

THE MISSIONARY WORK OF SAMUEL A. WORCESTER  
AMONG THE CHEROKEE: 1825-1840

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS. . . . .	iv
<b>Chapters</b>	
I. AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS AND THE CHEROKEE. . . . .	1
II. SAMUEL A. WORCESTER--THE CHEROKEE MESSENGER. . . . .	21
III. <u>WORCESTER V. THE STATE OF GEORGIA.</u> . . . . .	37
IV. WORCESTER'S MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES DURING REMOVAL. . . . .	68
V. ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE CHEROKEE MESSENGER. . . . .	90
APPENDIX . . . . .	95
A. CHEROKEE POPULATION STATISTICS	
B. ILLUSTRATIONS	
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	102

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure		Page
1.	The Cherokee Nation in the East: 1835. . . . .	97
2.	The Cherokee Alphabet . . . . .	98
3.	<u>Cherokee Phoenix</u> . . . . .	99
4.	Cherokee Nation in the West: 1840. . . . .	100
5.	<u>Cherokee Almanac</u> . . . . .	101

## CHAPTER I

### AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS AND THE CHEROKEE

The early years of the nineteenth century were dynamic, exciting years for the United States. The population was quickly expanding into the trans-Appalachian West; the nation was firmly establishing itself as an independent country and a world force; increasingly the national philosophy became the idea that the nation had a divine origin, a divine inspiration, and a divine authority over the North American continent and any other area of the world to which it might expand.<sup>1</sup>

The nation still reflected the thought of its early settlers, especially the Puritans of New England. There were fears among these people that the deistic-Unitarian influences of the late eighteenth century might corrupt the foundations of religion. These fears were of course unfounded, for within the next half-century, the country experienced a second Great Awakening to parallel that of

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<sup>1</sup>The term "manifest destiny" was coined in 1845 to represent this philosophy. It was "a widespread and swelling popular conviction that it was indeed the manifest destiny of the Republic to expand by peaceful process and by the force of republican example and principles of government over the whole of the continent of North America." Samuel Flagg Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States, 3rd ed. (New York, 1950), p. 215.

Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield in the mid-eighteenth century. However, this new awakening had a slightly different orientation, for its basis was the millennium. The theory was prevalent that the second coming of Jesus of Nazareth would occur somewhere in North America in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries. This idea of a foreseeable end to man's temporal existence, coupled with the American sense of divine purpose, resulted in a strong surge of religious activities. The non-Christian world was a challenge which would be met by missionaries, not only in the United States but also in England. The evangelical spirit spread and with it came the development of an American missionary spirit which insisted that the non-Christian heathen of the world would have to be "saved" before the millennium arrived. Americans, not having had centuries in which to develop traditional means of dealing with problems, and being without rigid cultural lines, took up the challenge to Christianize the world's people before the end came. Thus the American missionary spirit of the nineteenth century came of age.

Spirited revivals, divine revelations, and forecasts of the millennium marked the Second Great Awakening. This exuberant spirit gave life and impetus to the missionary spirit, almost dormant since the early efforts of the Quakers among the Indians of Pennsylvania. Even though the first settlements had basic economic foundations, the Christianizing of the New World quickly had become a secondary

justification for settlement. However, the Puritans of New England regarded the native Americans as possibly the "lost tribes of Israel" or more likely the spirit of the Devil, driven from Europe by Christianity, and now lodged in North America. It was not until the revivalistic spirit and enthusiasm joined with the idea of the millennium that the descendants of the New England Puritans, the Congregationalists and Presbyterians, began to modify their ideas about the American aboriginals. The Indians were people in need of salvation.<sup>2</sup>

It is not surprising that missionary organizations became common during the Second Great Awakening. The Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians and Others in North America (1787), Society of the United Brethern for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen (1787), the New York Missionary Society (1796), the Northern Missionary Society (1797), The Connecticut Missionary Society (1798), the Massachusetts Missionary Society (1799), and the Western Missionary Societies (1802) were some of the earliest missionary organizations. Later the Baptist (1814) and

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<sup>2</sup>Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response, 1787-1862 (Lexington, Kentucky, 1965), pp. 1-15; Clifton Jackson Phillips, Protestant America and the Pagan World: The First Half Century of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1810-1860 (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 3-12, 233-34; Ira V. Brown, "Watchers For the Second Coming: The Millenarian Tradition in America," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXXIX (December, 1952), 441-52; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Paths to the Present (New York, 1949), pp. 259-63.

Methodist Episcopal Churches (1820) formed similar mission societies.<sup>3</sup>

These organizations often published periodicals which both described their activities and encouraged the spread of missions, for it became fashionable to be a missionary and to go to heathen nations and save savages. A few examples of these publications are the New York Missionary Magazine which succeeded the Theological Magazine in 1809, the Massachusetts Missionary Magazine which began publication in 1803, the Presbyterian General Assembly's Missionary Magazine in 1806 and the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine in 1803. State and local missionary groups also published journals such as the New Hampshire Piscataqua Evangelical Magazine (1805-1808) and the Advisor: or Vermont Evangelical Magazine (1809-1815). However, most of these periodicals were of short duration. By far the most influential of these was Jedidiah Morse's Panoplist: or, the Christian's Armory (1805) which was his personal weapon against Unitarianism. Later, with Jeremiah Evarts serving as editor, The Panoplist became the most important missionary publication in the country by combining with the Massachusetts Missionary Magazine in 1808 and finally changing its name to the Missionary Herald in 1821.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Berkhofer, Salvation and the Savage, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Phillips, Protestant America and the Pagan World, p. 16.



The Missionary Herald became the official organ of undoubtedly the largest and most influential of all missionary organizations, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. At the meeting of General Association of Massachusetts Proper in Bradford, June 27, 1810, Congregationalist and Presbyterian missionary groups met in combined session. The meeting took on an unexpected note when four young divinity students from Andover Theological Seminary, Adoniram Judson, Jr., Samuel Nott, Samuel J. Mills, and Samuel Newell asked that they might speak to the gathering. They pointed out that there was a need for a united missionary effort and that since these two groups already held joint meetings and had similar goals for Christianizing the heathen, would it not be advantageous to the spreading of the word if these groups joined together? The meeting adjourned and reconvened the next morning, at which time they adopted the resolution founding the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, dividing the authority proportionately between the Presbyterians and Congregationalists. The first nine members of the Prudential Committee--an executive board--were chosen by the General Association of Massachusetts, but later only five would be chosen by the Massachusetts group while the other four would be chosen by the General Association of Connecticut.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>[Congregational Churches in Massachusetts], General Association, Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. At a Meeting, in Farmington, September 5, 1810, [no place of publication], 1810 [no page numbers]; Panoplist, VI (June, 1810), 86-90.

The first meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (A.B.C.F.M.), took place on September 5, 1810, at Farmington, Connecticut. It adopted as its objective "to devise, adopt, and prosecute ways and means for propagating the Gospel among those, who are destitute of the knowledge of Christianity."<sup>6</sup>

At last the missionary effort had what it had long lacked, a large organization and a backlog of eager young people to serve as missionaries. The four young men who appeared before the A.B.C.F.M. had attended different colleges, and, by the time they reached Andover Seminary, each decided that soul saving would be his life's work. All four had belonged to a secret organization at Andover called the "Brethren," whose members were devoted to preparing for lives as foreign missionaries. Even though the society existed at Andover until the 1870's, its existence was not suspected for many years and its exact origins are unknown. What is known, however, is that the "Brethren" included a large proportion of the foreign missionaries, and even established a sister organization. In fact, the first four foreign missionaries ordained by the A.B.C.F.M. were all former members of the Brethern and were the young men who had spoken to the 1810

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<sup>6</sup>Panoplist, (September, 1810), pp. 181-84.

meeting of the General Association of Massachusetts--Judson, Nott, Mills, and Newell.<sup>7</sup>

The Brethren played upon the evangelical fervor of the period as well as the sentiment against secret organizations initiated by the Antimasonic movement. Also, the romantic attraction of bringing the Gospel to foreign lands full of heathens undoubtedly added to the attraction of the missionary organization. Membership was predominately from the "Burnt Over" district of New York where many other uniquely American religious groups originated, including the Mormons. A former member of the Brethren was John Humphrey Noyes, later founder of the Oneida Community (1848).<sup>8</sup>

The first missions of the A.B.C.F.M. reflected a romanticism for foreign places as they went to British India and Ceylon in 1812, to be followed by other missionaries to the Sandwich Islands in 1815. Obviously the emphasis was on foreign missions, although as early as 1812, the Panoplist noted that the Jesuits in Canada were succeeding in converting the Indians, possibly because of their familiarity with tribal life and customs. The journal noted "It is a matter of vast importance, that the Missionary should be well acquainted with the Indian temper and character."<sup>9</sup> Possibly

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<sup>7</sup>Phillips, Protestant American and the Pagan World, pp. 20-31. This source included the only reference to the Brethren and its sister organization. However, the name of the sister society was not given.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.      <sup>9</sup>Panoplist, VIII (July, 1812), 22.

this brief interest in the success of the Jesuits in Canada was a result of the British use of Indians during the War of 1812.

It was not until 1816 that the A.B.C.F.M. undertook serious consideration of missionary work among the American Indians. Those considered first were the Cherokee. The Board expressed the opinion that God had given the land to the Indians and it was theirs, except where whites had purchased it, as had happened in Pennsylvania. For the most part, the Indians lost their lands because of the influx of whites with expansionistic goals. Usually the land passed into white hands by fraudulent or unjust means. Therefore, as Christian whites, it was the A.B.C.F.M.'s responsibility to do something to help protect the Indians and their lands from unscrupulous, invading whites. But the major problem facing the A.B.C.F.M. concerned what needed to be done for the Indians. The Board determined that it was first necessary to civilize them, and then to Christianize them. How to accomplish these goals presented an even more perplexing problem.<sup>10</sup>

The A.B.C.F.M. decided that the Indians must first learn farming to provide a stable economic basis and also to provide some common relationship with whites. This system would also benefit white settlers in the area, for if the Indians were part of the agricultural system, there would be less

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., XII (March, 1816), 118-22.

danger of their intentional disruption of that system. However, it would take more than economics to bring the Indians into white society; it would also involve the Indians' acceptance of the white's language, customs, and religion. The missionaries reasoned that these social tools could be taught more effectively and with less force by them than by the military. The Board looked at the problem realistically as a matter of national interest. It was to the advantage of the United States' interest in expansion not to fight wars with Indians. This was both sensible and humane.<sup>11</sup>

The greatest goal and actual incentive for the Board's missionary efforts was, of course, the salvation of the Indian's soul.<sup>12</sup> The evangelical spirit of the times, coupled with a realistic approach to the growth of the United States, led the A.B.C.F.M. to conclude that the Indian could be both civilized and Christianized to the benefit of the white population. The Puritan ethic of a reliance on realism and a belief in God remained strong among Congregationalists and Presbyterians of the Northeast.

The Board realized that in order for any instruction to be of a lasting nature, the Indians would have to give up nomadic living and become farmers, establishing settled habits and living as their white neighbors. There was a debate in the Board as to how to accomplish these ends. The first method would be to take some tribal youths out of their

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

homes and educate them in white schools in civilized areas, hoping they would absorb enough of the surrounding culture and life style that, when they returned to their people, their example would be a stabilizing influence. However, the Board also realized that this plan might produce so great a cultural shock as to cause the young Indians to rebel against the entire system and become even more savage. Conversely, if the education process were successful, the youths might be unable to cope with their home situations, families and friends once they returned. The possibility also existed that they might be rejected by the tribe as representing unwanted foreign influences. Thus, this solution seemed to have too many drawbacks to be of any significant benefit.<sup>13</sup>

The A.B.C.F.M. arrived at an alternative plan for civilizing the Indians which would meet the needs of both groups-- local education. Schools established within the Indian community could teach the rudiments of English and the American way of life just as easily as could a school in a white area. The Board thought it best to teach the Indians English rather than to encourage native languages (the Cherokee were particularly attached to their language), because there were no written Indian languages at this time. Although such a development might occur, the problem of translating school books, the Bible and other printed matter into the native languages

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., (April, 1816), pp. 150-52.

would be monumental. Therefore, teaching English seemed a logical solution to the problem.<sup>14</sup>

Local schools could also be operated on an agrarian basis so that the Indians could be taught farming techniques in their own areas and receive practical education in farming. This would tend to stabilize the Indians' economy and give them a basis of communication and competition with the white community.<sup>15</sup>

Finally the local school would provide an excellent opportunity, not only for the students of the school, but also the adults of the tribe, to see Christians living according to their faith. The missionary example of a Christian life would be an important influence in teaching Christian principles to the savages. By living among the Indians, the missionary would serve as a teacher, by his presence as well as by his example.<sup>16</sup>

The Board was quick to point out that this second plan was more than mere theory. Missions among the Cherokee were not new, for as early as 1801 the Moravians had established a mission at Springplace, Georgia. This mission, based on the local school principle, met with only limited success because of a lack of funds and facilities, in addition to problem

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

of being the initial settlement among the Indians. This mission was still in operation in 1816.<sup>17</sup>

However, the A.B.C.F.M. had a much better example on which to draw even though it was no longer active. This was the Presbyterian mission of the Reverend Gideon Blackburn at Chickamauga, Tennessee. Blackburn had settled in Tennessee in 1794 in the midst of a Cherokee war. During the war, Blackburn went out to the battlefields and gave aid to the wounded braves. He decided that there must be an effective way to reach these people through Christianity. The "plan must be laid with the expectation of having to combat with ignorance, obstinacy, and strong prejudices [against whites]." Nonetheless, Blackburn thought that Christianity could be brought to the Cherokee by coupling it with civilization, and that "if rightly managed eventually [the Indians could] become American citizens, and a valuable part of the union."<sup>18</sup>

Blackburn tried unsuccessfully in 1799 to present the subject of a mission to the Cherokee before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. In 1800 he began plans of his own to establish a mission in the area, but local poverty and the lack of church backing caused delays. But in 1803 he became a member of the Presbytery of the General

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<sup>17</sup>See Muriel H. Wright, Springplace: Moravian Mission and the Ward Family of the Cherokee Nation (Guthrie, Oklahoma, 1940) for a thorough discussion of this mission.

<sup>18</sup>Gideon Blackburn to David Morse, [n.d.], 1807, Panoplist, III (June, 1807), 39-40.



Assembly, thereby gaining an audience for his plans. After presenting his theories and plans, the Committee on Missions appropriated \$200 for support of such a mission and to cover Blackburn's services for a trial period of two months. This was obviously not enough to support the project adequately, but it was a start.<sup>19</sup>

By the spring of 1804, the Cherokee chiefs hesitantly agreed to permit the school to be established, and twenty-one children enrolled in the new institution. The school's boarding students caused the first major problem; some insisted upon returning to their parents but would not return the clothing provided by the school. Nonetheless, discipline was good, and each child received rewards for his work. The teacher stressed songs for both teaching and worship, for as Blackburn put it, "I will not say music can transform, but sure I am, it has a remarkable tendency to soften, the savage mind."<sup>20</sup>

The school at Chickamauga grew in spite of the lack of funds. Reports of the Presbytery and travelers were glowing, and praise for Blackburn was unanimous.<sup>21</sup> Despite the initial refusal of the Presbyterians to finance a second school at Hiwassee, Tennessee, Blackburn established the school and it, too, grew. However, the problems of two schools, a constant

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., (July, 1807), p. 40.      <sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 85

<sup>21</sup>Samuel Love to Presbytery, February 25, 1807, ibid., p. 86; Report of Committee of Missions of General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, May, 1808, ibid.

fight for funds, and poor health led to closing both facilities in 1810.<sup>22</sup>

The influence of Blackburn's school and his philosophy of civilization among the Indians did not end with the closing of his mission schools. He continued to hold the belief that the Indians were direct descendants of the Egyptians or had once lived near them. Possibly they were even the lost tribes of Israel, but Blackburn did not try to explain how they got to North America.<sup>23</sup> The family, social, and governmental structure and sophistication of the Cherokee impressed him.<sup>24</sup> In fact he concluded

that genius is not confined to the color of the skin, were equal advantages offered, and it is for a lamentation that so many who are capable of shining in the circle of a Bacon or Newton should lie neglected in the smoaky [sic] huts of the wilderness.<sup>25</sup>

Blackburn felt that the advantages that the Cherokee youth had gained and the height of civilization which they reached while in his schools could not be lost.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup>Blackburn to Morse, December 14, 1807, ibid., III (February, 1808), 417; Blackburn to Morse, January 15, 1808, ibid., 485-76; Blackburn to Panoplist, May 16, 1808, ibid., IV (August, 1808), 3; ibid., XII (April, 1816), 150-52.

