

THE FOREIGN MISSION SCHOOL AT CORNWALL, CONNECTICUT

Among the early mission schools established in the United States the one at Cornwall, Connecticut deserves mention as some of the most celebrated Indians received their education there.¹ These men later took part in the formation, government, and development of Indian Territory and inspired their descendents with a desire for education which has developed them into distinguished citizens of Oklahoma.

Cornwall is located in Litchfield County, on the east bank of the Housatonic River, in the northwestern section of the state. This is the most beautiful part of Connecticut, it contains fine farms and is free from factories that have ruined the picturesqueness of much of the East. The land on which the village was located in 1738 or 1739 was granted to the men of Boston and Hartford by the Indians in 1716; the boundaries were located in 1731 and the village was thriving by 1800.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions established the school at Cornwall in May, 1817 "for the purpose of educating youths of Heathen nations, with a view to their being useful in their respective countries."² "It was reckoned with Yale College and the Deaf and Dumb Institution in Hartford as one of the three noteworthy things in the state to be visited by intelligent travelers."³

The year the school started there were twelve students; seven Hawaiians, one Hindu, one Bengalese, an Indian and two Anglo-Americans. The school had increased its number of pupils the second year to twenty-four; four Cherokee, two Choctaw, one Abenaki, two Chinese, two Malays, a Bengalese, one Hindu, six Hawaiians, and two Marquesans as well as three American. Three Cherokee youths, and a Choctaw, from fourteen to seventeen years of age, were brought to the Cornwall School by Mr. Cornelius in August,

¹"It was seemingly more freely patronized by prominent Indians than any other North or South." Able, Annie Heloise. *Indian Consolidation*. American Historical Association, 1906. p. 297 note c.

²Morse, Jedidiah. Report on Indian Affairs. 1822, App. 163.

³Starr, Edward C. *A History of Cornwall, Connecticut*. Tuttle Morehouse & Taylor Company, (New Haven, Conn. 1926).

1818. The Cherokees were Leonard Hicks, Elias Boudinot, and Thomas Bassel. "The first is the son of Mr. Hicks, who is a Cherokee of more influence than any other in the tribe, and has been, for five years, a professor of Religion, and a member of the Moravian Church at Spring-place. The name of the Choctaw is *M'Kee Folsom*. His father is a white man; his mother a full-blooded native."

In the *History of the Moravian Missions Among Southern Indian Tribes of the United States* it is stated that several of the students at the Spring-place school "were so promising as to warrant higher education with a view to future usefulness in the Nation. At Cornwall, Connecticut, was conducted a Seminary for the education of . . . youth of all races, under the auspices of the Congregationalists. Hither Leonard Hicks and "Buck", Spring-place scholars, had been sent in 1818. Hither the following year, three more boys came to this institution; "John Ridge, who had studied at Brainerd Congregational school, Cherokee Nation, after finishing his studies at Spring-place in four years.

"David Steiner Tau-chee-chee—a fine boy and good student—named after Abraham Steiner (first missionary to the Cherokee) in whose heart a world of grace was going on; and John Vann, son of the former benefactor of the Cherokee mission. Missionary D. S. Buttrick of the Brainerd Congregational station and Brother Gambold together fitted out these boys for their journey and entrance into the school. Buttrick procured some money for Tau-chee-chee to which Gambold added \$10 out of his meager treasury; giving him beside, two of his own shirts. Buttrick took off his own coat and put it on Tau-chee-chee and Mr. Crutchfield added vest and trousers; . . . The boys had quite a triumphal tour to Connecticut. A Mr. Cornelius had them in charge for the journey to Cornwall. At Salem they tarried several days. . . . and received many gifts . . . At Washington, all visited ex-President Jefferson, dined with ex-President Madison and were introduced to President Monroe. They visited the tomb of Washington at Mt. Vernon.

⁴*Religious Intelligencer*, (New Haven), December 26, 1818, p. 494, col. 2; "Spring-place on the borders of Georgia and South Carolina was conducted by John Gambold, ably assisted by his wife." *History of Moravian Missions*, Edmund Schwarze, (Bethlehem, Penn.) p. 113.

