some of the mission schools supported by the committee were conducted by heroic women workers. Mrs. Lila P. Read at Wapanucka carried on the work with a small school. At Chishoktak Miss Anna L. Paxson had a boarding school and day school. It was located near Bennington, but Miss Paxson rarely ever saw a white face. The Hotchkins had schools at Caddo and Durant. So the work was carried on, reaching many Indian and white children in isolated places.<sup>84</sup>

In 1885 the Choctaw Council had become somewhat dissatisfied with the mission arrangement of schools. So in 1894 all contracts were cancelled, and the Choctaws conducted their school without the help of the missionaries. But the missionaries continued to operate neighborhood schools where they were needed until the end of tribal government. There were many white children coming into the Territory, and these schools reached them as well as the Indian children.<sup>85</sup>

By the year 1892 the number of academies had increased to seven. The Choctaw school system was under the supervision of a superintendent and three district trustees. The duty of the superintendent was to supervise the academies and high schools, the three trustees supervised the primary schools in the three districts.<sup>86</sup>

This school system was supported by the annuities, the royalties, permit taxes, and the income from invested funds. The Choctaw people had voted to use part of their annuities for educational purposes at an early period. They were interested in education, and had a high proportion of educated people in their tribe.<sup>87</sup> The mis-

---

were in attendance for a time, the school was again maintained for the education of Choctaw girls and has continued as a girls' school to this day (1947). When the school was re-opened in 1884, W. B. Robe and his wife, as superintendent and matron respectively, carried on the work for six years through the interests of the Presbyterian Board of Missions, U.S.A. Upon the retirement of Mr. and Mrs. Robe, the son, R. C. Robe, became superintendent and served until 1893. The following year, all the schools in the Choctaw Nation were taken over and operated by the Choctaw government with no church affiliations until 1899. When the school was re-opened in 1884, the old Wheelock church was repaired under the auspices of the Presbyterian Board of Missions, U.S.A., and missionary efforts were carried on again by the Reverend John Edwards at this location for a number of years. Mr. Edwards had labored as a missionary of the Presbyterian Church in the Choctaw Nation before the war between the states.—Ed.)

<sup>83</sup> "History of Indian Presbytery," *op. cit.*, *Oklahoma Trails*, p. 82.

<sup>84</sup> *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic*, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

See Appendix (Choctaw Schools) for statistics that give an idea of the growth of the Choctaw schools during the period of reconstruction.

<sup>86</sup> See Appendix (Choctaw Schools).

<sup>87</sup> *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic*, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

sionaries deserve great credit, for their earliest work was in the interest of education as well as religion. Through their efforts in the mission schools the Indians were awakened to the desirability of having an educated nation.

In 1900 the Federal Government took over the educational work for the Choctaws, and began the operation of most of the tribal schools. Today (1947) only two of these schools still function, Jones Academy for boys, near Hartshorne, Oklahoma, and Wheelock Academy, for girls, near Millerton, Oklahoma.<sup>88</sup>

However, the Federal Government has not completely neglected the denominational schools. Their policy has been to appropriate certain amounts out of tribal funds to give to selected denominational schools. The Indians have funds coming from mineral and other royalties, which are used in this manner. At the request of the Indians, two of the Presbyterian mission schools have always been included in the selected group. They are Goodland Indian Orphanage and the Oklahoma Presbyterian College at Durant. With this help from the Indians and the support given by the Assembly's Committee of Home Missions, the Presbyterian Church has been able to give Christian education to about two hundred Indian children every year.

Goodland Orphanage is older than the Presbyterian College at Durant, for it dates back to 1848. In that year Mr. and Mrs. John Lathrop were trying to develop a new mission at "Yakni Achuckma" or Goodland. They did not stay, and in 1850 Rev. O. P. Stark was appointed to this Mission. The school went through many discouraging periods; if the Indians in the community had not been interested, it would have died. However, such men and women as Solomon Hotema, Mrs. Carrie LeFlore, the Reverend and Mrs. J. P. Gibbons, Miss Elizabeth Rood, and Silas Bacon, remained faithful. The school has progressed, until now its high school course gives instruction to over fifty Indian boys and girls.<sup>89</sup>

During the decade from 1890 to 1900, thousands of white people come into Indian Territory. It was soon plain that statehood for the territory was eminent. So the college work in the mission schools was interracial, and the white people attended with the Indians. Such was the Oklahoma Presbyterian College.<sup>90</sup>

Durant, in the Choctaw Nation, was close to the Chickasaw line. Since it was on the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad, it soon became a place of importance. Here it was that the Oklahoma Presbyterian College was built.

<sup>88</sup> Morrison, *The Red Man's Trail*, op. cit., p. 102.

<sup>89</sup> "Goodland Indian Orphanage." *Oklahoma Trails*, op. cit., pp. 115-138.

<sup>90</sup> Morrison, *The Red Man's Trail*, op. cit., pp. 106-07.