<sup>23</sup>Blackburn to Morse, February 8, 1808, ibid., III (May, 1808), 567-68.

<sup>24</sup>Blackburn to Evangelical Intelligencer [n.d.], ibid., IV (December, 1808), 324.

<sup>25</sup>Blackburn to Panoplist [n.d.], ibid. (August, 1808), p. 140.

<sup>26</sup>Blackburn to Evangelical Intelligencer [n.d.], ibid. (December, 1808), 326.

Having noted the concrete examples of success among the Cherokee at Blackburn's Tennessee schools, the A.B.C.F.M. decided that the long-neglected American aborigines would be their next project. Any mission the Board might establish would certainly not fail because of lack of support. The organization could provide a wide base of support for new missionary efforts. However, one possible problem did remain, that of financing the missions.

The second step, to find a mission site and money to support the project, began in 1816. The Board sent Cyrus Kingsbury, member of the Connecticut Missionary Society, to locate a suitable location among the Cherokee of Tennessee. On his way to the area, he stopped in Washington in an attempt to get federal backing for the mission. The Madison administration received the proposition favorably and through Secretary of War William H. Crawford promised financial assistance in the establishment of a mission to civilize the Indians.<sup>27</sup> With the promise of financial backing of the federal government and moral support of the A.B.C.F.M., Kingsbury continued to Tennessee where he located a spot on the Chickamauga River which he suggested as a likely site.<sup>28</sup> The Board agreed, and by the following May Jeremiah Evarts, the Treasurer of the Board, arrived to inspect the new mission.

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<sup>27</sup>W. H. Crawford to Cyrus Kingsbury, May 14, 1816 in Phillips, Protestant America and the Pagan World, pp. 60-61.

<sup>28</sup>Kingsbury to A.B.C.F.M., June 30, 1817, Panoplist, XIII (November, 1817), 508-510.

Several buildings now served to educate Cherokee students. Evarts suggested that the mission be called Brainerd after the Reverend David Brainerd, missionary to several tribes in the northeastern area in the early 1700's.<sup>29</sup>

In 1817 the new administration of President James Monroe made it clear that it too favored the introduction of civilization to the Indians.<sup>30</sup> Congress, however, took no immediate action, but on March 3, 1819, passed a bill appropriating \$10,000 a year "for the purpose of providing against the further decline and final extinction of the Indian tribes . . .and for introducing among them the habits and arts of civilization. . . ." The bill also provided for teaching rudimentary subjects, agriculture, and "such other duties as may be enjoined," thereby eliminating possible conflicts involving separation of church and state. The President had authority to set guidelines for expenditure of these funds.<sup>31</sup>

In September, 1819, more detailed restrictions and qualifications were placed on the funds and missionary use of them. Boys were to be taught agriculture and mechanics "as are suited to the condition of Indians." Girls were required to learn spinning, weaving, and sewing. Aid for these purposes and for buildings went only to missions among Indians

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid.; see Fig. 1, p. 97.

<sup>30</sup>James D. Richardson, editor, A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, II (Washington, 1904), 16.

<sup>31</sup>U. S. Statutes at Large, VII, 516 (1819).

in areas bordering the United States.<sup>32</sup> Later the government decided that money would be allocated according to the number of pupils. The federal government would pay two-thirds of the construction costs of mission buildings, but the societies were required to employ only those people who would stress the "friendly and benevolent views of the government, and cooperating with it, in such measures as it may deem necessary for their civilization and happiness."<sup>33</sup>

In fact, President Monroe was so interested in civilizing the Indians that he made an unexpected trip to the A.B.C.F.M. mission (Brainerd) on May 27, 1819. The missionaries at the station suspected that the President might come, but they also expected to have some warning. However, Monroe's visit was not seriously considered until he was announced at the mission door. He toured the area looking at the buildings, asking questions and expressing his approval of the students living within a Christian family structure and being taught various types of work. He thought this was probably the best and only way to civilize and Christianize the Indians. The conduct of the children also impressed him. He was displeased, however, with the new girls' dormitory, a log cabin. He suggested that a two-story house with glass windows and a stone or brick chimney would be more suitable. He gave the missionaries a letter addressed to the local

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<sup>32</sup>American State Papers, Indian Affairs, II, 201.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 273.

federal Indian agent, authorizing him to pay the mission for the cost of the log cabin and provide the cost of a new, more suitable structure. "Make a good house, having due regard to economy," said the President. He left the next morning after breakfast, well pleased with the government's attempts to help the Indians, and in turn pleased with the A.B.C.F.M. method of dealing with Indian education.<sup>34</sup>

In order to gain a better idea of how the federal funds should be spent, the government asked Jedidiah Morse, geographer, philanthropist, and member of the Prudential Committee of the A.B.C.F.M., to make a survey of western missionary efforts and the condition of the Indians. His trip lasted from early May to late August, 1820. His report was too late for the current session of Congress, but he published it himself in 1822. Morse's recommendations were, not surprisingly, along the lines of policy already followed by the A.B.C.F.M. His basic recommendation was for the use of "education families," that is, qualified ministers and their families who would live with the Indians on small stations. Here education of all types would take place; the husband would teach boys farming, carpentry, smithing, and mechanics, while the wife would teach the girls sewing, homemaking, cooking and other domestic pursuits. Along with these duties the family would set a Christian example. Of course, these families

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<sup>34</sup>"Brainerd Journal," May 27-28, 1819, Panoplist, XV (August, 1819), 373.

would have to be "contented to labor without salary, receiving simple support."<sup>35</sup>

However, somewhat surprisingly, Morse reached a conclusion which shocked many of his New England associates. In order to help the Indians move most rapidly toward civilization and acceptance, he suggested intermarriage as an excellent way to save the Indians from extinction and bring them into American society. "They would then be literally of one blood with us, merged in the nation, and saved from extinction."<sup>36</sup> To the latter-day New England Puritans, Christianity and civilization was one matter, while miscegenation was an entirely different consideration.

The example of the A.B.C.F.M. thus became a guideline for other missionary efforts and almost evolved into government policy. Then logically the A.B.C.F.M. missions would fit all the government's qualifications and would be eligible for more federal support. By 1823 the A.B.C.F.M. was operating six mission schools and receiving over one-third of the

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<sup>35</sup>Jedidiah Morse, Report to the Secretary of War of the United States, on Indian Affairs, Comprising a Narrative of a Tour Performed in the Summer of 1820, under a Commission from the President of the United States, for the Purpose of Ascertaining, for the Use of the Government, the Actual State of the Indian Tribes in Our Country (New Haven, 1822), pp. 13-18, 78-79, in Robert Frederick Berkhofer, Jr., "Protestant Missionaries to the American Indians, 1787-1860," unpublished doctoral dissertation, School of Anthropology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, 1960, pp. 71-79.

<sup>36</sup>Morse, Report of the Secretary of War, p. 75 in Phillips, Protestant America and the Pagan World, p. 65.

total annual governmental expenditures for civilization among the Indians.<sup>37</sup> By 1829 the Board's schools garnered about one-half of all federal funds spent on the Indians.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>American State Papers, Indian Affairs, II, 458.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., pp. 459, 669.



## CHAPTER II

### SAMUEL A. WORCESTER--THE CHEROKEE MESSENGER

With restrained pride, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions stated in its fifteenth annual report (1825) that the savages were responding to missionary efforts. Although it was impossible to judge the true feelings of the Indians toward Christianity, the Cherokee adherence to the Christian principles of temperance, moderation in violence, restrained profanity, and attendance at regular worship services definitely increased since Brainerd opened in 1817.<sup>1</sup> The Cherokee made more progress toward civilization than any other group of Indians. The tribe's agricultural accomplishments were praiseworthy, but it was their growing independence in self-government which encouraged the Board the most.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, the Board refused to deceive itself by thinking that hard work and difficult times were in the past. To the contrary, there was "much darkness yet to be dispelled, much stupidity yet to be banished, much vice yet to be restrained."<sup>3</sup> It was into this environment that Samuel Austin Worcester came in 1825.

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<sup>1</sup>Missionary Herald, XX (September, 1825), 281-83.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., (January, 1825), p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., (September, 1825), p. 283.

The Worcester family's involvement in religious work extended over a period of eight generations. The Reverend Leonard Worcester of Peacham, Vermont, and his wife Elizabeth, daughter of the Reverend Samuel Hopkins of Hadley, Massachusetts, were living in Worcester, Massachusetts when Samuel Austin was born on January 9, 1798. Soon after Samuel's birth, his father took the pastorate of the Congregational Church of Peacham, Vermont. Here at the Peacham Academy, Samuel went to school under the tutelage of Jeremiah Evarts. Because the Peacham congregation was poor and his father's stipend was meager, Samuel walked the seventy-five miles to the University of Vermont in the Autumn of 1815. At that time the Reverend Samuel Austin, the uncle for whom Worcester had been named, was not only president of the University but was also the first corresponding secretary of the A.B.C.F.M. It was during his sophomore year of college that Worcester "experienced religion" and became professionally involved with the college. He graduated with honors in 1819, taught a year, and then entered the Theological Seminary at Andover. After graduation in 1823, while working in Boston, Worcester was convinced by Jeremiah Evarts, new corresponding secretary of the A.B.C.F.M. that a great challenge lay in missionary work among the Cherokee. After all, Worcester had excelled in

language study in college, and at that time the Cherokee language was thought to be more difficult than Chinese.<sup>4</sup>

The summer of 1825 marked the beginning of a new life for Worcester. On July 19, 1825, he married Ann Orr, daughter of John Orr of Bedford, New Hampshire. On August 25, Leonard Worcester preached the ordination sermon for his son's entrance into the missionary service of the A.B.C.F.M. Worcester and his new bride left immediately for the Cherokee Nation to begin their lives together as missionaries among the heathen.<sup>5</sup>

The Worcesters arrived at Brainerd Mission in October, 1825. Worcester began his tenure by giving an inaugural sermon. After the service, the Cherokee honored him with a name in their language. The first suggestion of "white" and "young corn" were rejected; after a good deal of discussion and consideration the group decided on the name A-tse-nu-sti, or messenger, because "he is wise; he has something to say."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Nevada Couch, Pages from Cherokee Indian History, as Identified with Samuel Austin Worcester, D.D., For 34 Years A Missionary of the A.B.C.F.M. Among the Cherokee (St. Louis, 1884), pp. 1-6. Nevada Couch, a female student at the Worcester Academy of Vinita, an Indian school of the American Home Missionary Society, presented this brief paper at commencement exercises on June 18, 1884. Even though undocumented, it contains interesting information about the life and work of Worcester, which has been used repeatedly by scholars interested in his work with the Cherokee. See Althea Bass, Cherokee Messenger (Norman, Oklahoma, 1936), and Carolyn Foreman, Park Hill (Muskogee, Oklahoma, 1948).

<sup>5</sup>Missionary Herald, XXI (September, 1825), 302.

<sup>6</sup>Bass, Cherokee Messenger, pp. 49-50; Couch, Cherokee Indian History, p. 6.

Worcester began his work at Brainerd by diligently studying the Cherokee language that he might be able to discuss difficult theological problems with the people in their own tongue.<sup>7</sup> He also made a trip to the Hawsis Mission in July, 1826, with hopes of organizing a formal church. Up to this time Hawsis had been the most primitive of outposts, only attempting to introduce the Cherokee of the area to Christianity and not to pressure them into formal acceptance of the faith. This area in less contact with the rest of the Nation, was more reluctant to accept outsiders and whites, even missionaries who were trying to help them.<sup>8</sup> Worcester was upset with the lack of formal organization at Hawsis, possibly because of his New England background. The weekend consisted of sermons by missionaries from other stations in the area, as well as dancing, music and talks by some of the Cherokee. The formal church was not established at this time, but by September there was a formal church set up at the rugged Hawsis mission.<sup>9</sup>

After less than a year with Worcester as head of the mission, the Board inspected the Brainerd school in August,

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<sup>7</sup>Missionary Herald, XXII (November, 1826), 353.

<sup>8</sup>Even after the school was established, problems resulted from a lack of trust between the Indians and the missionaries. Once Sophia Sawyer, teacher at Hawsis, was told by a student's mother that she would rather have her child in hell than in the teacher's class. Marion L. Starkey, The Cherokee Nation. (New York, 1946), p. 67.

<sup>9</sup>Missionary Herald, XXII (November, 1826), 353.

1826. The inspection consisted of the mission students either reciting memorized passages, reading from the Bible, or spelling difficult English words. The program which accompanied the recitations dismayed Worcester because the Cherokee loved to sing and dance, and this "animating scene," as Worcester put it, was somewhat surprising to the New Englander, to whom a religious celebration should be a dignified, reserved occasion, accompanied only by the singing of hymns. Nevertheless, the examination went well, and the impressive progress of the students brought many complimentary remarks.<sup>10</sup> Thus in his first year, Worcester could boast the organization of one church and a good showing in the examination of the Brainerd school. Obviously this was an excellent start for a freshman missionary.

Excitement in the missionary community as well as among the Cherokee began to increase in 1826 with the spread of the amazing syllabic alphabet of John Guess, better known by his Cherokee name, Sequoyah. Even though there are numerous accounts of his life and of his accomplishments, there is little precise information about the inventor of this remarkable linguistic achievement. The date of Sequoyah's birth and information about his parentage are uncertain. It is currently believed that he was born about 1775 in Tuskegee on the Tennessee River to a Cherokee woman and a white trader, Nathaniel Gist. A childhood illness left him lame in one leg,

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

and because of this physical handicap he became a skilled blacksmith and silver craftsman. Despite his physical condition, he volunteered to fight with Andrew Jackson in the Creek War of 1813. He was discharged shortly after the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, and in 1815 married Sally Benge, a Cherokee.

By 1809 Sequoyah became fascinated with the apparent superiority of white men because they could put ideas and words on paper so that others could understand the message without speaking. It was generally believed among the Cherokee that this was a skill resulting from the innate superiority of whites. Because of Sequoyah's talent as an artist, he began to try to capture ideas on paper by means of pictographic writing. However, this method involved thousands of picture representations, and Sequoyah decided to try breaking the words down into sounds which would be repeated in other words, and each sound would have a specific character to represent it. Initially there were about 200 characters, but the final perfected alphabet consisted of only eighty-six.