“. . . . ‘Buck’ fell in with a remarkable good fortune at Cornwall which at once started him on a career. Dr. Elias Boudinot, Philanthropist, Statesman, Author . . . was much pleased with all of the boys and especially with ‘Buck’, and gave him his name with the promise of caring for him by annual support. ‘Buck’ also received a medal from him.”⁵

When the boys returned home they were welcomed with great joy by the Moravian Missionaries at Spring-place and when David Tau-chee-chee entered the mission he broke down and wept for joy.⁶

The public spirited citizens of Cornwall had given the building for the school and the land on which it was located. Mr. E. W. Dwight was the first principal but he was replaced the next year by the Reverend Herman Daggett while the assistant instructors were the Reverend John H. Prentice, Reverend Herman L. Vaill; Horatio N. Hubbell, and Bennet Roberts were employed as teachers but were also students.⁷ Interest in Cornwall Mission was widespread and gifts of food, tools, and clothing were contributed by people of all conditions and the Reverend F. Blumhardt in writing from Basle spoke of the school “on which the praying hearts of thousands in Switzerland are fixed.”

Jedidiah Morse in his remarkable report to the Secretary of War giving a detailed account of his tour among the Indians in 1820, says that there were twenty-nine students in the Cornwall school in 1820, half of whom were Indian boys from the principal families of five or six different tribes; some of the youths were in receipt of an allowance from the government and Morse wrote: “I beg to commend them all to the favor of the President, as very promising youths, in a course of education, which will qualify them for extending influence, and for important usefulness, in their respective nations. They . . . are exercised in various labors, and inured to industry; and the school comprises most of the branches of academical education, and is under excellent instruction and government.”⁸

⁵Moravian Historical Society, *Transactions* (Bethlehem, Penna. 1923), Special Series, vol. 1. Schwarze, Edmund, Ph. D., p. 109ff.

⁶*Idem.* p. 171.

⁷Starr, Edward C., B. D. *Ibid.*

⁸Morse, Jedidiah. *op. cit.* App. 163.

Morse had been a member of the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and he quotes largely from their report of September 1820 as well as "from subsequent communications of its worthy, and highly esteemed Principal, Rev. Mr. Daggett." He states that "Cornwall was in a retired situation . . . ten miles west of Litchfield." He says "there belong to it (the school) a commodious edifice for the School, a good mansion house, with a barn, and other out-buildings, and a garden for the Principal; a house, barn, & with a few acres of good tillage land for the Steward and Commons; all situated sufficiently near to each other; and eighty acres of excellent wood land, about a mile and a half distant.

"The object of the School, as set forth in the Constitution, is—*'The education in our own country, of Heathen Youths, in such manner, as, with subsequent professional instruction, will qualify them to become useful Missionaries, Physicians, Surgeons, School-masters, or Interpreters; and to communicate to the Heathen nations such knowledge in agriculture and the arts, as may prove the means of promoting Christianity and civilization.'* As these youths are designed for a higher education, than is expected to be obtained at our Mission Schools in heathen countries, it is deemed of no small importance, that they be only such as are of suitable age, of docile dispositions, and of promising talents.

"In the constitution there is a provision, that youths of our own country, of acknowledged piety, may be admitted to the school, at their own expense, and at the discretion of the Agents." Among the students at Cornwall in 1820 there were eight Cherokee, two Choctaw, two Onidas, one Tuscarora, two Caughnewagas, three from the Stockbridge tribe and one Indian from Pennsylvania; the remaining body of students being composed of three American boys and youths from the islands of the Pacific.

Morse's report continues: "Under the instruction of the able and highly respected Principal, the Rev. Mr. Daggett, and his very capable and faithful assistant, Mr. Prentice, the improvement of the pupils, in general, has been increasing and satisfactory, and in not a few instances, uncommonly good. Besides being taught in various branches of learning, and made practically acquainted with the useful arts of civ-

ilized life; they are instructed constantly, and with special care in the doctrines and duties of Christianity. Nor has this instruction been communicated in vain. Of the thirty-one Heathen youths . . . seventeen are thought to have given evidence of a living faith in the Gospel; and several others are very seriously thoughtful on religious concerns."