The Reverend C. J. Ralston and his wife worked and taught at Armstrong Academy for a number of years. Their son, Calvin, had been born there. His parents were strong advocates of educational advantages, so they began saving toward their son's education. When only four years old, young Calvin strayed beyond the limits of Armstrong Academy. He fell into a deep pool and was drowned. At the time of this tragedy, 1892 the Ralston's school fund for their son amounted to over two hundred dollars. They decided to use the money for a memorial to their little boy.<sup>91</sup>

In 1894 the Assembly's Home Mission Committee planned to start a school at Durant. Mr. Ralston decided to give his memorial fund to this school, if the committee agreed to name it after his son. Also he wanted the property deeded to the Assembly's Committee. So the school was founded and called Calvin Institute.<sup>92</sup>

From 1894 to 1896 the Reverend R. K. Moseley was head of the school. Many veteran missionaries were on the Board of Trustees, such as J. J. Read, W.J.B. Lloyd, and C. J. Ralston. The first President of the Board of Trustees was Doctor Robert A. Lively, for many years the Stated Clerk of Indian Presbytery. During these first two years the school progressed to such an extent that it was moved to a larger building further west on the main street of Durant.

The school came under the supervision of Mrs. Mary Semple Hotchkin and her son, Ebenezer, in 1896. The Board selected this useful woman, who had come to Indian Territory in 1857 as a teacher. She was born in Ohio, in 1837, and had known every comfort. But when the call of the mission field came, she gave up her luxuries, and came to Wheelock to teach. She taught at Bennington later, and then in the schools at Goodwater, Mayhew, Caddo, and Chickasaw in the Chickasaw Nation. While at Bennington she married Henry Hotchkin, son of the old pioneer missionary; some of their children became missionaries. Mrs. Hotchkin's consecrated life made her forty years of service of great usefulness to the Indians. Besides being a teacher, she worked as a friend, nurse, doctor, and spiritual advisor. Into her classroom at every station she carried the Bible; she taught the Bible just as she taught her regular school classes. At every mission school where she was stationed she read the Bible through. It was a habit of hers to give away marked copies of the New Testament. It is not surprising that when she died on August 31, 1917, her last words were: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet."<sup>93</sup>

---

<sup>91</sup> Anne R. Semple, "Oklahoma Presbyterian College," *Oklahoma Trails*, p. 101.

<sup>92</sup> Morrison, *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

<sup>93</sup> Semple, "Oklahoma Presbyterian College," *The Red Man's Trail*, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

Mrs. Hotchkin found the work hard at Durant. There was very little equipment, only a few desks and seats cut from rough logs. But through her efforts the work grew, and Durant, as well as the church, recognized its importance. In 1900 the school was able to secure a contract, so that Indian boys and girls could attend supported by tribal funds. As the city of Durant was very interested in the enlargement of the school, the Board of Trustees, with Doctor Thornton R. Sampson at the head, decided to build a brick school building. Many people in Durant gave liberal gifts, and with the support of the Assembly's Committee, this was done. A new location was selected near the northern edge of the city. As a dormitory was needed, the old frame school building was moved out to serve this purpose. It was no longer known as Calvin Institute, for the name was changed to Durant College. For the next eight years the school was operated on the co-educational basis; many Indian boys and girls received an education there.

The Reverend Ebenezer Hotchkin was the head of the school during this period, and has served the school for many years since that time. He was born on July 5, 1869, not far from Goodland, and was reared and educated in the Indian country. Naturally he came to know and understand the Indian. His early education was received under his mother's instruction at Caddo. When yet a boy he attended the government Indian School, Haskell Institute, at Lawrence, Kansas. Doctor Hotchkin says today:<sup>94</sup>

"I am about half Indian in heart and mind. I still associate with them almost as much as I mingle with my white neighbors. I know their weaknesses and their strength, their problems and their desires, and am able to talk and advise with them when they bring their troubles to me, as many still do. Even the fullbloods, who are becoming rarer as the civilization of the white man encroaches on what I like to term the Indian civilization, count me as one of them."

After leaving Haskell Doctor Hotchkin worked as a cow hand on the old Bar-Z ranch near Pauls Valley. In those stirring days the cattle business was dangerous, for there were white and Indian rustlers and negro outlaws. Many times the cowboys would have to fight these rustlers, and Mr. Hotchkin saw many of his associates shot. The cowboys had a code of ethics as to the use of obscene language around the camp house; anyone using such language was given twenty lashes with a wet rope. Mr. Hotchkin tells how he once violated the code and was unable to ride his horse for a week.

He soon gave up this rough life, and finished his education at Park College, Missouri, and Fort Worth University in Texas. After marrying Miss Marriah Moore at Pauls Valley, he began his chosen work of preaching and teaching. He was evangelist for Indian Presbytery for a few years, but at the same time served as a

---

<sup>94</sup> *The Daily Oklahoman*, May 8, 1930, Section C, p. 8.