Before the alphabet spread from Sequoyah's home in the Arkansas Territory and was adopted by the Cherokee National Council in 1824, the Cherokee people generally scoffed at his idea. Some even regarded it as witchcraft; once tribesmen destroyed all of Sequoyah's work by setting fire to his

cabin in an attempt to stop the mysterious communication on paper by witchcraft.<sup>11</sup>

As early as February, 1826, the Missionary Herald reported that this new alphabet for the Cherokee seemed "likely to exert [sic] considerable influence on the national intelligence." Missionaries in the area already were saying that if the Bible could be translated into Cherokee, hundreds of adults who could not read anything, much less English, would be reading the Scriptures within a month.<sup>12</sup> In March of 1828, Jeremiah Evarts, secretary of the A.B.C.F.M. interviewed Guess through an interpreter since Guess did not speak English. When asked why he developed the alphabet, Guess responded that unless ideas were preserved on paper, they were forever lost to mankind, and that putting ideas and words on paper was like "catching a wild animal and taming it."<sup>13</sup>

Worcester explained the alphabet to the A.B.C.F.M. as being completely phonetic, consisting of eighty-six (later eighty-five) characters. The characters were based on the English alphabet with modifications of some letters and some

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<sup>11</sup>There are several biographies of Sequoyah, but all are confusing because of the lack of precise information: Grant Foreman, Sequoyah (Norman, 1938); Jack Kilpatrick, Sequoyah of Earth and Intellect (Austin, 1965); George E. Foster, Se-Quo-Yah, The American Cadmus and Modern Moses (Milford, New Hampshire, 1885). See also Albert V. Goodpasture, "The Paternity of Sequoyah, The Inventor of the Cherokee Alphabet," Chronicles of Oklahoma, I (October, 1921), 121-25. See Fig. 2, p. 98.

<sup>12</sup>Missionary Herald, XXII (February, 1826), 48.

<sup>13</sup>Interview of Jeremiah Evarts with George Guess, 1828, ibid., XXIV (April, 1828), 133-34.

completely new characters to allow for the difference between the twenty-six letters of the English alphabet and the eighty-six of the Cherokee. The greatest advantage and most amazing fact about this alphabet was that because of its completely phonetic nature, an adult Cherokee could be taught the entire system in only a few hours. Of course, this would be a rudimentary knowledge, but that person would then be able to sound out words, and proficiency would be only a matter of practice. Worcester concluded that "at least twenty, perhaps fifty times as many would read a book printed with Guyst' [sic] characters, as would read one printed with the English alphabet."<sup>14</sup>

However, the A.B.C.F.M. and the editorial staff of the Missionary Herald reserved their enthusiasm and gave several logical reasons why the Guess alphabet might not be the magical key to the civilized world for the Cherokee. First, they suggested the generally intelligent Cherokee might be cutting themselves off from educated society and the sympathy of other educated people by clinging to their strange alphabet rather than by learning English. There "are few out of their nation, who will be at the pain [sic] to become familiar with the characters and sounds of this alphabet," admonished the Board. Another consideration seemed to be the expense of matrices and type for printing an alphabet made

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<sup>14</sup>Worcester to Assistant Secretary of the Board, [n.d.], ibid., XXII (February, 1826), 48; ibid., XXIV (May, 1828), 162-63.



up of some English letters, modified English letters, and some completely new letters. Also, by learning this alphabet instead of the English alphabet the Cherokee would isolate themselves from the bulk of world knowledge. Special editions of all materials would have to be published at great expense. The Board seemed to feel this was unnecessary, especially in light of the work of another missionary of the A.B.C.F.M., John Pickering. Pickering, an orthographer from Boston stationed in the Sandwich Islands, had developed an alphabet for the Polynesian languages. These languages were similar to Cherokee in that each syllable ended in a vowel sound. The Board pointed out that this alphabet might take half as long to learn to read as would English. Pickering's system also used the English characters, thereby eliminating one of the Board's points of opposition to the new matrix.<sup>15</sup> However, it failed to explain the apparent contradiction of supporting one non-English alphabet (Pickering's), but yet refusing to support the superior Cherokee alphabet of Sequoyah.

Worcester agreed with the A.B.C.F.M. that the Sandwich Island alphabet of Pickering might take half as long to learn as English, but he still maintained that Cherokee children could learn to read their own language more quickly than they could learn the Pickering alphabet because Sequoyah's alphabet

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 48-49.

was simpler. Worcester made his point even stronger by saying that "if books are printed in Guess's characters, they will be read; if in any other, they will lie useless." The Cherokee rightly believed that their alphabet was superior to any other and were proud of the accomplishment of one of their own, Sequoyah. With their interest and enthusiasm aroused, it would be a crushing blow and it would probably be impossible to convince them of accepting any other form of writing.

Tell them now of printing in another character, and you throw water upon the fire, which you are wishing to kindle. . . . Print a book in Guess's [alphabet], and hundreds. . . can read it the moment it is given them. . . ,

said Worcester.<sup>16</sup> The Cherokee's missionary-linguist sensed the feeling of national pride in this alphabet coupled with general enthusiasm, a combination which could not be surpassed.

Although the Board was hesitating and had not committed themselves in any way to the projects Worcester had suggested, the Cherokee Council met July 26, 1827, and authorized the establishment of a "national" press. They allotted funds to purchase a press and have the matrices made for the Guess alphabet. Also at this meeting the Cherokee took a step which marked their advance and progress as a civilized nation; they adopted a constitution based on the United States

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<sup>16</sup>Worcester to Board [n.d.], ibid., XXIII (July, 1827), 212-13.

Constitution, with a national bicameral council, a judiciary, and a nationally-elected principal chief.<sup>17</sup>

Once the Cherokee had appropriated the funds, the A.B.C.F.M. directors resigned themselves to the reality that the Cherokee were going to have their language, regardless of what reasoning the Board might use against the project. In fact, the Board began to cooperate by acting as agent for the Indians in the purchase of an iron press and other furnishings necessary to establish a printing office. Worcester, whose father had been a printer before entering the ministry, was the logical person to help establish the press. Samuel Worcester went to Boston to supervise the purchase of the press and the making of the first matrices in the Cherokee alphabet.<sup>18</sup>

The Cherokee Council also provided for the hiring of an editor and a printer for the paper. Elias Boudinot, a Cherokee educated at the Foreign Mission School, Cornwall, Connecticut, and who later studied briefly at Andover Theological Seminary, accepted the appointment of editor at a salary of \$300 a year.<sup>19</sup> Worcester first met him at the Boudinot family home at Hightower, Georgia, where Worcester

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., XXIV (June, 1828), 193-94.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., XXIII (December, 1827), 382. This issue of the Missionary Herald contained the first five verses of Genesis printed in the Cherokee alphabet, the first printing of the tribal language.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

spent almost two weeks. On returning from his visit, he wrote his old teacher and friend, Jeremiah Evarts, that he had "more confidence in Boudinot as a translator than in any other. . . . His appearance is that of one sincerely pious."<sup>20</sup> This was the beginning of not only a working partnership but also of a close personal, and intellectual friendship between the two men.

The paper had two printers, Isaac N. Harris of Sequochee Valley, Tennessee, and John F. Wheeler, a Cherokee, from Huntsville, Alabama. On December 23, 1827, they arrived at New Echota,<sup>21</sup> the capital of the Cherokee Nation and the future site of the newspaper. Until the press arrived, both men spent their time learning the Cherokee alphabet and fitting the office for the peculiar needs of an eighty-six character alphabet. It was hoped that printing could begin by January 1, 1828, but the press failed to arrive until late

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<sup>20</sup>Worcester to Jeremiah Evarts, January 8, 1827, in Ralph H. Gabriel, Elias Boudinot: Cherokee and His America (Norman, Oklahoma, 1941), pp. 99-100.

<sup>21</sup>Echota was the name of a city of refuge for the Cherokee. According to legend, if a man killed anyone (either intentionally or by accident), he could flee to Echota where he would be safe from any avenger. The only qualification for this sanctuary was that the man must go out from the city and fight in the next battle. If he killed an enemy or took a prisoner, he could leave Echota without fear of revenge, for if an avenger killed a man who had proven himself in Echota, the avenger would be killed by order of the chiefs of Echota. If, however, the man seeking refuge failed in battle, he had to stay in the city until he succeeded or was killed in battle. The Cherokee took the name New Echota for their capital to symbolize a place of refuge. Missionary Herald, XXV (June, 1829), 197-98.

that month. By almost super-human efforts on the part of the printers, Boudinot, and Worcester, the first issue of the Cherokee Phoenix appeared on February 21, 1828.<sup>22</sup>

Boudinot declared the objectives of the Phoenix to include the publishing of laws and documents of the Cherokee Nation and providing an account of the "manners and customs of the Cherokee." The paper would also record accounts of their progress in educational and religious matters, as well as information about other tribes. It would report the news of the day and publish miscellaneous religious articles, literature, and anything else that might be of interest to the Cherokee. The editor stressed that the paper was not a profit-making venture and that donations would be welcomed.

We would now commit our feeble efforts to the good will and indulgence of the public, praying that God will attend them with his blessings, and hoping for that happy period when all the Indian tribes of America shall rise, Phoenix like, from their ashes, and when the terms, "Indian depredation," "war whoop," "scalping knife," and the like, shall become obsolete, and forever be "buried deep under ground."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>James Constantine Pilling, Bibliography of the Iroquoian Languages (Washington, 1888), pp. 40-42.

<sup>23</sup>Henry Thompson Malone, Cherokees of The Old South: A People in Transition (Athens, Georgia, 1956), pp. 158-59 citing New Echota (Ga.), Cherokee Phoenix, February 21, 1828. The file of the Phoenix examined did not include several issues and these are quoted from other sources. The paper was bilingual, but not everything was published in both English and Cherokee. The name of the paper changed to Cherokee Phoenix and Indian's Advocate on February 11, 1829, but the paper is generally referred to as the Cherokee Phoenix. See Fig. 3, p. 99 .

Other newspapers throughout the country welcomed the Phoenix as a brave attempt of the Cherokee to preserve their national identity, or as the Fayetteville, Kentucky, Village Messenger declared, "to preserve the small remnant of a once powerful tribe from total extinction."<sup>24</sup> Niles Register said that it was time that the Indian tribes became part of the nation (United States) in order to prove "to posterity that extermination was not the desire of the generation in which Washington lived and Jefferson flourished, however much it has resulted from the march of the white population, and perhaps, generally must."<sup>25</sup> Other newspapers frequently reprinted articles from the Phoenix and praised it for its excellent quality in both content and printing.

As soon as publication of the Phoenix was under way, Worcester returned the major part of his attention to the translation of religious works, temperance tracts, textbooks, and literature into Cherokee. Boudinot assisted him as a native translator. Since the office of the Phoenix was in New Echota, about fifty miles from Brainerd, Worcester moved to New Echota to be closer to his work. Thus his activities as teacher and missionary were modified to provide additional time for translating. However, he would occasionally visit

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<sup>24</sup>Fayetteville (Ky.), The Village Messenger, April 11, 1828. See Appendix A for discussion of Cherokee population.

<sup>25</sup>Baltimore Niles Weekly Register, November 24, 1827.

other missions such as Candy's Creek to inspect either the facilities or to preach.<sup>26</sup>

In its annual summation of the location of the A.B.C.F.M.'s missionaries and their activities, the Missionary Herald merely reported that in 1829 Worcester was at New Echota preparing books, scriptures and studying the Cherokee language. And indeed he was, for in that year, with the aid of Boudinot, the New Echota press published 800 copies of a fifty-two page song book, Cherokee Hymns. The press also printed 1,000 copies of the Gospel of Matthew after Worcester completed the translation.<sup>27</sup> These books were of course sold to those who could afford them, but more often Worcester distributed them without charge throughout the Nation. The Baptist mission at Valley Town received 200 copies of the Gospel of Matthew in this way.<sup>28</sup>

The publication of books and the Cherokee Phoenix were really surface indications of the progress made by the Cherokee. Within five years from 1823 to 1828 the literacy rate among Cherokee was about equivalent to the literacy rate among whites in the United States.<sup>29</sup> In some areas the rate

<sup>26</sup>Missionary Herald, XXV (August, 1829), 253.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., (November, 1829), p. 365.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., (December, 1829), p. 373.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., XXIV (October, 1828), 331. The 1840 census was the first to include data on literacy. At that time 78 per cent of American whites were literate. U. S. Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957 (Washington, 1960), p. 206.

was almost 100 per cent.<sup>30</sup> These achievements would have been tragically slow if it had not been for the dedicated work in translation and publication by Worcester. He courageously disagreed with the A.B.C.F.M. and fought for the language the Cherokee held so dear.

Worcester's sponsor, the A.B.C.F.M., stated on its twentieth anniversary in 1820 that partly because of its aid, the Cherokee had progressed to the point where not only were they a literate people but also a nation of farmers, operating under a democratic state based on the pattern of the United States. A total of 233 Cherokee had joined the A.B.C.F.M. churches in the twenty year period, and only twenty-three of that number had been excommunicated. About 180 students attended the mission schools at eight outposts. Over 50,400 pages of religious and school books came from the Cherokee press at New Echota, partly as a result of the aid of the A.B.C.F.M., but mostly because of the work of Worcester and the Cherokee themselves. All this work was done by only five missionaries and twenty-eight assistants together with their respective families, along with the Cherokee who belonged to the churches and students at the schools.<sup>31</sup>

However, the A.B.C.F.M.'s and Worcester's greatest test would come when the Georgia government actively challenged not only the right of the missionaries to be in Georgia but also the right of the Cherokee to retain their ancestral homes.

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., XXV (January, 1829), 10.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., XXVII (January, 1831), 1-10.



## CHAPTER III

### WORCESTER V. THE STATE OF GEORGIA

By 1829 the Cherokee were progressing rapidly toward what whites called "civilization." They had a written language, a national publication, schools, a written constitution based on the United States Constitution, and a rapidly growing Christian community. They were also becoming a rich nation because of the gold discovered on their land. However, it was this gold that led to the downfall of the Cherokee Nation in the East.

Georgia assumed a defensive posture on Indian affairs by maintaining a policy of "let us alone." They regarded individual citizens, public officials and missionaries to the Indians as "prying, querulous, meddling individuals . . . .Knights errant of the true quixotic stamp, who will rest [sic] life and limb, political and domestic harmony and happiness, for the love of broil and adventure." Resistance by the Indians to Georgia's policy was explained as the influence of "a few interested half-breeds" who might benefit by remaining while the rest of the Indians "would gladly remove to the West."<sup>1</sup> However, it was the discovery of gold on Ward's Creek near Dahlonega which gave the state the most

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<sup>1</sup>Athens (Ga.), The Athenian, August 11, 1829.

vital reason to try and press for removal of the Cherokee from the gold rich lands of northern Georgia.<sup>2</sup> By late 1829 the gold fields were reported to be richer than thought possible.<sup>3</sup>

On December 19, 1829, the Georgia legislature passed a law providing that as of June 30, 1830, all the Cherokee lands in Carrol, Dekalb, Gwinnett, Hall and Habersham counties and the Cherokee people themselves would be under the jurisdiction of Georgia. All Cherokee "laws, ordinances, orders and regulations of any kind. . . would be null and void and of no effect." The law also declared that it was unlawful for any one to counsel the Indians or to try to persuade them not to remove west of the Mississippi River. Finally the statute stated that no Cherokee could be a "competent witness in any court of the state to which a white person may be a party."<sup>4</sup> To ensure Georgia's control over the Cherokee lands, Governor George A. Gilmer issued a proclamation in June, 1820, providing that all gold discovered in the state either on Cherokee lands or other unoccupied

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<sup>2</sup>James Mooney, Myths of the Cherokee, 9th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology (Washington, 1883-84), pp. 241-42.

<sup>3</sup>The Athenian, November 3, 1829.

<sup>4</sup>Laws of the Colonial and State Governments, Relation to Indians and Indian Affairs from 1633 to 1831, inclusive: with an Appendix Containing the Proceedings of the Congress of the Confederation and the Laws of Congress From 1800 to 1830, on the Same Subject (Washington, 1832), pp. 198-202. Hereinafter cited as Laws of the States; Augusta (Ga.) Chronicle and Advertiser, December 20, 24, 1829.

lands was the property of the state. In addition, this proclamation provided for distribution of Cherokee lands by public lottery.<sup>5</sup> This series of oppressive laws stripped the Cherokee of their lands, their wealth, and their right to rule themselves as an independent political entity. They were, in fact, deprived of their rights to property and political existence.