Morse's report contains lists of the names of the students at Cornwall, March 1, 1821, as follows:

Names	Native Names	Country
*James Ely		Anglo-American,
*George L. Weed		do.
*Horatio N. Hubbell		do.
*Adin C. Gibbs,		Indian youth from Penn.
*Elias Boudinot	Kub-le-ga-nah	
Leonard Hicks		
*Thomas Bassel	Taw-tohoo-a	
*David S. Taucheechy	Taw-chee-chy	Cherokees
*John Vann		
John Ridge		
*James Fields		
*David Brown	A-wih	
† McKee Folsom		Choctaws.
Israel Folsom		
*Professors of religion.		Hopefully pious.

An eye witness⁹ relates that the public exhibition held every year in May was a "grand affair." The students spoke in their own language and then in English and the entertainment was so popular that it was always held in the church as it was the only building large enough to hold the interested spectators. "The Indian pupils appeared so genteel and graceful on the stage that the white pupils appeared uncouth beside them. . . ." John Ridge is described as "a noble youth, beautiful in appearance, very graceful, a perfect gentleman everywhere."¹⁰

John Ridge who afterward became celebrated in his nation went to Cornwall in 1819, paying his own tuition, he was

⁹Starr, *Ibid.* Account by Eunice Wadsworth Taylor in "Dwight Collection Mss." p. 151.

¹⁰*Idem.* p. 155.

a "son of Major Ridge commander of the Cherokees in the Seminole War, who visited Cornwall, a large, tall man in white top boots. John did not look the Indian."¹¹ Major Ridge "came in the most splendid carriage . . . that had ever entered the town." He had "waiters in great style" and the Major's coat was trimmed in gold lace.¹² John was a sufferer from hip disease which caused him to limp for ten years and he had been nursed two years in the family of John P. Northrup, steward of the school. In January, 1824 he was married to Sarah Bird Northrup much to the disturbance of the people of Cornwall. After the marriage of John and Sarah they lived in Georgia in great splendor. John frequently transacted business for his nation in Washington while Sarah dressed in silk every day, remained at home looking after her three children and thirty servants. After the death of Ridge his widow returned to the home of her parents in Cornwall.¹³

David Brown, given on Morse's list among the Cherokee, was born at Will's Valley, Alabama. His father was half white and his half brother was a chief and judge. He was ambitious to be a minister, and had helped in the preparation of a spelling book for the Cherokee and assisted Pickering to prepare a Cherokee grammar. He developed into a fine public speaker, studied Hebrew and divinity, and after going to Andover returned home where he was a prominent member in his nation and served as clerk of a delegation to Congress.¹⁴ James Fields, a kinsman of Brown, was also part white and is described by Edward C. Starr as being foppish and not very proficient. He says he paid for his schooling as he was wealthy and later in life devoted himself to "taking care of his considerable property."

Leonard Hicks was a son of Chief Charles Renatus Hicks who was a half-breed and the first Cherokee convert. His mother was a Cherokee. His father was considered the most influential man in his nation. Leonard Hicks served as clerk of the nation although the Reverend Mr. Daggett had prophesied that he would disappoint his friends as he was a trifler

¹¹Starr, *Ibid.* p. 147.

¹²*Idem.* p. 155.

¹³*Idem.* p. 155.

¹⁴*Idem.* p. 147.

and inattentive. As he was homesick he was allowed to leave school at the request of his father. William Kirkpatrick went to the school in 1822 and died March 9, 1823. He was named after his patron William Kirkpatrick of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, who supported him. He is described as uncommonly bright but ill when he arrived at Cornwall.

Ta-wak, David Carter was a grandson of Nathaniel Carter of Killingworth and Cornwall and his father had been carried off by the Indians when a child. He remained with them and married a Cherokee. David was editor of the *Cherokee Advocate* and *Cherokee Phoenix*, became a very influential man and a judge of the Supreme Court. He was dismissed from the school although he did not learn the reason and lived for a time in Goshen, very likely with his aunt. He died about 1863.

John Vann, who attended Cornwall from 1820 to 1822 was the son of a white man, Clement Vann and his wife Mary Christiana, who was early converted. He joined the Moravians who described him as "a poor ignorant indecent Indian" and yet he became a man of influence and was, at one time, editor of the *Cherokee Advocate*.