Bible teacher in the school at Durant. His life from that time until recently has been closely connected with the school.<sup>95</sup>

During the period from 1900 to 1908, William Brown Morrison served as principal of the high school. Born near Lexington, Virginia, he attended and graduated from Washington and Lee University. He went to Beaumont, Texas, to teach, and was called from there to the work in the Durant College. His wife, Christine Barton Morrison, whom he had married in Beaumont, assisted him with his work as matron of the dormitory. They were connected with the school until 1905, when they went to Virginia to take up work there. However, in 1910, they returned, and Doctor Morrison was connected with the school for eight years as President.<sup>96</sup>

When Statehood came for Oklahoma in 1907, it was decided to operate the Durant College as a girl's school. The city of Durant purchased the old property of the school, and offered a new site northwest of the city limits. A beautiful building was erected on a twenty acre campus, and everything was put in readiness for the opening of a new college. In 1910 the school became Oklahoma Presbyterian College for Girls.<sup>97</sup>

When Oklahoma became a state in 1907, the Choctaw Nation passed out of existence as a separate political unit. From that time on Choctaw history has been closely connected with that of the State of Oklahoma. Many years had passed since their peaceful nation was disturbed by the white man. A long road had been traveled. With statehood came a better educational system. The missionaries had worked hard to bring the Indians into a civilized state. They had, to a large extent, prepared them for citizenship, but their work was not finished. The evil effects of the Civil War upon the Choctaw people finally were eradicated. Once again the faithful efforts of the missionary workers had helped their Indian friends through a dark and difficult period. But now another change had come, and the Indians needed help in readjusting themselves to a new civilization.

---

#### APPENDIX, (Choctaw Schools)

Before the Boarding Schools were re-opened, Superintendent Forbis LeFlore made the following report for the school year of 1868-1869 (See *Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, [1869], p. 410*):

---

<sup>95</sup> Personal interview with Dr. Ebenezer Hotchkin now living at Durant, Oklahoma.

<sup>96</sup> Personal interview with the late Dr. W. B. Morrison, Department of History, Southeastern State College, Durant.

<sup>97</sup> *The Daily Oklahoman, op. cit.*; Morrison, *The Red Man's Trail, op. cit.*, p. 110.

Neighborhood Schools	No. of Schools	Pupils	Cost
Pushmataha District .....	27	718	\$ 7,028.45
Apukshunubbee District .....	23	618	6,312.87
Moshulatubbee District .....	19	511	6,027.72
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>69</b>	<b>1,847</b>	<b>\$19,369.04</b>

In 1872 a table of statistics gave the number of schools among the different Indian tribes. By this time the boarding schools had been opened. The report for the Choctaw schools was as follows (*Report*, Commissioner of Indian Affairs [1872], p. 388):

Name	No. of scholars	No. of teachers	Names of missionaries and denominations to which they belong
Neighborhood Schools .....	719	34	Allen Wright, J. M. Colton,
Spencer Academy .....	60	2	W. J. B. Lloyd, and Elijah
New Hope .....	40	1	Brewer, Presbyterians;
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>819</b>	<b>37</b>	Jesse Walker and R. M. Davis, Methodists; R. J. Hogue and W. H. Murrow, Baptists.

The report of Robert L. Owen, United States Indian Agent, gave the following information concerning Choctaw schools for the school year of 1886-1887 (*Report*, Commissioner of Indian Affairs [1887], p. 106):

Name	Number attending	Average attendance	Appropriation	Cost
New Hope Seminary (girls).....	100	95	\$10,000	-----
Spencer Academy (boys).....	100	97	10,000	-----
Armstrong Academy (orphan boys).....	50	50	5,500	-----
Wheelock Seminary (orphan girls).....	50	50	5,500	-----
State Colleges:				
Girls .....	13	25	-----	\$7,125
Boys .....	13			
Neighborhood schools (168).....	3,512		82,269	44,144

The condition of the Choctaw schools for the years 1888-1889 was reported by Leo E. Bennett, United States Indian Agent (*Report*, Commissioner of Indian Affairs [1889], p. 205):

The Choctaw Nation supports	Capacity
Spencer Academy .....	120
New Hope Seminary .....	120
Wheelock Orphan Asylum .....	60
Armstrong Orphan Asylum .....	60
<b>Common schools</b> .....	<b>Number</b>
Private schools .....	Names—Presbyterian Academy at McAlester Baptist school at Atoka
	170 (30 of these for freedmen)

United States Indian Agent, Leo E. Bennett, made the following report (*Report*, Commissioner of Indian Affairs [1892] p. 255):

	No.	Capacity	Money appropriated	Name of Principal
Neighborhood schools .....	123		\$ 59,400	
Choctaw Academies: .....	7			
New Hope Seminary .....	180		10,000	T. D. Ainsworth
(for females)				

Tushka-luse Institute .....	30	10,000	Henry Nail
(for Choctaw freedmen male and female)			
Jones Academy (for boys) .....	100	10,000	A. T. Dwight
Tus-ka-homma Institute .....	100	10,000	Peter Hudson
(for females)			
Spencer Academy (for boys) .....	100	10,000	H. A. Caldwell
Wheelock Orphan Seminary .....	50	5,600	R. C. Robe
(for girls)			
Armstrong Orphan Home .....	70	7,000	C. J. Ralston
(for boys)			
		<hr/>	
Total .....	550	\$122,400	