Georgia felt secure in its actions since Secretary of War John H. Eaton, answering a letter from the New York Convention for the Emigration of the Indians, wrote, "Georgia . . . may legally and rightfully govern and control throughout her own limits." He expressed the Jackson Administration's attitude that removal was not only a liberal plan, but it was also humane.<sup>6</sup>

President Andrew Jackson gave executive sanction to Georgia's policy, when on December 6, 1829, he delivered a message to Congress proposing removal of Indians in occupied areas to land beyond the state boundaries of the United States. This would "end. . . all possible danger of collision between the authorities of the general and state governments on account of the Indians. It will place a dense and civilized population in large tracts of country now occupied by a few savage hunters." The United States government now proposed to buy all Indian lands in the eastern states, to

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 202-18.

<sup>6</sup>Chronicle and Advertiser, September 16, 1829.

give equivalent lands beyond the area of the states, and to pay for all expenses of removal and the expenses for one year after removal, in order to provide time for settlement in the new areas.<sup>7</sup>

This proposal seemed just to Jackson and to those who demanded removal of the Indians. However, there were those who opposed the policy in Congress as well as throughout the nation. Congressional opposition was epitomized by Horace Everett's speech of May 19, 1830 in the House of Representatives. He said the removal bill was objectionable because it used force, "legislative force, moral force, duress, the untiring power of civilized man pushing his uncivilized neighbor farther and farther into the woods." He compared forcing the Indians from their homes to the ejection of the French Huguenots and the English Puritans, except those groups left because of religious pressures and not because physical force was used. Finally, he appealed to the moral sense of Georgians, saying that a policy of forced removal was designed to crush the Indians, to force them to live under laws

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<sup>7</sup>Richardson, editor, Messages and Papers of the Presidents, II, 500-29. See also F. P. Prucha, "Andrew Jackson's Indian Policy: A Reassessment," The Journal of American History, LVI (December, 1969), 527-39. This article attempts to defend Jackson as a humanitarian on the basis of a few personal kindnesses toward Indians. On this basis the author arrived at the conclusion that Jackson's policy toward the Indians was humane and deserved reconsideration by others that "less-than-disinterested missionaries." Prucha fails to confront the results of Jackson's policy or to justify them as humane. His conclusion that critics "have certainly been too harsh, if not, indeed, quite wrong" is neither logically defended nor reasonably attained.

which were intolerable. "The evil, Sir, is enormous; the violence is extreme; the breach of public faith deplorable; the inevitable suffering incalculable."<sup>8</sup>

Groups of interested citizens met all over the country. In Boston a convention was held to discuss the "Rights of the Indians."<sup>9</sup> Hundreds of pages of memorials protesting removal were submitted to Congress.<sup>10</sup> Newspapers in areas which might eventually be affected by this proposal were indignant that the federal government would support such an inhumane policy. The Louisville Daily Journal reported that Jackson had said his policy was no different from that of his predecessors, Madison, Monroe, and Adams, that being, to negotiate with the Indians for sale of their lands and then to remove them peacefully. To the Journal, however, Jackson appeared to advocate a policy of forced removal. "His policy . . . is no more like that of his predecessors, than the design of the gaunt wolf, who attacks the timorous flock, are like those of the honest shepherd who guards and protects them."<sup>11</sup> In Mississippi The Natchez feared a day of

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<sup>8</sup>Register of Debates, 21st Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 1058-79.

<sup>9</sup>Samuel C. Adams, Rights of the Indians (Boston, 1830), pp. 1-16.

<sup>10</sup>Register of Debates, 21st Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 993-1133; [Jeremiah Evarts], Essays on the Present Crisis in the Condition of the American Indians; First published in the National Intelligencer, under the signature of William Penn (Boston, 1829).

<sup>11</sup>Louisville Daily Journal, December 24, 1830.

retribution might come in which the whites would be treated with "the despotism which the present has exercised over the hapless and helpless Indians."<sup>12</sup> However, a basic objection to Jackson's policy appeared in the Kentucky Reporter.

To the removal of the Indians with their free consent, and at a cost not unnecessarily great, no one objects. It is not therefore the fact, but the manner of removal that is objectionable. It is to a removal to be effected by a total abandonment of all the laws which have hitherto regulated our Indian relations, that the people are opposed.<sup>13</sup>

The Louisville Daily Journal went so far as to call Jackson a "blockhead" for thinking the Indians would leave their lands voluntarily. "The point is this removal is forced. Americans [United States citizens] would fight if they were forced to leave their lands."<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, Jackson's policy had the support of the office of the president and the backing of those who would be favorably affected by removal. As a letter from "A Patriot" to the editor of The Natchez declared, there was no need to cry about humanity, which "is a good thing in itself, but not of much account when mere Indians are concerned."<sup>15</sup>

Despite public outcries, Congress passed the Act for the Removal of the Indians in May, 1830.<sup>16</sup> Jackson still refused

<sup>12</sup>Natchez (Miss.), The Natchez, February 13, 1830.

<sup>13</sup>Franklin (Ky.), Kentucky Reporter, July 7, 1830.

<sup>14</sup>Louisville Daily Journal, December 24, 1830.

<sup>15</sup>The Natchez, February 13, 1830.

<sup>16</sup>U. S. Statutes at Large, IV, 411 (1830).

to do anything to help them or to change his policy.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, they were forced "to take the best legal advice and carry their cause before the Supreme Court of the United States, where they would have justice done them."<sup>18</sup> William Wirt, Attorney General in the James Monroe and John Quincy Adams administrations (1817-29) and prosecutor at the trial of Aaron Burr, acted as counsel for the Cherokee Nation.<sup>19</sup> Basically the case was an attempt to get the Supreme Court to rule that the Cherokee Nation constituted a foreign nation. Wirt first petitioned the Court for a writ of error in the case of George (Corn) Tassel, a Cherokee convicted of murder. The writ was issued despite Georgia's refusal to send a defense representative. Nevertheless, Georgia officials executed Tassel.<sup>20</sup>

Wirt then filed the case of The Cherokee Nation v. The State of Georgia in which he again argued that Georgia did not have authority over the Cherokee lands or people because they were a foreign nation. On March 5, 1831, Chief Justice John Marshall ruled on the case by saying that if "courts were permitted to indulge their sympathies, a case better

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<sup>17</sup>Richardson, editor, Messages and Papers of the Presidents, II, 536-41.

<sup>18</sup>Kentucky Reporter, January 27, 1830.

<sup>19</sup>Thomas P. Abernathy, "William Wirt," Dictionary of American Biography, XX, 418-21.

<sup>20</sup>The Cherokee Nation v. The State of Georgia, 30 U. S., 1 (1831).

calculated to excite them can scarcely be imagined." However, he refused to hear the case on the grounds that the Cherokee Nation was not a foreign state as defined in Article III, Section 2 of the Constitution, and therefore he dismissed the case for lack of jurisdiction. Marshall suggested in his ruling of the court that another case be prepared.<sup>21</sup> This new case was Worcester v. The State of Georgia.

Governor Gilmer and the state of Georgia were not idle during this controversy. On December 22, 1830, the Georgia legislature passed a bill providing that as of March 1, 1831, no white man would be allowed to live among the Cherokee without first taking an oath stating, "I. . . do solemnly swear. . . that I will support and defend the constitution, and laws of the state of Georgia, and uprightly demean myself as a citizen thereof. So help me God." In addition, white residents on Cherokee lands would have to obtain a permit from the governor for permission to live with the Indians.<sup>22</sup> This law was obviously directed toward the missionaries who lived with the Indians, since most of them were non-residents (Worcester was originally from Vermont) and thereby could not swear allegiance as Georgia citizens. In addition, they were quasi-officials of the federal government because the missions were partially supported from federal funds. This put their status in question and could prevent the oath from applying

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid.      <sup>22</sup>Laws of the States, pp. 220-23.



to them. However, these were not the primary reasons for the missionaries' refusal to take the oath.

Three days after passage of this legislation the missionaries in the affected area met at Chatooga Camp Ground and adopted a resolution which stated that they felt the Indian question was not only a political but a moral problem. They declared that removal of the Indians would be harmful because it would hinder their development as a civilized people. While denying charges of influencing the Indians' decision not to remove, they declared they "would not be understood to affirm that we have always studiously avoided the expression of our opinion." The extension of Georgia laws over the Cherokee would be an "irreparable injury" and a "flagrant violation of their national and conventional rights." Worcester was among the signers of this resolution.<sup>23</sup>

Publication of this pronouncement seemed to confirm the suspicions of Georgia officials that Worcester was the real editor of the Cherokee Phoenix and that Elias Boudinot, the alleged editor and publisher, was merely a figurehead. Worcester denied this in the July 30, 1832, edition of the Phoenix with a statement that he had "never written for the Phoenix, on any subject connected with the political concerns of the Cherokee." Boudinot concurred.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Missionary Herald, XXVII (March, 1831), 80-84.

<sup>24</sup>Cherokee Phoenix, July 30, 1831.

Worcester and the other missionaries had the complete support and financial backing of the A.B.C.F.M. The Board editorialized in the May, 1831, issue of the Missionary Herald that the missionaries could not leave their posts in compliance with Georgia law because these laws were a violation of the civil rights of the Cherokee. They were under no obligation as citizens or Christians to submit to such unjust laws. If they did submit, the Board felt that Indians would lose confidence in the missionaries and would be discouraged in the pursuance of their rights. Since the missionaries were sent into the Cherokee Nation with the approval and protection of the United States government, they were obliged to pursue their duty until the laws could be tested before the Supreme Court.<sup>25</sup>

The first confrontation and subsequent arrests came on March 12, 1831, when Isaac Proctor, a teacher at the Carmell Mission, was arrested by Colonel Charles H. Nelson and twenty-five men of the Georgia Guard (a military group created by the state legislature expressly to prevent Indians from digging gold on their own land)<sup>26</sup> for not having a permit from the governor. By the next day the Guard had covered the forty miles to New Echota where they arrested Worcester, John Wheeler (The Phoenix's printer), and one Gann, an unidentified

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<sup>25</sup>Missionary Herald, XXVII (May, 1831), 165-66.

<sup>26</sup>Laws of the States, pp. 222-23; Cherokee Phoenix, March 5, 1831.

white man living at the mission, for not possessing permits. The following day John Thompson, missionary at Hightower Mission, was also arrested. Worcester, Thompson, Wheeler and Gann were taken to Lawrenceville, Georgia, where the Gwinnett County Court was in session. Judge Augustin Smith Clayton granted a writ of habeas corpus on the grounds that the law of the state was unconstitutional. Since Worcester was the postmaster at New Echota as well as a missionary, Clayton ruled that the law did not apply to government agents. He considered the other prisoners to be quasi-government officials because of the federal funds expended at the mission. All the prisoners were released.<sup>27</sup>

Governor Gilmer was displeased with the decision of Judge Clayton. In order to determine the exact status of the missionaries, Gilmer wrote Secretary of War John H. Eaton on April 26, 1831. Eaton replied that the missionaries of the A.B.C.F.M. were not government officials. He advised Gilmer that anyone opposing the Jacksonian policy of removal should be expelled from the Indian lands.<sup>28</sup> In addition, because of the influence of Gilmer's letter to Eaton, Postmaster General William T. Barry dismissed Worcester from his

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<sup>27</sup>The Athenian, April 5, 1831; Missionary Herald, XXVII (May, 1831), 166.

<sup>28</sup>Senate Executive Document No. 512, II, 23rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1834-1835, 281-282.

position as postmaster of New Echota.<sup>29</sup> The two legal points on which Judge Clayton had ruled in favor of Worcester were removed; Worcester could no longer claim legal immunity to the law.

Gilmer informed Worcester on May 16 of Eaton's position and advised the missionary to leave or be arrested.<sup>30</sup> In reply Worcester accused Gilmer of being responsible for his loss of the postmastership. Worcester admitted his desire to prevent the removal of the Indians but asserted that it was his responsibility to test the jurisdiction of Georgia over the Indians by violating the law. He told the governor that he refused to take the oath of allegiance to Georgia because this action would produce a loss of trust and effectiveness in his relations with the Cherokee. In conclusion he stated that if he were correct that Georgia had no rightful jurisdiction over the Cherokee, then there was "no moral obligation to remove, in compliance with her enactment."<sup>31</sup>

On Friday, July 8, Colonel Nelson again arrested Worcester along with several other missionaries. This time the Guard was more cruel. A Cherokee named Proctor, arrested for digging gold, was chained by the neck to the back of a

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<sup>29</sup>Cherokee Phoenix, May 28, 1831; The Athenian, January 14, 1831, quoting Augusta Chronicle and Advertiser, n.d. This writer examined a file of The Augusta Chronicle, but there were no papers included for several months in which this article might have appeared.

<sup>30</sup>Gilmer to Worcester, May 16, 1831, Missionary Herald, XXVII (August, 1831), 248-49.

<sup>31</sup>Worcester to Gilmer, June 10, 1831, ibid., pp. 250-51.

wagon after an abortive escape attempt. Members of the Guard taunted the missionaries with obscenities and inflammatory remarks and a Sergeant Brook said, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The soldiers chained Elizur Butler by the neck to a horse. It was pointed out to the soldier riding the horse that Butler could easily be dragged. The Guard allowed both men to ride the horse until it stumbled and fell on both of them. Butler was injured slightly, and the soldier received several broken ribs. The only abuse Worcester received, besides the many miles of forced march, was verbal. On Sunday the prisoners arrived at Camp Gilmer. As Sergeant Brook imprisoned them he said, "there is where all enemies of Georgia have to land--there and in hell." The jail was dirty, dark, and had an unpleasant odor. The prisoners enlarged an already existing hole in the wall to get fresh air. However, Worcester reported they had enough food and water and were in good health. "Though not at liberty, we dwell in peace, and with peace of conscience we are contented."<sup>32</sup>

The next Saturday evening, Worcester requested of Colonel Nelson permission to hold Sunday worship services. Nelson replied:

We view the within request as an impertinent one. If your conduct be evidence of your character and the doctrines you wish to promulgate we are sufficiently enlightened as to both. Our object is to restrain, not to facilitate their promulgation.

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<sup>32</sup>Worcester to Board, July 11, 1831, ibid., (September, 1831), pp. 299-302.

If your object be true piety you can enjoy it where you are. Were we hearers we would not be benefited, devoid as we are of confidence in your honesty.<sup>33</sup>

A preliminary hearing was held in Lawrenceville on July 23, 1831. Entered as evidence against Worcester were the letters from Secretary of War Eaton to Governor Gilmer, Worcester and Butler's reply to Gilmer's letter advising them to leave the Indian territory, and a letter from the governor to Colonel John W. A. Sanford (commander at Fort Gilmer) instructing him to arrest Worcester again if he should be released on bond. The decision of the court was to bind the defendants over for trial. Worcester posted bond and returned to New Echota.<sup>34</sup>

Elisha W. Chester, counsel for Worcester, wrote to Colonel Sanford suggesting that he not rearrest Worcester because of the illness of his wife following childbirth.<sup>35</sup> Sanford refused, saying that if Worcester were more interested in the health of his wife he would not defy the laws of the state.<sup>36</sup> In reply to Sanford, Worcester wrote, "I believed that I ought not to yield my right of residence until it could be fairly tested before judicial tribunals."<sup>37</sup>

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 299-302.

<sup>35</sup>Chester to Sanford, July 25, 1831, ibid., (October, 1831), p. 332.

<sup>36</sup>Sanford to Chester, July 26, 1831, ibid., pp. 332-33.

<sup>37</sup>Worcester to Sanford, August 4, 1831, ibid., p. 333.