McKee Folsom, the first Choctaw listed as attending the school was probably named for the Indian Agent, Colonel McKee. He was a son of Nathaniel Folsom a white man. He was at Cornwall 1818-1822 and is said to have paid for his tuition. His family was very prominent in the nation and he acted as interpreter for Mr. Wright while he or his younger brother Israel assisted Mr. Byington in arranging a Choctaw alphabet. Israel was a celebrated member of the nation. He attended Cornwall 1818-1822 and he was considered a good student. He helped Mr. Wright prepare a school book, reduce the language to writing and translate the Scriptures. His wife was Lovica Nail and he was the father of thirteen children. He was a brother of David Folsom a district chief of the Choctaw Nation. He conducted a Sunday School and was a preacher for thirty years. In 1840 he was at Wheelock Church.

Miles Mackey, a half blood Choctaw who attended Cornwall 1823-1825 was dismissed "for a proposed matrimonial union" according to Evarts, as was James Terrell who is described as "of good talents, well-behaved but trifling; irrelig-

ious in influence, . . . apparently once called an Osage." The Delaware, Adin C. Gibbs was part white and he was in school 1818-1822. He came from Pennsylvania, spoke English well. He was twenty-one when he came to the school and conducted meetings in the Johnson Hollow school which are remembered half a century later by a citizen of Cornwall. He lived among the Choctaw as a teacher and missionary for years. A kinsman of Tally, Chief of the Osage, was in Cornwall school. He was Holbochinto and was re-named Robert Monroe. The Foreign Mission Society supported this Osage lad during 1824-26. He had formerly been a pupil at Union Mission in Indian Territory.

The records of the school called Hopefield, a branch of Union Mission, state that "Philip VanRansaller" had been received there June 6, 1822, when he was fourteen; that he removed to Cornwall and afterward attended school at Oxford, Ohio.¹⁵

Starr reports Wah-che-oh-heh or Stephen Van Rensselaer a student at Cornwall from 1824-25. He calls him a relative of Tally and states that he had attended school at Union Mission; that he was named for General Stephen Van Rensselaer, LL.D., President of the United Foreign Mission Society, which supported him. Stephen proved a most useful member of his tribe being clever at blacksmithing and a good interpreter. In 1832 he was one of five from the school to act as missionary helper. He remained at Cornwall with Mr. Loomis after the school closed and afterward attended Miami University.

Buck Watie had been given the name of his patron Elias Boudinot, and through his influence he entered the Cornwall school in 1818. The following remarkable letter written by this youth of seventeen was addressed to the Baron De Champagne, of Basle, Switzerland who had become interested in the work of the school and had contributed one hundred ducats thereto. The instructor of the boys wrote the Baron to assure him that the letters sent him from his pupils were composed wholly by the students whose names were subscribed to them. "Foreign Mission School, Cromwall, (Con.) Jan. 8, 1821. Honored and Respected Sir, Having been requested by

¹⁵American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Congregational House, Boston. *Manuscript Library*, vol. 34, No. 129.

my beloved teacher, Mr. Daggett, I have the pleasure of writing to you; and in the name of my fellow students, to thank you for your benevolent donation of 100 ducats. We feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, that we are not destitute of Christian friends, who are willing to give their property for our sustenance, while receiving an education in this charitable institution. We are here, far from our native countries, brought here by the kind providence of God; and blessed be his name, that he has given us friends to support us, and to instruct us in human knowledge, but especially in that science, which treats about the immortal soul, and the only way to everlasting felicity. While we are looking with grateful hearts to the Christian people of the United States, we are grateful to think, that we have a kind benefactor in Switzerland.

“My honored Sir, we have nothing in this world with which we can reward you, for your act of benevolence. Only we return to you our grateful thanks. But I hope the Lord will reward you, and make you the instrument of good to many souls. May he yet grant you prosperous, peaceful, and useful days of your remaining life, and a crown of glory in the life to come. May your prayers be answered for this school; that numbers here may be trained up, who will go into the vineyards of the Lord, and be faithful laborers in bringing many unto Christ, who are now sitting in darkness. Our school promises extensive good. Here are numbers, we hope, who are willing to be employed in the work of the Lord.