On Sunday, August 14, 1831, Worcester's infant daughter died, and his wife remained ill. The following Wednesday evening a major of the Georgia Guard came to the mission in disguise and warned Worcester of plans to arrest him the next night. Before the major could leave other members of the Guard appeared, arrested Worcester, and took him to Colonel Nelson. At first, Nelson would not listen to Worcester's pleas to be allowed to return to his wife, but finally Nelson released him.<sup>38</sup>

However, this freedom proved of short duration. Worcester appeared for trial at Lawrenceville on September 16 along with Elizur Butler and ten other codefendants. The trial began early Thursday morning with Judge Clayton again presiding. Argument continued until midnight when the jury retired. Twenty minutes later they brought back a verdict of guilty. The court recessed until Saturday morning when Judge Clayton would pronounce sentence. When the court convened Worcester was allowed to make a statement proclaiming his innocence on the grounds that neither the court nor the state had jurisdiction over Cherokee lands and thereby no right to try him. Clayton did not agree and expressed the opinion that those who would violate the laws of Georgia, the good will of the governor, and who would bring "anarchy and confusion" onto the state, were guilty. He quoted passages from the Bible as grounds for his decision that

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<sup>38</sup>Catherine Fuller to Board, August 18, 1831, ibid., pp. 333-34.

Worcester and the other eleven defendants should be sentenced to four years at hard labor in the state penitentiary at Milledgeville, then the state capital.<sup>39</sup> Worcester felt that the harshness of the court resulted from gubernatorial pressures on the judge.<sup>40</sup>

The Missionary Herald soon reported that upon the missionaries' arrival at the Milledgeville Penitentiary, Governor Gilmer offered each of the twelve prisoners a pardon if he would agree to take the oath to uphold the actions of the state of Georgia in relation to the Cherokee and to leave his missionary post. Ten of the prisoners accepted pardons while only Worcester and Butler refused to compromise their rights and principles. The Herald continued to support the cause of the missionaries by stating the opinion of the Board that it was not the duty of a Christian missionary to submit to every law of the state, even if it were unjust; however, it was the responsibility and the wish of Worcester and Butler to bring the case of the Cherokee to the Supreme Court. The Board retained counsel for the appeal and prepared a writ of error to be presented to the Supreme Court early in 1832.<sup>41</sup>

Worcester's reports to the Board from prison were relatively cheerful. In general he reported receiving good

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<sup>39</sup>Cherokee Phoenix, October 7, 1831; The Athenian, September 20, 1831.

<sup>40</sup>Worcester to Board, September 16, 1831, Missionary Herald, XXVII (November, 1831), 363.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., pp. 364-65; see also The Athenian, November 15, 1831; Milledgeville (Ga.), Federal Union, November 10, 1831.



treatment, sufficient food, and adequate clothing. He encountered some verbal abuse by the guards, but more often the treatment was considerate. Worcester worked as a shop mechanic, and Butler turned a lathe wheel in the prison workshop.<sup>42</sup> Certainly the greatest joy in their lives at this time came with permission to minister to the spiritual needs of other inmates. Since they were housed separately, more prisoners could hear their sermons. Each Sunday about sixty to eighty prisoners attended services while a smaller number attended daily prayer meetings.<sup>43</sup>

Nationwide public support for the cause encouraged Worcester and Butler. The Board and many churches proclaimed days of prayer for them.<sup>44</sup> In a letter dated November 27, 1831, Worcester expressed his delight at the days of prayer. "It affects us deeply that we are made the subject of so many fervent prayers."<sup>45</sup>

Despite the prison environment, Worcester's spirit and faith remained high. He considered the cause of the Cherokee and his own rights beyond private consideration. These were matters of the utmost importance. He was convinced that he had "pursued a righteous course, in defense of a righteous cause."<sup>46</sup>

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., (December, 1831), 396.

<sup>43</sup>Worcester to Journal of Humanity, October 6, 1831, ibid., p. 395.

<sup>44</sup>Missionary Herald, XXVII (December, 1831), 396.

<sup>45</sup>Worcester to Board, November 27, 1831, Missionary Herald, XXVIII (January, 1832), 20.

<sup>46</sup>Worcester to Board, November 16, 1831, ibid.

William Reed, Chairman of the Prudential Committee, the governing body of the A.B.C.F.M., still supported Worcester. On November 3, 1831, he presented a memorial to President Jackson in which he defended the case for the Cherokee, their rights, their civil liberties, and their land. In addition he requested presidential action to secure the release of Worcester and Butler. Reed maintained that the missionaries were in Cherokee territory with the consent and protection of the United States government. He cited the Treaty of Hopewell, 1785, and the Treaty of Holston, 1791, in which the Cherokee were promised protection from encroaching whites.<sup>47</sup> These treaties also provided that only the United States government would have the authority to regulate trade and intercourse with the Indians. The Treaty of 1802 to Regulate Trade, sections fourteen through seventeen, gave jurisdiction to federal courts in disputes between Indians and United States citizens.<sup>48</sup> Thus Georgia had no claim to jurisdiction over the missionaries or the Cherokee. Reed asked that Jackson protect the missionaries and Indians by enforcing existing treaties.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>U. S. Statutes at Large, VII, 18 (1785); ibid., p. 39 (1791).

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 139 (1802).

<sup>49</sup>Senate Executive Document No. 512, II, 641-646.

Jackson replied to Reed's memorial through Secretary of War Lewis Cass. The President said that he had no jurisdiction to interfere within the states because the states had the right to enforce their laws anywhere within their boundaries, even if these state statutes might be in opposition to federal laws and treaties.<sup>50</sup> Thus Jackson not only openly stated his refusal to help the Indians and the missionaries but also expressed his states' rights attitudes.

The only remaining alternative was appeal to the Supreme Court. From February 20 through February 23, 1832, William Wirt and John Sergeant argued the case of Worcester v. The State of Georgia before the Court. Georgia again did not send attorneys to defend her interests. The argument of the missionaries' attorneys was along the lines of Reed's memorial to the President. On March 2, after approximately a week of deliberation, Chief Justice John Marshall returned the majority decision in favor of Worcester.<sup>51</sup>

Marshall's attitude toward the Cherokee was somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand he regarded the Indians as a "cruel and dangerous enemy whose cruel system of warfare seemed to justify every endeavor to remove them."<sup>52</sup> Yet

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<sup>50</sup>Cass to Reed, November 14, 1831, cited in Robert Sparks Walker, Torchlights to the Cherokee (New York, 1931), p. 117.

<sup>51</sup>Missionary Herald, XXVIII (April, 1832), 129-30.

<sup>52</sup>Marshall to Story, October 29, 1829, cited in Albert J. Beveridge, The Life of John Marshall (Boston, 1919), IV, 542.

he also disapproved of administration policy to the Indians and felt that "humanity must bewail the course which is pursued."<sup>53</sup> Obviously in the decision that Marshall handed down in Worcester v. The State of Georgia, his anti-administration sentiments won out over his fear of a "cruel and dangerous enemy."

The basic question of the case was whether Georgia actually had lawful authority to extend the jurisdiction of its statutes within the territory of the Cherokee Nation. If such a right existed, then Worcester was in violation of the Georgia statute of 1830 prohibiting whites from living among the Cherokee without a permit from the governor of the state. This question of jurisdiction would also decide if Georgia had authority to seize Cherokee lands and distribute them by lottery. Finally the case would decide the legal status of the Cherokee as a viable nation. This was also the question in The Cherokee Nation v. The State of Georgia (1831) in which Marshall had ruled that the Cherokee Nation was not a foreign nation as defined by the Consitution.

In his 1832 ruling Marshall said that as a result of the Treaty of Hopewell the Cherokee Nation was a distinct political entity since this treaty guaranteed the Cherokee free trade. Loss of this trade would result in "a surrender of self-government. . . a perversion of their necessary meanings,

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<sup>53</sup>Marshall to Carr, [n.d.], 1830, ibid.

and a departure from the construction which has been uniformly put on them." Such a restriction would annihilate "the political existence" of the Cherokee. As a result of the Treaty of Holston, 1791, and the Treaty of 1802 to Regulate Trade, the Indians should be recognized as "distinct political communities, having territorial boundaries, within which their authority is exclusive, and having a right to all the land within those boundaries which is not only acknowledged, but guaranteed by the United States." In addition, these treaties provided that the Indian territory was "completely separated from that of the States; and provided that all intercourse with them shall be carried on exclusively by the government of the Union." Marshall stated that a weaker governing unit did not lose its right to sovereignty when it is associated with a stronger nation for protection.

The Cherokee nation. . . is a distinct community, occupying its own territory, with boundaries accurately described, in which the laws of Georgia can have no force, and which the citizens of Georgia have no right to enter, but with the assent of the Cherokee themselves, or in conformity with treaties and with the acts of Congress. The whole intercourse between the United States and this nation is by our constitution and laws, vested in the government of the United States.

The Act of the State of Georgia, under which the plaintiff in error was prosecuted, is consequently void, and the judgements [sic] a nullity.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Worcester v. The State of Georgia, 31 U. S., 215-244 (1832).

This decision in effect ruled against Jackson's policy of Indian removal to the West as well as against Georgia's attempts to extend her authority over Cherokee lands. Jackson believed Marshall had issued the decision to "embarrass" him.<sup>55</sup> The President rationalized that even if he wished to and could raise the necessary troops to enforce the decision of the Supreme Court, the nation could not survive the conflict. He wrote that the "decision of the Supreme Court has fell still born."<sup>56</sup>

Of course the Court's decision met with great enthusiasm among the Cherokee. Boudinot was optimistic about the eventual outcome, unjustifiably so. "The question is forever settled as to who is right and who is wrong. . . . It is not now before the great state of Georgia and the poor Cherokee, but between the U. S. and the state of Georgia."<sup>57</sup> John Ridge also was pleased and reported "rejoicing with patriots of our country," but he also felt that the "contest is not over." The matter was not yet settled to his satisfaction, although the Cherokee had gained a great amount of public and private support for their cause. This support

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<sup>55</sup>Jackson to Anthony Butler, March 6, 1832, Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, edited by John Spencer Bassett, (Washington, 1930), IV, 430.

<sup>56</sup>Jackson to John Coffee, April 7, 1832, ibid., 415.

<sup>57</sup>Boudinot to Stand Watie, March 7, 1832, in Edward Everett Dale, Cherokee Cavaliers (Norman, Oklahoma, 1939), pp. 4-5.

could never be changed. In their jubilation, the Indians did not forget the effort of Worcester and Butler. Ridge especially expressed the feeling that they owed much "gratitude . . . to the good men."<sup>58</sup>

In the minds of the Cherokee, the decision of the Supreme Court should have ended the case of the missionaries. However, the newly-elected governor of Georgia, Wilson Lumpkin, refused to release them from prison. Niles Register reported that Lumpkin would "enforce all the laws of Georgia concerning the Indians and their lands--and it is not probable that he will be prevented from doing so." In the same article the Register expressed the hope "that Georgia, being allowed time to get cool, and content with executing her laws over the Indians and their lands, will quietly release . . . Worcester and Butler."<sup>59</sup> The National Intelligencer voiced the optimistic hope that Georgia had more common sense than to let the problem with the missionaries come to a confrontation between state and national authorities.<sup>60</sup>

However, the reaction of most Georgians was neither cool nor sensible. The Court decision was "contrary to what we anticipated," said the Savannah Republican. The paper went on to maintain that the federal government had no constitutional basis for conterminding the state's orders. Georgians

<sup>58</sup>John Ridge to Stand Watie, April 6, 1832, ibid., pp. 7-10.

<sup>59</sup>Niles Weekly Register, March 31, 1832.

<sup>60</sup>Washington National Intelligencer, April 5, 1832.

felt as if the Supreme Court had sanctioned a hostile nation within their boundaries and that the decision put "the state more directly in hostility with a department of the federal government than. . . ever before." Above all else, the paper was certain "that the laws of the State will be enforced."<sup>61</sup> The Augusta Courier observed that as the chief executive of the United States, Jackson was bound to enforce the decision, for if he did not he undoubtedly would be impeached.<sup>62</sup> But the Georgia Journal was more confident of the outcome. "Nothing like force can or will, for a long time, be in operation, if indeed ever; and we devoutly hope and are inclined to believe it never will be."<sup>63</sup>

Few Georgia citizens doubted that the state would continue to enforce its policy. Some determined to "do something by just doing nothing,"<sup>64</sup> *i.e.*, by ignoring the decision. Others said that "if necessary [they would] shoulder their muskets and march to the Penitentiary to guard and prevent the missionaries from being discharged."<sup>65</sup> Either the missionaries would serve their time or stay in jail "until

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<sup>61</sup>Franklin (Tenn.), Western Weekly Review, April 13, 1832, citing Savannah Republican, March 11, 1832.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., citing August (Ga.) Courier, March 14, 1832.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., citing Milledgeville, Georgia Journal, March 15, 1832.

<sup>64</sup>Milledgeville (Ga.), The Recorder, April 12, 1832.

<sup>65</sup>New York Daily Sentinel, April 3, 1832, citing the Savannah Republican, [n.d.].



the bricks which enclose them are not left one upon another."<sup>66</sup>  
The people of Georgia were determined to enforce the laws  
"until she shall be shorn of her strength, her patriotism,  
and her freedom."<sup>67</sup>

A stalemate existed. Georgia refused to comply with the Supreme Court ruling and release Worcester and Butler. Yet, Jackson was obliged to enforce federal mandates. However, if he did send in troops to enforce Marshall's ruling, which he obviously would not do since Georgia was implementing his policy of removal, a true nullification and states' rights crisis might occur and split the nation. Therefore, Lumpkin was reasonably confident of his stand. He had not only the backing of the state but also the passive assistance of the president.

Obviously, circumstances were different now, and Worcester made a painful reappraisal of his position. Despite the decision of the Supreme Court, the missionaries would not be released. Nothing could be accomplished by obstinancy. If they pushed the Court to enforce the decision, the tribunal itself might be in jeopardy. Nor were the missionaries going to stop the oppression of the state merely by leaving Georgia no alternatives. However, there were two positive aspects: first, Worcester and Butler would be more likely to be freed by giving in to the authority of Georgia rather than by fighting it, and second, the possibility of returning to the Cherokee would be greater by giving in rather than by

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<sup>66</sup>The Recorder, September 6, 1832.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., March 29, 1832.

pursuing an impossible course. Both of these possibilities were doubtful but might be obtained through cooperation.

Worcester concluded that

We will not conceal that we are in some doubt as to the path of duty. In regard to the past our minds are settled. But we consider the circumstances of the case as in some important respects new, and are willing to examine the ground on which we now stand, and to recede from it, if we find it untenable.<sup>68</sup>

Upon receiving this letter, the Prudential Committee of the A.B.C.F.M. held a special meeting on December 25, 1832, to consider the questions presented by Worcester. It decided that because of the dangerously unstable condition of the country as a result of the problem, it was best that the missionaries "yield rights, which in other circumstances . . . might have been their duty to claim, rather than to prosecute them tenaciously at the expense of hazarding the public interest."<sup>69</sup>

On January 8, 1833, Worcester sent a letter to his attorneys telling them not to take further action before the Supreme Court.<sup>70</sup> He sent a second letter to Governor Lumpkin informing him that there would be no further court action, not because the missionaries believed they were wrong or that they had changed their minds, but because it was obvious to

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<sup>68</sup>Worcester to Board, [n.d.], Missionary Herald, XXIX (March, 1833), 111.

<sup>69</sup>Missionary Herald, XXIX (March, 1833), 111.

<sup>70</sup>Worcester to William Wirt and John Sergeant, January 8, 1833, ibid., p. 112.

them that the pursuance of the case in the courts would lead to "consequences injurious to our beloved country."<sup>71</sup>

However, three days before Worcester wrote the letter, Governor Lumpkin announced that he would release the missionaries if they would drop the proceedings in the Supreme Court, and "apply to the proper authority of the State, in a respectful and becoming manner, and they shall go free, and not till then."<sup>72</sup> Worcester's appeal to the Governor was obviously not "in a respectful and becoming manner," for Lumpkin refused the request until Worcester wrote a second appeal. In this second appeal he modified his statement to the effect that it was his intention only "to forebear the prosecution of our case, and to leave the question of the continuance of our confinement to the magnanimity of the State."<sup>73</sup> This evidently was less offensive to the sensitive Lumpkin, for on January 14, 1833, he authorized the release of Worcester and Butler, even though they were given no written statement to that effect.<sup>74</sup>

When rumors began to circulate that Worcester and Butler were seeking a pardon, some Georgians doubted if they were

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<sup>71</sup>Worcester to Lumpkin, January 8, 1833, ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Wilson Lumpkin, Removal of the Cherokee Indians from Georgia, 1827-1842 [sic: actual period covered is 1827-1853], (New York, 1907), I, 207.

<sup>73</sup>Worcester to Lumpkin, January 8, 1833, Missionary Herald, XXIX (March, 1833), 112.

<sup>74</sup>Worcester to Board, January 14, 1833, ibid.; The Recorder, January 17, 1833.

sincere or if they could be trusted among the Indians once again.<sup>75</sup> After announcement of the release, the Milledgeville Federal Union attacked Governor Lumpkin for being too lenient,<sup>76</sup> while the Recorder maintained that the missionaries should not have been released "until the Supreme Court had abandoned their illegal and unconstitutional usurpation; the rights of the States should at least have been permitted to triumph."<sup>77</sup>

Nonetheless Georgia officials released Worcester and Butler after they had served sixteen months of their four year sentences. They both returned to missionary work among the Cherokee because Georgia had repealed the law under which they were convicted.<sup>78</sup> It was no longer necessary to enforce this highly questionable statute because by this time the lottery for the Cherokee's land was well under way, and whites were living throughout the area. Worcester returned, not to the land of the Cherokee Nation, but to an area infested with gold-hungry whites who were quickly making conditions so intolerable that the Indians had no choice but to remove to the West. What Jackson could not convince the Cherokee to do, the state of Georgia managed by the land lottery.

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<sup>75</sup>Athens (Ga.), Southern Banner, July 27, 1833.

<sup>76</sup>Federal Union, February 14, 1833.

<sup>77</sup>The Recorder, January 21, 1833.

<sup>78</sup>Missionary Herald, XXIX (March, 1833), 113.

A month after his release from prison, Worcester wrote a letter of summarization and explanation on behalf of Butler and himself to the Missionary Herald. This eloquent statement of position and purpose made clear not only their attitudes as missionaries but also their feelings toward the rights of Indians. Worcester said his initial purpose for residing among the Cherokee was to bring salvation to the Indians, to establish schools, and to translate the Bible and other works into Cherokee. He looked upon the Georgia law requiring an oath of allegiance to the state from whites living with the Indians as more than an attempt to remove whites from the area; it was an attempt to extend the jurisdiction of the state over the Cherokee people. This overt plot to seize sovereignty from the Indians was incompatible with Worcester's belief that "the Cherokee possessed both a natural and conventional right to govern themselves, subject only to. . . the United States." Thus he was not obligated as a Christian or as a citizen of the United States to obey such an unjust law but instead chose to "appeal to the justice of our country in defense of our constitutional rights . . . and in defense of the rights of a much injured people." He believed that this "civil right to refuse obedience to the law" should be tested in the Supreme Court, and that since the Cherokee "rights and ours were involved in the same question, we felt that, in maintaining our own [rights], we were maintaining theirs also."

However, when it became obvious that in order to enforce Marshall's decision federal troops would be required, Worcester decided that even though it was still his duty to maintain his rights and those of the Cherokee, it was not his duty to cause bloodshed and polarize the nation. Therefore, although it might appear that his defiance of Georgia accomplished nothing, Worcester felt that the attempt was necessary, even without any guarantee of success or accomplishment. In addition, the state had repealed the law under which he was convicted, thereby allowing him to return to his work among the Indians. Finally, the decision of the Supreme Court, although not enforced, might have later value to the Cherokee as a precedent for further court action.<sup>79</sup>

This statement of purpose made it clear that Worcester undertook his test of Georgia's jurisdiction not only to defend his own civil rights but even more to defend the rights of the Cherokee. He felt that the Indians had natural and political rights to their land and to their existence as a sovereign nation. He believed that the Cherokee would lose their faith in Christianity if he did not defend them. Thus, his defense of the Indians' rights was motivated partly out of a desire to do his job well. The A.B.C.F.M. agreed with his stand and gave him complete financial, legal and moral support. The Board allowed him to carry out the fight against

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<sup>79</sup>Worcester to Board, [n.d.], ibid., XXIX (May, 1833), 183-86.

Georgia as he wished, and it was his decision to halt further prosecution of the case. Governor Lumpkin's statement that the missionaries would not be released until they asked to be released served only to accentuate the futility of remaining in jail. Thus, Worcester felt he could accomplish more for the Cherokee by being and working with them than he could by remaining in prison.

## CHAPTER IV

### WORCESTER'S MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES DURING REMOVAL

Worcester's belief that he could do more for the Cherokee out of prison than fighting from within proved correct when he returned to New Echota. While Worcester was in jail, Boudinot had continued translating and printing the Phoenix until August 1, 1832, when he resigned because of pressure and internal dissension between himself, as editor of the official publication of the Cherokee Nation, and John Ross, head chief of the Nation.<sup>1</sup> The controversy between the two men polarized sentiment within the tribe. The Ross faction maintained that tribal lands must be defended, while the Boudinot faction felt that the tribe would suffer less if they left their homes before they were either weakened to the point that they could offer no resistance or were completely eliminated as a nation by the white influx.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Malone, Cherokee of the Old South, pp. 167-69 citing Cherokee Phoenix, August 11, 1832.

<sup>2</sup>The controversy between Boudinot and Ross is itself a complex story. Accounts of the controversy from various points of view can be found in the following works: Gabriel, Elias Boudinot, pp. 134-40; Malone, Cherokees of the Old South, pp. 166-69; Grace Steele Woodward, The Cherokee (Norman, Oklahoma, 1963), p. 172; John P. Brown, Old Frontiers: The Story of the Cherokee Indians from Earliest Times to the Date of Their Removal to the West, 1838, pp. 496-505; Grant Foreman, Indian Removal (Norman, Oklahoma, 1932), pp. 266-68; Starkey, The Cherokee Nation, pp. 190-93.



Ross insisted that the paper maintain the stance that the Cherokee should fight removal; Boudinot believed that the people had a right to hear the other side, which was admittedly a minority opinion. Nonetheless, Boudinot felt that the usefulness of the paper was at an end if he could not print the opposing viewpoint to that of Chief Ross. As a result Boudinot resigned and Ross appointed his brother-in-law, Elijah Hicks, as editor.

Hicks, whose education was much inferior to that of Boudinot, found it difficult to keep the paper going. Subscriptions remained unpaid, and the pressures of publication proved too much. The paper appeared irregularly until the last issue of May 31, 1834.<sup>3</sup> Thus the Cherokee cause was without a united leadership, and also without its voice to the world, The Cherokee Phoenix.

The death blow for the New Echota press came in the spring of 1835 when the Cherokee Council decided to remove the press to Red Clay, Tennessee, the new council site since Georgia law prohibited meetings at New Echota. Ross sent a crew and wagon to get the press, but they discovered that at the order of the United States officials Benjamin F. Curry and John F. Schermerhorn, the Georgia Guard had seized the

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<sup>3</sup>Malone, Cherokees of the Old South, p. 169 citing Cherokee Phoenix, May 31, 1834.

press. Ross requested the return of the press,<sup>4</sup> but the Guard never returned it.

The entire Cherokee Nation was now threatened. The Georgia "Poney [sic] Club's" activities increased. The aim of this group of private citizens was to steal or to destroy everything of value which belonged to the Cherokee in an attempt to drive them from their lands. The Club's efforts were succeeding to the extent that there was "scarcely a poney [sic] worth twenty dollars. . .left in the Cherokee country."<sup>5</sup>

Of course, the most insidious pressure exerted by the Georgia government was the free land lottery provided for in Governor George Gilmer's proclamation of June, 1830.<sup>6</sup> The lottery commissioners convened July 25, 1832 in Milledgeville for the purpose of making initial preparations for the lottery.<sup>7</sup> Any white male, of eighteen years or older and a United States citizen whose family had lived in Georgia for a period of three years before January 1, 1832, was eligible for the lottery. In addition widows and orphans both had one draw, and heads of families were given an extra draw.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>John Ross [et al] to Lewis Cass, April 22, 1836 in Senate Document No. 120, 25th Cong., 2nd Sess., pp. 591-92.

<sup>5</sup>Western Weekly Review, August 17, 1832.

<sup>6</sup>Laws of the States, pp. 202-18.

<sup>7</sup>Federal Union, July 26, 1832.

<sup>8</sup>Laws of the States, p. 227.

There were two lotteries, one for land, and the other for lands believed to contain gold. Both lotteries were to begin on October 22, 1832.<sup>9</sup> The land lottery had a total of 18,304 prizes of 150 acres each, with about 85,000 names entered, or about four and one-half names per prize. The gold land prizes equaled forty acres each with 35,000 prizes and about 133,000 names entered. Thus the land lottery consisted of a total of 2,545,600 acres while the gold lottery added 1,400,000 acres to that figure. The total, 3,945,600 acres amounted to 6,165 square miles, equivalent to a square seventy-eight and one-half miles on each side.

Because of the number of names and prizes involved the Savannah Daily Georgian estimated that it would take seven months just to draw names at the rate of 250 to 300 per day. The paper also blamed the lottery squarely on the "two persons whose stubborn zeal in asserting its [Cherokee Nation's] independence, have thus made them remote agents of its dismemberment--we mean the missionaries."<sup>10</sup>

The lottery encountered numerous problems. Surveyors who went onto the land to lay out the lots by order of the state legislature met with varying degrees of resistance, but most often their markers were destroyed after they left. The Macon Advertiser asked, "What has become of the Georgia Guard?

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<sup>9</sup>Federal Union, October 25, 1832.

<sup>10</sup>Savannah Daily Georgian, October 4, 1832.

Are they sleeping, dreaming, or halting by the way side?"<sup>11</sup> However, the problem with the Guard was one of jurisdiction. At one point the Guard was part of the state judiciary, but later it was considered part of the local sheriffs' offices. Because of confusion the Guard was allowed to become a militaristic band which wandered without direction or control within the Cherokee lands, in some cases taking advantage of its position to better the members' own conditions or pocketbooks. It appeared contradictory, even to the Milledgeville Federal Union, that the state should abolish Cherokee law in an attempt to enforce uniform regulations and then allow the Georgia Guard to make conditions worse than before through their uncontrolled activities. Nonetheless the Guard's depredations continued.<sup>12</sup>

Fraud also entered into the lottery. For example, a minor government official managed to draw for himself the parcel of land on which the John Ridge home stood. The value of the land with its improvements was about \$40,000.<sup>13</sup>

The twenty-fourth annual report of the A.B.C.F.M. reported that the mission land at Hightower fell within the scope of the lottery and that whites were streaming into the area. The Board thought it "expedient" to remove the

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<sup>11</sup>Western Weekly Review, October 12, 1832 citing the Macon Advertiser, n.d.

<sup>12</sup>Federal Union, October 27, 1831; ibid., November 10, 1831.

<sup>13</sup>Western Weekly Review, January 19, 1833.

missionary family from the land along with everything that could be moved. Also, two men who claimed that they had drawn the lots on which Haweis Mission stood, took possession of the land.<sup>14</sup> Butler, having returned to his post at Haweis, fled to Brainerd mission in Tennessee outside the area of the land lottery.<sup>15</sup>

At New Echota Worcester tried to continue his work translating the Gospel of John into Cherokee<sup>16</sup> until he received a letter from William Springer, Agent for the Cherokee in Georgia, dated February 15, 1834, informing him that the lot on which he lived now belonged to Colonel William Harden and that Worcester had until February 28, 1834, to get out.<sup>17</sup> The letter did not arrive until about a week before the mandatory date of evacuation. Worcester replied, "I suppose I must regard this note as compulsion, and act accordingly."<sup>18</sup> However, he obtained a delaying order and then left for Brainerd on March 13, 1834.<sup>19</sup>

Despite the printing of 7,500 copies of Matthew, Acts and Scripture Extracts before the seizure of the New Echota press, the 1834 report of the A.B.C.F.M. was gloomy because

<sup>14</sup>Missionary Herald, XXIX (December, 1833), 461.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., XXX (May, 1834), 193; ibid., XXXI (January, 1835), 21.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., XXX (April, 1834), 161.

<sup>17</sup>William Springer to Worcester, February 15, 1834, ibid., (May, 1834), p. 193.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.      <sup>19</sup>Ibid., XXXI (January, 1835), 21.

the problems of the missionaries had become worse. Missions were seized; crowded conditions and the temper of the times caused the work of the missionaries to become less effective; the Cherokee were extremely agitated because of the encroachment of whites, threats of expulsion, divided political loyalties, and general doubts about their future. Whites who came into the area set poor examples for the Indians by encouraging drinking and "every kind of debauchery." In fact, the Board expressed amazement that whites had not done more harm. But the A.B.C.F.M. recognized the major problem as being the division within the tribe itself between the Ross and Boudinot factions.<sup>20</sup>

Because of these unsettled conditions, it was impossible for Worcester to continue his work. After less than a year at Brainerd, he and his family, along with John Wheeler, printer of the Phoenix, and Wheeler's wife, left on April 8, 1835, for Dwight Mission in the Western Cherokee Nation.<sup>21</sup>

The pressure on the Cherokee was increasing daily. It was obvious that the only possible solution was some sort of treaty with the United States. Several abortive attempts had resulted in only more hard feelings. John F. Schermerhorn, negotiator for the federal government, tried repeatedly to get the tribe to agree on a treaty, but because of the division between Ross and Boudinot over the removal matter, no

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., XXXII (January, 1836), 21.

settlement was possible. However, in October Ross decided to accompany a delegation to Washington to try to talk to President Jackson and personally arrange a treaty. In the absence of Ross and the anti-removal delegation, Boudinot, along with the other leaders of the group in favor of removal (Major Ridge and his son, John), signed the Treaty of New Echota with Schermerhorn on December 29, 1835. Ross protested vociferously that the treaty was invalid because he was head chief and that the Cherokee who had signed the treaty, giving up the remaining Cherokee land in the East for lands in the western areas beyond the borders of the United States, had acted without authorization from the majority of the tribe. Nevertheless, Congress ratified the treaty, and the President proclaimed it as the law of the land on May 23, 1836.<sup>22</sup>

The Treaty of New Echota stunned most of the Cherokee Nation for it meant that now all hope of maintaining their homes was gone. Their lands would be given over to the whites with only minor reimbursement for property, improvements, and homes. But the real tragedy was the loss of ancestral homes which had belonged to the Cherokee before the arrival of any white man. Worcester was also shocked at Boudinot's acquiescence to the compact. It was "fraudulent

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<sup>22</sup>U. S. Statutes at Large, VII, 478 (1835).

and wicked" according to the missionary, but he still maintained that his old friend had acted conscientiously and was doing what he mistakenly thought would be best for his people.<sup>23</sup>

Whether motivated or not by good intentions, the Treaty of New Echota began one of the most tragic episodes in American history. The last of the A.B.C.F.M. missions, Brainerd, was closed in August, 1839. In October fourteen companies of about 1,000 Cherokee each began the almost 700 mile trip through Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, and Arkansas. One group went by water, but the others all went overland, a trip of from three and one-half to five and one-half months. From the time they were gathered into groups in May and June of 1838 to the time the last group reached Arkansas, the A.B.C.F.M. estimated that between 4,000 and 4,500 Cherokee died as a result of the removal itself and not because of neglect on the part of the government. This averaged thirteen to fifteen deaths a day for the period of removal and amounts to about one fourth of the total population of 16,000.<sup>24</sup>

However, the estimates concerning the number of Cherokee removed have varied. Head Chief John Ross estimated that 13,149 Cherokee emigrated, while Captain J. R. Stevenson,

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<sup>23</sup>Worcester to David Greene, June 18, 1838 in Gabriel, Elias Boudinot, pp. 175-76.