“We need the prayers of all Christian people, and we are truly encouraged to think, that we are remembered by the christians of Europe, as well as of America. You will likely, Sir, wish to know from what nation I come. I am a Cherokee, from a nation of Indians living in the southern part of the United States. There are eight of us here from that nation. Six out of eight profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. I came to this school more than two years ago; and, if it be the will of the Lord, I expect to leave it in about one or two years. I feel sometimes an ardent desire to return to my countrymen and to teach them the way of salvation. Pray for me, that my faith fail not, and that I may not finally prove insincere. That we may meet in the kingdom which

is eternal in the heavens, is the wish of your unworthy and unknown young friend."

The betrothal of Elias Boudinot¹⁶ to Miss Harriet R. Gold was announced in 1825 and probably created more excitement than any other engagement in Connecticut. The two young people were burned in effigy, Stephen Gold, the brother of Harriett lighting the fire, while the church bell tolled for hours. Harriett Gold must have been a young woman of determination as she withstood the reproaches, arguments, and prayers of her family and friends and married Boudinot on March 28, 1826. She is described by one who knew her as "one of the fairest, most cultured young ladies of the place, a very pious, amiable girl, the nearest to perfection of any person I ever knew. She was the youngest of fourteen children. . . ." ¹⁷ She accompanied him to his old home in Georgia where she bore him six children before her death, August 15, 1836. She is buried in Calhoun, Georgia. Boudinot afterward married Delight Sargeant.¹⁸ Two years after Boudinot's death his widow returned to Vermont and their children were reared in the families of her sisters. They were well educated and passed as white people.¹⁹

S. Worcester, Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, writes regarding the establishment and condition of the various mission schools belonging to the Board: "Salem, Mass. Nov. 3, 1819. Besides the establishments in the Indian Nations, we have a school at Cornwall, Con., instituted for the purpose of educating youths of the Heathen Nations, with a view to their being useful in their respective countries. . . The expenses of the land, buildings, instruction, maintenance of the pupils, & various contingencies, from the beginning to August 31, 1819—amounted to about \$12,000; besides very liberal donations by the town of Cornwall. The number of pupils is at present about 30—15 of whom are Indian youths of principal families belonging to five or six different Indian Tribes. Several of these last receive an allowance from the Government; & I

¹⁶Native name Galagina, "male deer" or "turkey." Handbook of American Indians, Edited by Frederick Webb Hodge. Part 1, p. 162.

¹⁷Starr, *Ibid.* p. 155.

¹⁸See Mary Boudinot Church's "Elias Boudinot" in *The Magazine of History*, vol. XVII, December 1913. No. 6 p. 220.

¹⁹Starr, *Ibid.* p. 156.

beg to commend them all to the favour of the President, as very promising youths in a course of education, which will qualify them for a leading influence & for important usefulness in their respective Nations. They, as well as the pupils in the Schools in the Nations, are exercised in various labours & enured to industry; & the School comprises most of the branches of Academical Education, and is under excellent instruction & government. . . .”²⁰

Among the expenditures of the government for the civilization of the Indians \$400 was paid to J. Evarts, June 14, 1820 for the education and support of four Indian youths at Cornwall for one year and on June 18, 1821, S. Worcester received \$638 from the fund for students, while J. Evarts was paid \$400 on November 23 of the same year for students at this school.²¹

A very touching letter found in the Indian Office Records was sent by Charles R. Hicks to his son Leonard who attended school at Cornwall. Leonard, who was only thirteen and a half years old copied this letter and sent it to the Secretary of War. “Cherokee Nation Fortville, May 22, 1818. Dear Looney. You are about to leave your native land and relatives to receive an education from the Christian people at the Northward, on whom I have the strongest reasons to believe they will treat you with kindness and lead you in the paths of religion, and instruct you in some of the useful branches of education that might be advantageous to yourself and country. And on your part I expect you will act with strict obedience to the rules they may require of you in their instruction, and that your demeanour may comport with your instruction when in the years of manhood and do not make yourself uneasy while there on account of seeing your friends & relations, for God is the keeper of our spirits and knows best when we should see each other while here, and should therefore trust in his will & pleasures for all his ways are righteous & just towards his creatures. You will write every three months and let us know your health and advancement in learning, and I will write and let you know our situation

²⁰S. Worcester to John C. Calhoun.