<sup>24</sup>Missionary Herald, XXXVI (January, 1840), 14.



receiving agent in Arkansas, counted 11,504. Still another estimate was that of Captain John Page, disbursing officer, who reported 11,721.<sup>25</sup> None of these figures took into consideration the deaths along the route which were generally in agreement with the A.B.C.F.M. figure of between 4,000 and 4,500.

After removal was accomplished, a member of the Georgia Guard who participated in the process and later became a colonel in the Confederate Army said, "I fought through the civil war and have seen men shot to pieces and slaughtered by thousands, but the Cherokee removal was the cruelest work I ever knew."<sup>26</sup>

This second removal in 1838 added to the 6,000 Cherokee, originally from the Southeast, living in the Arkansas Territory. They had been there since the Treaty of 1817 which provided for an exchange of lands in the eastern United States for equal amounts of land in the West. This treaty also stated that each Indian who left his home would receive a rifle, ammunition, a brass kettle or a beaver trap, and one

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<sup>25</sup>Charles C. Royce, The Cherokee Nation of Indians: A Narrative of Their Official Relations with the Colonial and Federal Governments, 5th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology (Washington, 1887), p. 292.

<sup>26</sup>Mooney, Myths of the Cherokee, p. 130. The definitive study of the removal of the five civilized tribes is Grant Foreman, Indian Removal.

blanket "to be considered full compensation for improvements left behind." In addition the government would pay for the expense of removal.<sup>27</sup> However, few left until a supplemental treaty was passed in 1819 providing that each head of a family who moved to Arkansas would be given 640 acres.<sup>28</sup> Opposition was enormous, and only a few thousand Cherokee took advantage of the government's offer.

However, there were enough Cherokee in the West to warrant the A.B.C.F.M. establishing missions there. In the summer of 1820 Reverend Cephas Washburn and Reverend Alfred Finney, along with their families, totaling about twenty, arrived at the Cherokee Nation in the West to establish a mission and school.<sup>29</sup> The mission, known as Dwight, met with reasonable success considering the extreme distrust of whites by the western Cherokee. By 1833 there were three missions of the A.B.C.F.M. among the western Cherokee--Dwight, Fairfield, and one at the fork of the Illinois River. These three schools all received money from the federal government's civilization fund to match the money spent by the A.B.C.F.M.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> U S. Statutes at Large, VII, 156 (1817); Senate Document No. 512, IV, 491.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 195 (1819).

<sup>29</sup> Little Rock Arkansas Gazette, July 8, 1820; ibid., April 17, 1821.

<sup>30</sup> Senate Document No. 238, 23rd Cong., 1st Sess., p. 195.

When Worcester left his work among the Georgia Cherokee, he went to Dwight Mission among the western Cherokee to begin again an effort to Christianize the Indians. Even though the A.B.C.F.M. listed him in their 1836 report under "Missions to the Arkansas Cherokee," he had no specific assignment.<sup>31</sup> He arrived at Dwight on May 29, 1835, after a difficult trip through Kentucky, Illinois and Missouri. Ann, Worcester's wife, became ill in Kentucky, thereby delaying their arrival. A press, this time purchased by the A.B.C.F.M., was already at Union, a mission of the Board among the Osage Indians of the Arkansas Territory. Worcester planned to establish the press at Union temporarily and begin printing books in Cherokee and other Indian languages as soon as possible. Later a permanent location would be selected, one possibly closer to the area where the bulk of the emigrating Cherokee settled.<sup>32</sup>

While at Dwight, Worcester wrote a letter to his brother-in-law, Samuel Chandler, in Bedford, New Hampshire. The letter was amazing for it revealed the determination and spirit left in this man after years of uncertainty and court battles, not to mention imprisonment and being forced to leave his work with the Cherokee Nation in the East. Worcester lamented:

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<sup>31</sup>Missionary Herald, XXXII (January, 1836), 22.

<sup>32</sup>Worcester to Samuel Chandler, July 7, 1835, "Some letters from Samuel A. Worcester at Park Hill," edited by George A. Shirk, Chronicles of Oklahoma, XXVI (Winter, 1948), 470; See Fig. 4, page 100.

Our personal trials. . .we regard as but a small thing; and would gladly endure them again, and far more than them, if by that means the honor and character of our country could be retrieved, and the people for whose good we have labored restored to their former prospects.<sup>33</sup>

By late summer, 1835, the press at Union was in full operation, printing a more varied array of material than had been printed at New Echota. The first of these publications was Selected Passages of Scripture. The book contained only twenty-four pages, but the press printed 5,000 copies. Also 5,000 copies of the fifth edition of Cherokee Hymns, consisting of forty-eight pages, was published. However, the latest title was 450 copies of the Cherokee Almanac, consisting of sixteen pages. The Almanac was based on the classic pattern of Poor Richard's Almanac, with celestial charts, anecdotes, passages of scripture, temperance tracts, and information about the Cherokee Nation. This work, unlike the Cherokee Phoenix, was usually printed in both Cherokee and English, whereas the Phoenix was often more English than Cherokee.<sup>34</sup>

Preparations were complete by the winter of 1836 for the press to be moved to Park Hill. Worcester, his family, the

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 471.

<sup>34</sup>Missionary Herald, XXXII (July, 1836), 268-69. Copies of the Cherokee Almanac are extremely rare. There is a copy of the 1848 Almanac at the DeGoyler Collection at Southern Methodist University. This writer examined it and was fascinated by the instructions on page two as to how to set a clock by the sun. Also included were accounts of the Cherokee Bible Society and the Temperance Society. See Fig. 5, page 101.

printer Wheeler, and his family, arrived there in early December.<sup>35</sup> Park Hill was located about three miles from the forks of the Illinois River. This location was chosen to avoid the possibly unhealthy marshy conditions at the forks.<sup>36</sup> It was also closer to the projected capital of the Cherokee Nation in the West, Tahlequah. When Major General Ethan Allen Hitchcock passed through the area he described Park Hill as overlooking "two prairies of moderate extent and the scenery is as beautiful as the eye can desire. . . . The Illinois River rushes by the borders of the . . . prairie."<sup>37</sup>

Worcester continued his work of translating various scriptures and publishing documents of the Cherokee Nation, because "the demand for books in their own language seems to be steadily increasing."<sup>38</sup> There seemed to be some problem, however, in conversion to Christianity. There might have been numerous causes for this but undoubtedly the confusion, disillusionment, and tragedy of removal affected the Cherokee's ability to trust any white or convert to his religion.

The twenty-eighth annual report of the A.B.C.F.M. in 1838 reported there were four schools at the Dwight, Fairfield and Park Hill missions with a total of 145 students,

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., XXXIII (March, 1837), 125.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., (January, 1837), p. 21.

<sup>37</sup>Ethan Allen Hitchcock, A Traveler in Indian Territory: The Journal of Ethan Allen Hitchcock, late Major General of the United States Army, edited by Grant Foreman (Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 1930), p. 47.

<sup>38</sup>Missionary Herald, XXXIII (January, 1837), 21.

seventy of whom boarded at the missions. However, they added pessimistically that "the state of religion has been low, and few additions have been made to the churches, except that at Fairfield, where seventeen have been received. A new church of ten members has been organized at Park Hill."<sup>39</sup> The missionaries' greatest success was in the temperance movement. This was an unexpected success with 500 members among the missions and even at Fort Gibson, the nearby army garrison. Within the year 1837, only twenty abstainers were believed to have broken the pledge and more than half of those were from Fort Gibson.<sup>40</sup>

However, the missions in the Arkansas territory faced even more serious problems, one of which was the flood of immigrants from the East. Reverend Cephas Washburn, missionary at Dwight, reported that from October, 1836, to July, 1837, about 2,000 Cherokee arrived in the vicinity of the mission, most of whom planned to settle there. The greatest problem was sickness. Washburn said, "Nearly all of these who have settled in the lower part of the nation either have been or are now sick." In one area about ten miles from Dwight, there had been fourteen deaths within three weeks, primarily because of the lack of medical facilities. Those who got medical treatment recovered, but the

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., XXXIV (January, 1838), 12.

<sup>40</sup>Washburn to Board, November 9, 1837, ibid., (March, 1838), p. 96.

vast majority received no care other than that which they could provide themselves. In July, 1837, Washburn expected 2,500 more Cherokee to arrive in the near future and most would settle somewhere near the missions on the Illinois River.<sup>41</sup>

Washburn also touched on another serious problem of the Cherokee in the West, that of political dissention and agitation within the tribe.<sup>42</sup> Of course, the roots of this dissent went back to Boudinot's resignation as editor of the Cherokee Phoenix as a result of John Ross' demands that the paper print only information favorable to resisting removal by all possible means. Boudinot, Major Ridge, and his son, John Ridge, led the opposition to Ross and signed the New Echota Treaty of 1835. This political division migrated West with the Cherokee.

Boudinot arrived in the West in late autumn of 1837. He came specifically at the request of Worcester, for it was Boudinot who had been Worcester's assistant in earlier translating as well as editing the Phoenix. However, because of the strong sentiment against the New Echota Treaty and Boudinot, it became extremely difficult for Worcester to continue employing him. Worcester himself felt that Boudinot's actions were "entirely unjustifiable," but that they were the result of what Boudinot honestly, but mistakenly, thought

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<sup>41</sup>Washburn to Board, July 31, 1837, ibid., (November, 1838), p. 445.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.; New York Observer, September 23, 1838.

would benefit his people. Although the National Council had earlier approved of Boudinot as translator at Park Hill, they informally requested Worcester to remove him from his position. After a direct appeal to John Ross, Boudinot was allowed to stay on, but only until the Council could meet and discuss the problem.<sup>43</sup>

Worcester found himself in an awkward situation. It was, of course, his responsibility to continue the work of translating, and Boudinot was the best assistant and translator in the entire Cherokee Nation. They were also close personal friends. However, Worcester had to face the possibility that if he went against the wishes of the National Council, they could refuse him permission to continue his work and "order for my removal from the Nation."<sup>44</sup>

Despite the opposition to Boudinot, the missionary work continued. In the autumn of 1838, Worcester and Washburn organized another church, this time at Honey Creek. The congregation consisted of only eleven members, most of whom had been members of the church before they came West. John Huss, a Cherokee lay minister, took charge of the new church.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Worcester to Samuel Chandler, June 14, 1838, in Foreman, Park Hill, pp. 12-13.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.      <sup>45</sup>Missionary Herald, XXXV (February, 1839), 76.



The press at Park Hill also continued its publication of works in Cherokee. The Gospel of John, consisting of 101 pages, was printed in an edition of 1,500. A Primer of sixteen pages was also printed in an edition of 1,500.<sup>46</sup> In addition the press published the Cherokee Almanac along with a small catechism and a tract on temperance.<sup>47</sup> This was an amazing amount of work considering the confusion of removal, sickness, and political disruption of the tribe.

These factional problems justifiably worried Worcester, but Boudinot still maintained the position which he had held in 1836 when writing Elbert Herring, Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Boudinot, then at New Echota, admitted there were those within the Nation who held strong feelings against him and other members of the "Treaty Party." He noted that a friend, George Kellog, sent him copies of letters in which anonymous threats were made against the lives of the signatories. One letter went so far as to say that the Indians in the area held no "malice toward the white people, but that they intended killing Ridge and yourself [Boudinot]." Kellog recommended that Boudinot leave the New Echota area to avoid possible danger for himself and his family. However, Boudinot replied, "I shall not be excited and shall take the matter coolly [sic] and deliberately."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid.      <sup>47</sup>Ibid., (January, 1839), p. 12.

<sup>48</sup>Boudinot to Elbert Herring, June 16, 1836, Senate Document No. 120, pp. 602-03.

Sentiment against Boudinot continued after he joined Worcester at Park Hill. It erupted into violence in the early morning hours of June 22, 1839. John Ridge, son of Major Ridge (both signers of the New Echota Treaty), was dragged from his bed into the yard of his home at Honey Creek and within sight of his wife and children was stabbed to death. Later that morning his father was ambushed and fatally shot as he rode along the Arkansas road toward Vineyard. Finally, about mid-morning, Elias Boudinot, working on his new house about a quarter mile from the Worcester home at Park Hill, was asked by three Cherokee if he could get medication for them from the mission. As Boudinot started for the medicine, the three brutally attacked him with knives and tomahawks, savagely hacking him, making "seven gashes in the head with a hatchet." Although still alive when Worcester arrived at his side, moments after the three men made a successful escape with a waiting company of armed men, Boudinot died without saying anything to his friend and defender. In a letter giving his account of the tragic events to David Greene of the A.B.C.F.M., Worcester wrote that Boudinot "had fallen a victim. . .to his honest. . .zeal for the preservation of

his people. In his own view he risked his life to save his people from ruin and he realized his fears."<sup>49</sup>

The murder of the three primary signers of the Treaty of 1835 was obviously part of a conspiracy of revenge. John Ross, who had thwarted such an attempt on the life of Major Ridge in 1836 following the treaty,<sup>50</sup> apparently was unaware of the plot. Nonetheless, when Colonel Matthew Arbuckle of Fort Gibson sent a detachment of men to bring Ross in for questioning, Ross refused unless he could take a group of "600 or 700 of his armed men." The soldiers returned without him.<sup>51</sup> However, when Arbuckle did question Ross at Park Hill, the latter answered questions politely but refused to discuss the identity of possible murder suspects.<sup>52</sup>

The other signers of the New Echota Treaty fled to Fort Gibson or left the area, while the old settlers who had been there since 1817 began to fear domination by the Ross faction. These fears were justified when the National Council met on July 7, 1839, and issued a decree which in effect

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<sup>49</sup>M. Stokes to J. R. Poinsett, June 24, 1839, House Document No. 2, 26th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 354-55. This first report erroneously reported that the murders took place on three separate days. See also Missionary Herald, XXXV (September, 1839), 365-66; Worcester to David Green, June 26, 1839, in Gabriel, Elias Boudinot, pp. 177-78.

<sup>50</sup>Woodward, The Cherokees, p. 227.

<sup>51</sup>Arkansas Gazette, July 3, 1839.

<sup>52</sup>Woodward, The Cherokee, p. 229.

pardoned anyone committing violence against those who threatened "the lives of innocent and peaceable citizens," i.e., the Ross faction. It also demanded that anyone making a threat against the Ross group must make a retraction or face prosecution.<sup>53</sup>

Seven men took advantage of this offer of pardon on July 10 and were "fully exempted, released, and discharged from all liability to prosecution, punishment, or disabilities of any kind whatever. . . as if the act or acts had not been committed."<sup>54</sup> These men were probably the murderers of Boudinot and the Ridges. Therefore, they were under the protection of the Cherokee Council headed by Ross and thus immune from any punishment. The Arkansas Gazette suggested that since the Cherokee had refused to punish the murderers, Arkansas officials should press charges against the suspects because Major Ridge was killed in Washington County, Arkansas, and therefore the state also might have grounds for prosecution. This might prevent the "necessity of a war of extermination being waged against an unfortunate people, whom the hand of fate has borne heavily upon."<sup>55</sup>

Worcester's translator was now dead; the Cherokee Nation was divided and fighting internally; and the state of religious activities was extremely precarious. Unlike the

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<sup>53</sup>House Document No. 2, pp. 390-91.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 394.