²¹*American State Papers*. “Indian Affairs” vol. 11, p. 272; Starr. *Idem*. Jeremiah Evarts was the father of the famous wit and lawyer William M. Evarts. ~~Secretary~~ of State under President Hayes.

here, and allow you every year some money to cloathe yourself so far as my ability shall permit may the Lord keep and protect you on your journey, and convey you back to your native land, together with you the Red Bird your countryman; and you & him will converse at times in your own language so as not to forget it I am dear Looney remaining Affectionately yours Charles R. Hicks."

There is an unsigned memorandum attached to the above letter: "The following anecdote may not perhaps be uninteresting—At the time the Choctaw youth left his friends, his brother, a distinguished chief, addressed a number of warriors present and explained to them the nature & importance of an education—After which one of the warriors a brother in law of the lad, addressed him in behalf of the rest, and as I was told much to the following effect. —'My Brother in Law. We have been listening to what your Brother has told us, of your intention to go far to the North, to live among the white people & to learn their manners & their arts. And we are glad to hear you are going also to the Great White House of our Father the President — When a warrior goes out to fight or to hunt, he always lays his course & does not return till he has obtained his object — You are now taking your course,—and you must not stop till you have finished it. Then you can come back & be of great use to your nation, and we shall be glad to see you again—' "

January 6, 1821, David Brown, a student at Cornwall wrote a long and very religious letter to Baron De Champagne in which he relates that he had come to the school the previous June and adds: ". . . I trust the Lord will prepare me for usefulness among my dear brethren the Cherokees. . . ." ²² He wrote J. Evarts ". . . But why do I talk thus, while the idea of some people is, that an Indian cannot be civilized? He has no capacity for religion. He cannot learn. He has no faculties; therefore let him go, and again traverse the regions of his native woods, and turn to his savage state, which is wretchedness and woe. But the God of heaven has spoken, and who can recall his blessed words." ²³

The following letter was dictated by the mother of Elias Boudinot while he was a pupil in the Connecticut school in

²²Morse, *op. cit.*, App. 269.

²³*Idem.*

January 1821. "Dear Son, When you shall have finished your education, I shall rejoice, just as if I had got an education. I hope the Lord will have mercy on me, that I may find the good way. As you have found the Savior before me, I will take your advice, and listen to your talk."

The Reverend Mr. Daggett wrote to Jedidiah Morse: "Cornwall, (Con.) March 12, 1821. At your request I present you with a few specimens of the improvement of some of my pupils, in the F. M. S. They are all in the handwriting of those whose names are undersigned. The letters of David Brown and Israel Folsom, are their own composition, with such trifling corrections as are usually given to the compositions of youths in school. . . . The calculation of the lunar eclipse, was made understandingly, by Elias Boudinot, (Kul-le-ga-nah,) seventeen years of age, under my superintendence; and the projection was made by him, without any assistance except the directions in the book. It may be, we shall discover some error in the calculation, on a review, as it has been gone through rather hastily. John Ridge and Elias Boudinot have studied Geography extensively, Rhetoric, Surveying, Ecclesiastical and Common History, three books in the *AENEID*, two Orations of Cicero, and are attending to Natural Philosophy. The conduct of my pupils is, with very few exceptions, remarkably good, and their dispositions amiable. It is a pleasant task to guide them in the paths of science and religion, in the hope, especially, that some of them are destined to become extensively useful in promoting the temporal and spiritual good of their respective tribes and nations.

"It is with concern we perceive our climate to be unfriendly to the health of the Islanders, three of whom, as you know, have already fallen a sacrifice to it. On this account, it is probable, that Divine Providence intends this school to be chiefly useful to the Aborigines of this country. And as Congress has done considerable, and will probably do more, to advance the civilization of these long-neglected and injured fellow-beings, I would suggest, whether, on a proper presentation, they would not judge it expedient, in some way, to provide permanent funds for the support of this benevolent Institution. . . Should you think proper, on your southern tour to present the following specimens to the President of the

United States, I have no objection to your doing it . . . Herman Daggett.”