<sup>55</sup>Arkansas Gazette, August 21, 1839.

troubles the Cherokee had faced in Georgia, these were internal matters, matters in which outside intervention, even by long-time defenders of the Nation such as Worcester and other missionaries, was not welcomed.

CHAPTER V  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE  
CHEROKEE MESSENGER

Even a man of Worcester's obviously deep conviction and dedication must have wondered what he had accomplished by his years of work with the Cherokee, in light of their condition by 1840. Displaced from their ancestral home, fragmented by internal political strife, disillusioned by the injustice of the United States government, and undoubtedly questioning the principles of Christian brotherhood taught by the missionaries, the Cherokee were retrogressing from the state of civilization which the United States government under Jackson had supposedly sought for them.

The missionaries had been part of the attempt to civilize the Indians following the first federal assistance appropriated for this purpose in 1817. Brainerd Mission in Tennessee had been a noble attempt to teach the Indians how to become part of white American society. The Cherokee excelled at the game of civilization, both the good and bad aspects. They became successful farmers, even owning slaves in some cases.<sup>1</sup> To a reasonable degree they developed into

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<sup>1</sup>Senate Document No. 120, p. 535; In 1835 the Georgia Cherokee owned 776 slaves. A total of 1,592 slaves were owned by Cherokee in the four state area of Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Alabama.

a Christian nation as well as a democratic one. They went from the void of illiteracy to the complex responsibilities of a literate nation as a result of the efforts of Sequoyah and the alphabet he developed. Their newspaper, The Cherokee Phoenix, was renowned as a valiant effort to present their case before not only the United States but the world.<sup>2</sup> What had all this success at the white man's game of civilization done for the Cherokee? The question all but answers itself, for the Cherokee fell victim to the whites' culture, political wars, and moral corruption.

Although Worcester regarded the Cherokee as heathens and savages as did most whites of that day, he also saw them as human beings who needed help. His approach was a practical one, for it was the plan of the A.B.C.F.M. to give the Indians not only a faith in the Christian God but a way to survive in a world which was quickly changing into one dominated by whites. In 1816 the A.B.C.F.M. proposed to teach the Indians ways of becoming part of the agricultural system and thereby gaining a common ground with whites. They accomplished this, only to have the land on which they learned to farm be stolen by greedy whites in Georgia. Missionaries taught the Indians to read and write their own language and express themselves through a cherished American tradition--the free press. But this too had failed when

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<sup>2</sup>Grant Foreman notes in Sequoyah that one of the most nearly complete files of the Cherokee Phoenix is a "prized possession of the British Museum, in London," p. 14.

Boudinot was forced to withhold the pro-removal side of the question on the orders of John Ross. Finally, the Cherokee tried to preserve a portion of their identity as a nation only to have their people removed to a strange land in which they found it difficult to exist in harmony with other factions of the tribe.

Of course, Worcester's defense of the Cherokee against the State of Georgia and the subsequent victory of the state is a classic example of might winning over right. The self-sacrificing Christian spirit of this missionary led him to a logical position for a man who deeply believed what he taught, that being the Christian ideal of defending what one thinks to be God's will at all costs. However, Worcester demonstrated that he could be both reasonable and practical, when he saw that maintaining an unyielding position would only prevent him from pursuing his work among the Indians. Therefore, although his request for a pardon from the Governor of Georgia might not have been the most romantic and chivalrous action, it was the most practical.

Worcester went West to prepare for the arrival of the major portion of the Cherokee Nation, trying to make their new home more acceptable by bringing the one element of their culture which could never be destroyed--language. The Cherokee language was unique and seemingly indestructible. Their lands could be taken from them, thousands could be killed through the removal process, but their language would live.



Worcester was instrumental in the preservation and propagation of this vital element of the Cherokee heritage. As the bibliographer James Pilling has written, "It is very probable that he [Worcester] was the translator of a number of books for which he is not given credit. . . . Indeed it is safe to say that during the thirty-four years of his connection with the Cherokee but little was done in the way of translation in which he had not a share."<sup>3</sup>

Worcester made two major contributions to the Cherokee before his death at Park Hill in 1859. First was his faith and the propagation of Christianity among them. However, this was done by other missionaries both before and after him. But his truly unique accomplishment was his work with the Cherokee language. It must have taken a man of near genius to bring knowledge to a people through an ingenious alphabet and through great dedication to remain with those people and fight not only for their right to exist but also for their right to know.

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<sup>3</sup>Pilling, Bibliography of the Iroquoian Languages, p. 174.

APPENDIX

## APPENDIX A

### CHEROKEE POPULATION STATISTICS

Although no provision was made for census figures to designate Indians as a separate group until 1860,<sup>1</sup> the first census in 1790 estimated the Cherokee population of northern Georgia and southeastern Tennessee to be 3,000.<sup>2</sup> However, a more revealing indication concerning the Cherokee enumeration in this period following the Revolution is contained in the report of George Washington's first Secretary of War, Henry Knox, who reported that there were 2,000 "gun-men" among the Cherokee in Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and North Carolina in 1785.<sup>3</sup> However, because of conflicts with whites, in 1790 Knox reported only 600 "gun-men," a truly amazing decrease.<sup>4</sup> If one applies the ratio used by the War Department, in 1837 to determine Indian population, i.e., one fighting man per five of total population,<sup>5</sup> then the Cherokee

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<sup>1</sup>U. S. Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of The United States, Colonial Times to 1957 (Washington, 1960), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>U. S. Bureau of the Census, A Century of Population Growth From the First Census of the United States to the Twelfth, 1790-1900 (Washington, 1909), p. 39.

<sup>3</sup>U. S. State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, 39.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>5</sup>U. S. State Papers, Military Affairs, VII, 786.

population of 1785 was 10,000, while five years later it had dropped to only 3,000. This second figure of 3,000 seems doubtful, for although the number of fighting men of the tribe might have decreased by two-thirds, the total population probably would not have declined by that great a percentage.

The figure again is apparently disputed by the War Department Census of the Cherokee in December, 1835. This census revealed that there was a total of 16,512 full blooded Cherokee in the four state area, while over half of that number, 8,916, lived in Georgia.<sup>6</sup> This would have meant an unrealistic rise in total population from the 3,000 in 1789 to over 16,000 in 1835.

In 1837 the War Department estimated that there were still 14,000 Cherokee to be removed to the West in compliance with the Treaty of 1835. There were already 7,911 in the West, mostly early immigrants from the Treaty of 1817.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Senate Document No. 120, p. 535.

<sup>7</sup>U. S. State Papers, Military Affairs, VII, 785.



## CHEROKEE ALPHABET.

CHARACTERS AS ARRANGED BY THE INVENTOR.

R D W h o s u p l a y a b f a m e o u  
 v w b q j a n h r a s y k t g t o u z o  
 c r k s a t v e o t o s o e j k a q o e  
 c t i e s v c i o u a v t p f h c a c j  
 l v o a o l

CHARACTERS SYSTEMATICALLY ARRANGED WITH THE SOUNDS.

o a	r e	t i	a o	o u	i v
s ga o ka	f ge	y gi	a go	j gu	h gv
o ha	f he	a hi	f ho	r hu	a hv
w la	e le	p li	o lo	x lu	a lv
o ma	o me	h mi	s mo	y mu	
o na t hna o nah	a ne	h ni	z no	a nu	o nv
t qua	o que	o qui	o quo	o quu	c quv
s u sa	o se	a si	o so	r su	r sv
o da w ta	s de t te	a di a tih	a do	s du	o dv
a dla e tia	r tle	o tli	o tlo	o tlu	p tlv
o tsa	t tse	h tsi	k tso	j tsu	c tsv
a wa	o we	o wi	o wo	o wu	e wv
o ya	o yo	a yi	h yo	o yu	b yv

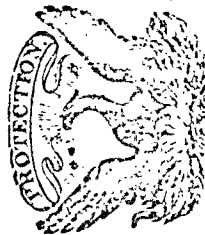
SOUNDS REPRESENTED BY VOWELS.

a as a in *father*, or short as a in *rival*.  
 e as a in *hate*, or short as e in *met*.  
 i as i in *pike*, or short as i in *pit*.  
 o as oo in *law*, or short as o in *not*.  
 u as oo in *fool*, or short as u in *pull*.  
 v as u in *but* nasalized.

CONSONANT SOUNDS.

g nearly as in English, but approaching to k. d nearly as in English, but approaching to t. h, k, l, m, n, q, s, t, w, y, as in English.  
 Syllables beginning with g, except a, have sometimes the power of k; a, s, o, are sometimes sounded to, tu, tv; and syllables written with tl, except t, sometimes vary to dl.

Figure 2



**GWY**  
**CHEROKEE**

**PHENIX**

**VOL. I.**

**NEW ECHOTA, WEDNESDAY JUNE 25, 1836.**

**NO. 18.**

EDITED BY ELIAS BOLDING OFF, PRINTED WEEKLY BY ISAACH. HARRIS, FOR THE CHEROKEE NATION.

At \$200 per annum in advance, \$3 in six months, or \$150 at the end of the year.

To subscribers who can read only the Cherokee language, the price will be \$100 in advance, or \$50 to be paid within the year.

Advertisements will be inserted at one cent per line for the first week, and a half cent for each subsequent week, unless otherwise ordered to the Editor, per line, without the advertisement.

AGENTS FOR THE CHEROKEE NATION

to all other officers within their respective Districts.

Approved—CHARLES HICKS, A. McCoy, Clerk of the N. Com. E. BOLDING OFF, Clk. N. Com.

**Resolved by the National Committee and Council,** That a child under the age of twelve years, whose tender age renders it improbable that he or she should be impressed with a professed sense of moral obligation or of sufficient capacity, deliberately to have committed an offence, shall not be considered, or found guilty of any crime or misdemeanor; nor a lunatic or a person insane without legal interdiction, shall be found guilty of any crime with which he or she may be charged. Provided the act so charged as criminal shall have been committed in the condition of such lunacy or insanity: Be it further resolved that an idiot shall not be found guilty or punished for any crime or misdemeanor with which he or she may be charged; Be it also further resolved that any person counseling, advising, or encouraging a child under the age of twelve years, or a lunatic, or an idiot to commit an offence, shall be proceeded for such offence, as if he or she had committed the same, and if found guilty shall suffer the same punishment as if he or she had committed the said crime, lunacy or idiot, if he or she had possessed discretion, and had been guilty.

**CORRESPONDENCE.** *Bazaar Commissioners on the part of the United States, and the Council of the Cherokee Nation, in the year 1833.*

The following is a reply from the Commissioners to the Council of the Cherokee Nation, October 21, 1833.

to all other officers within their respective Districts.

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# CHEROKEE NATION IN THE WEST: 1840

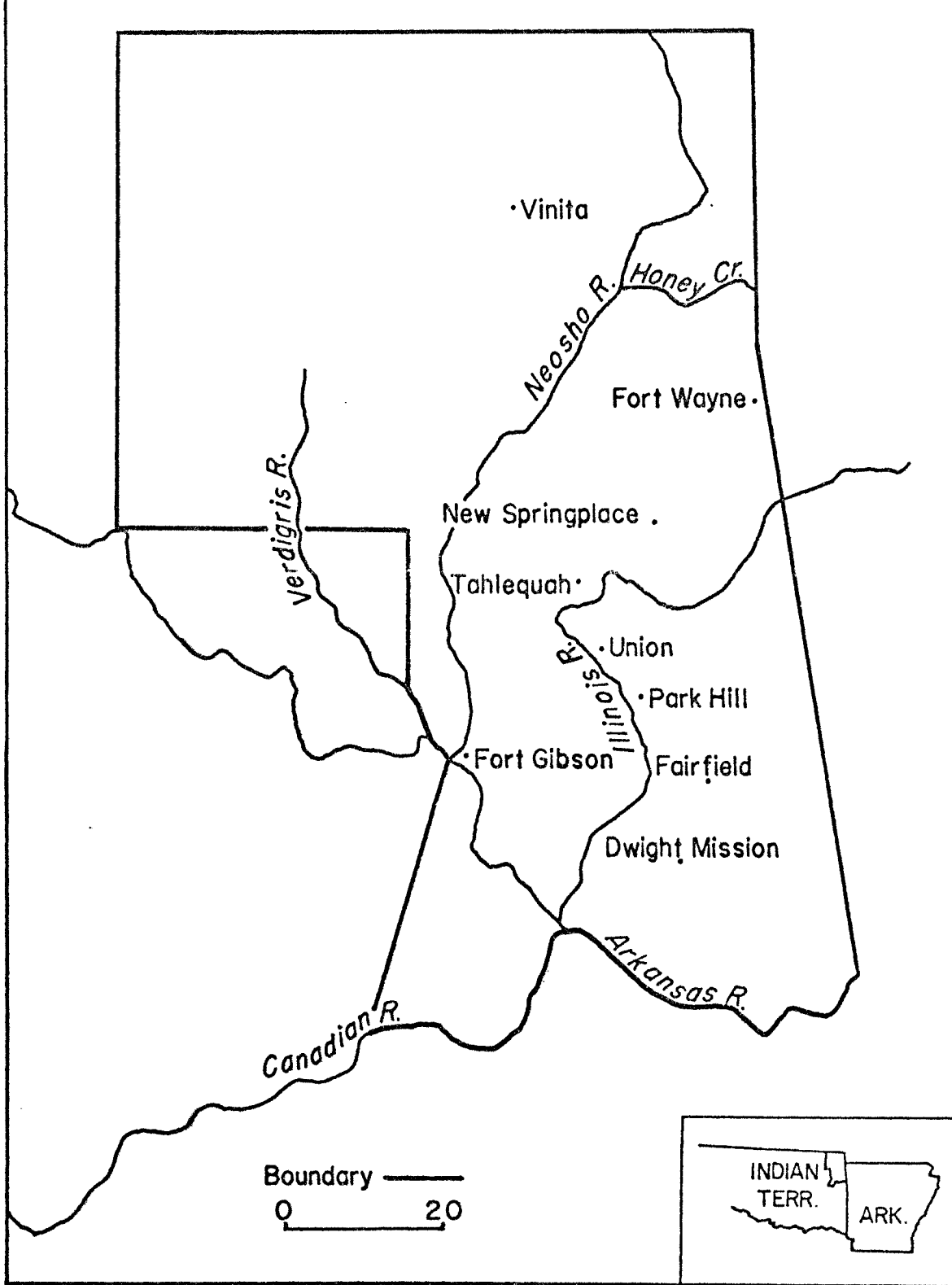


Figure 4



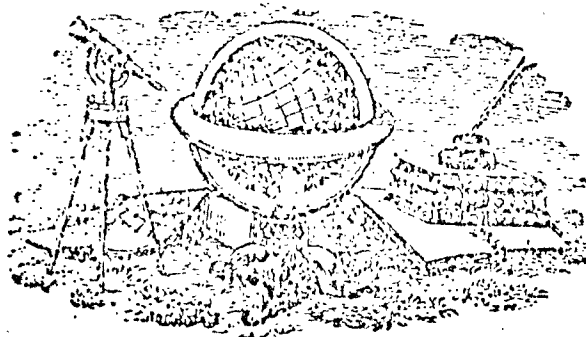
NEW YORK  
 HARRIS BROS  
 SEPTEMBER 1836.

# CHEROKEE ALMANAC

For the year of our Lord

1836.

Calculations copied from the Temperance Almanac as adapted  
 to the latitude of Charleston.



SEABERT	GAY BROTHERS,
DE BERT	NEW YORK,
DE BERT	ORIGINATED BY
DE BERT,	REDACTED BY

UNION:

MISSION PRESS: JOHN F. WHEELER, PRINTER.

CHEROKEE: VIG. BROTHERS.

Figure 5

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