“To his Excellency James Monroe, President of the United States of America. Sir, As Dr. *Morse* is about to proceed to the seat of government, on business relative to the Indian Tribes in this country, I take the liberty, by permission of my instructor, to address a few lines to you. I congratulate you, sir, upon your re-election to the high office which you sustain. I thank you for the paternal regard which you have manifested towards my countrymen, and other Indian Tribes . . . The nation, to which I am connected, was once large and powerful, and could behold a great portion of land as their possession. But now they have decreased to a very small number. . . It makes me rejoice to reflect that we, the Cherokees, are now enjoying, in a little measure, the means of comfort; and I trust, that our dear father, the President, will not suffer us again to be driven to the west, and to return again to our savage state; but rather that you will send us teachers, bibles, and the precious gospel; and doubtless you may see some faithful and devoted children of the wilderness, as your subjects. This Institution, of which I am now a member, I doubt not will be the means of diffusing knowledge and truth to the remotest parts of the globe, and will aid greatly the good work which is now performing by the benevolent people of America, and of other lands. David Brown.”

“Cornwall, (Conn.) March 18, 1821. Honored Sir, . . . I am happy to understand that Doct. *Morse* is about to visit the seat of government, to exhibit to you, his report, relative to the Indians, whom he has visited. We their sons, who have the advantages of instruction in this seminary, hope that it may meet your cordial approbation, and that assistance may be proferred to the long-neglected and despised people. . . I rejoice, that my dear nation now begins to peep into the privileges of civilization—that this great and generous government is favorable to them, and that ere long, Congress will give them the hand of strong fellowship—that they will encircle them in the arms of love, and adopt them into the fond embraces of that *Union*, which the immortal Washington and others have made in this western world! . . . It is a known fact, that those Indians who have missionaries among them,

and who live on this side the Mississippi, are coming up, with faster steps to civilization, than those who have been inticed to remove to the west. An instance of this may be found in viewing the condition of my dear people. I left them about two years ago; when they were at work the tools of the whites were used—some possessed large farms; cattle, horses, hogs, &c. Their women were seen at the wheel, and the weaver's shuttle was in motion. How different is the condition of that part of my nation, who have been inticed, by their foolish imaginations, and particularly by the allurements of the white man, to remove to the Arkansaw. The equipage of a hunter, viz. a brass-kettle, gun and knife were offered to them, which, mortified at the sight, we saw them eagerly receive and depart. They are now in the pursuit of game, in which employment we have reason to apprehend, they would have continued, or perhaps might have sunk into oblivion, were it not, that teachers have been sent to them, by christian benevolence.

“My health is not very good at present; my disease, the scrofulous complaint, has again attacked my system. My father wishes me to return, which I will perhaps do in a short time. I wrote to him, and requested him, to send me to a College at the south, whenever I may have the happiness to recover. My father and mother are both ignorant of the English language, but it is astonishing to see them exert all their power to have their children educated, *like the whites!* To his Excellency James Monroe. John Ridge.”

The letter of Israel Folsom to President Monroe was dated March 8, 1821: “As I am persuaded you are the true friend of the poor red people, I do hereby express my gratitude to you, for your benevolence towards the Choctaws, and other infatuated sons of the forest. I am a stranger to you Sir, and unworthy to address you in this manner. Yet reflecting that you are the father of the poor Indians, and having permission from my dear Preceptor, I would say a few things, in behalf of my countrymen.

“The Choctaws have considered you, with unfeigned impressions of respect. We have called you father, because you show a kind, and compassionate spirit towards us; and we will make application unto our father, whenever the circumstances require. The Choctaws are so ignorant, they know not

what is good, and are ready to follow the disgraceful example of bad men. Yet, in general, the Choctaws are very submissive to what is said to them by their true friends.

“I hope I am preparing to return to them soon, and tell them what they must do. It is my chief object, when I finish my education, to return to my dear nation, and endeavor to persuade them to foresake their ancient customs, habits and manners, and lay hold on the culture of the land, after the example of their white brethren; to lay their guns and tomahawks down, for the plough, hoe, and the axe; to cultivate their lands, and exchange their whiskey, that detestable liquor, to which they are perpetually devoted, for the coffee, and the tea; and the war-whoop, for the praises of God.

“One thing increases the deplorable condition of the Choctaws; that is, the example of the bad white people, who come into the Nation, and show the poor Indians how to pursue the way down to ruin, instead of showing them the way unto the living God. But we have reason to be thankful that so many benevolent people are now engaged to do them good, and to lead them in the right way. . . . When I was on my way, coming to this christian school, from the Choctaw nation, I passed by your palace, in December, 1818. I intended then to visit you, but the hour which I had to spend in Washington did not admit. I have a brother in this school, elder than myself, who had opportunity (when he was on his way,) to visit you, and three Cherokee boys. From your unworthy heathen friend, Israel Folsom.”

“Accompanying the foregoing letters, were the calculation of the eclipse of August 2d, 1822, very neatly projected, and the results stated in the usual form, by *Elias Boudinot*, . . . a translation of the 119th psalm, into the Mah-he-con-nuk language by *John Hicks*, of that tribe, . . . with a number of very neat and beautiful specimens of Chirography, of the pupils. In this art they are equal to any people on the globe.”²⁴

Congress called upon President Monroe “to cause to be laid before this House an account of the expenditures made under the act to provide for the civilization of the Indian Tribes. . . .” and he, on January 20, 1822, transmitted a report from the Secretary of War, John C. Calhoun in which he writes: “. . . It may be proper to observe that, by a rigid

²⁴Morse, *op. cit.*, App. 278.

construction of the rules adopted for the expenditure of the appropriation, the schools at Cornwall, in Connecticut, and Great Crossings, in Kentucky, would appear to be excluded from any benefit from it. It was believed, however, as there was not sufficient number of schools in the Indian country, at the time the allowances were made, to absorb the whole appropriation, that it would advance the object of Congress in passing the act to include them in the distribution."

The Executive Committee of the Agency of the Foreign Mission School gives "notice to the friends of charitable institutions, that a building is now wanted for the accomodation of said (Cornwall) School, to be erected as soon as the means can be provided. It is proposed that the building be constructed of brick, and that it be about 60 feet by 30, on the ground, and two stories high. The first story to be divided into two convenient school rooms, a hall, and a study; and the second into lodging rooms for the students, a room for the Library &c. The probable expense of the building will be between two and three thousand dollars. . . . Funds are also needed, to purchase a farm, for the benefit of the Institution, and for the exercise and instruction of the students in the agricultural art. . . . The present number of students is twenty-four. . . H. Daggett. Cornwall, March 1823.²⁵

Cornwall School was disbanded in 1827 and various reasons have been given. The Indians were incensed at the disturbances caused by the intermarriage of their sons with white girls and declined to return them to Cornwall. The marriages had also caused a change of sentiment among the citizens of the community and it is related that the young men of the village seriously feared the rivalry of the fascinating Indian youths in their courting, although the former repudiated any such feeling. Probably the most serious reason is contained in the following letter: "Washington City May 19th, 1832. To L. Lea, Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Sir For several years past the Chickasaw Nation appropriated about \$3000 for the education of Chickasaw youths in the United States; The people are now dissatisfied with this arrangement. The grounds of discontent are twofold We have

²⁵*The Christian Mirror*, April 18, 1823, p 2, col. 2. Copied from the *Religious Intelligencer*.

found that in sending our Boys to the Northern States and keeping them there their Constitution gives away under the vigour of the climate. We have kept them in the State of Connecticut for the most part and out of twenty one who have been sent abroad five have died and several more are now in the last stages of consumption This fact alone would be well calculated to create a prejudice in the minds of our people against our education. . . . Yours truly Benjamin Love Edmond Pickens Samson Folsom Chickasaw Delegation.²⁶

The handbook of American Indians states that: "In addition to the regular mission establishments some educational work for Indians was carried on in accord with a declared purpose at Harvard College. . . . and at a the Foreign Mission School at Cornwall, Conn., by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, beginning in 1817. The net result was small."²⁷ This hardly seems fair when one considers the distinguished careers of pupils of the school; men of national reputation who had much to do in guiding the destinies of their nations and bringing them to a realization of the importance of establishing schools within their own boundaries.

Carolyn Thomas Foreman,
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²⁶National Records. "1848 Chickasaw Nation," p. 210, No. 3.

²⁷Part 1, p. 884.