

CHEROKEE BAPTIST MISSION

By A. D. Lester

Continued From Last Week

"Thursday July 23, 1840. This brings the last of our school. A number of the neighbors came in and heard the children read, and then Brother Bushyhead talked and prayed with the scholars and we dismissed." Thus came the close of the first school only a few miles from the present Westville, Oklahoma, and also the close of the first school taught in the area of the present Baptist Mission Meeting House.

It was June 25, 1841, when Evan Jones and family arrived at the place he planned, (before going for his family) to establish a Baptist Mission Station and school. On September 13, 1841, Evan Jones wrote, what I call his school letter, to the Baptist Board, at Boston, of which I quote in part:

"I have deferred writing on the subject of schools.....I find that education is much more highly appreciated than at any former period..... When we arrived, we found the people in full expectation that we would have made arrangements for school.....We could have immediately have half a dozen schools filled, if there were teachers to take charge of them. In this immediate vicinity there are forty or fifty children who speak English, and whose parents are

exceedingly anxious to have

This would be a good location for permanent Seminary: with competent teachers.....If

a respectful female department could be had....Female character here, needs great care and attention in forming, and society has reached a point at which such effort are in an encouraging degree appreciated.

Bushyhead offers to sell his home in the Baptist Board, and Jones states: He (Bushyhead) proposes to let us have the buildings, which he now occupies, with 30 acres of land, for Five Hundred Dollars, or without the land, for Three Hundred and Forty Dollars. The following is a rough inventory of the property.

One hewed log cabin, with stone chimney, floored above and below, board steps for stairs. Shingled roof porches, back and front with clap-board roof, loose plank floors. Two low cabins, stick and clay chimneys, clap-board roofs, rough plank floors below. One round log cabin, wooden chimney, rough plank floor below, clap-board roof. One large round log stable; by moving and adding a few more logs, would answer for a small barn, clap-board roof. One smaller stable, sufficient for our use. Two small old cabins (would do for hog pens). One good low hewed log cabin, (without chimney) clap-board roof, rough plank floor below. A well with wooden pump in the yard. 3 Acre cleared land, used as

garden and vegable patch; rail fence round this and two horse lots. 30 Acres of land, under cultivation. These improvements are fully worth Eight hundred dollars, could readily be sold for that sum or more. All this would come to much less money than we could build them for. End of quote from letter.

The Baptist Board purchased the buildings, but they yet... In need of a suitable school building and teachers. Thus a building of brick was erected. As to where the brick came from I do not know, However, there are two sites east of the present Westville, where bricks were manufactured, and there could have been other places. Seemingly, the Cherokees were more familiar with using brick than we might have thought they were. Writing Carolina, on September 27, 1821, Humphrey Posey who was in charge of building the Valley Town Baptist Mission Station at the place, said: Our school is doing well; 40 Cherokees are still improving very fast....."We have bricks brunt and one chimney star-

ted."(From History of North Carolina Baptist, by Paschal). Thus, the Cherokees were burning and using bricks as early as 1821, and perhaps earlier.

My first knowledge of a brick building at the site of the present Baptist Mission Church, was when I read a copy of the report of P.M. Bulter, Cherokee Indian agent. This report is rather lengthy, thus I shall only quote a part of it, which follows:

Continued Next Week



Writer & Historian

Mr. A. D. Lester, writer and historian keeps very occupied with his writings on Cherokee history. A recent article he wrote, is now being published in our newspaper.

We would like to thank Mr. Lester for letting us publish these very interesting articles. He recently wrote an article on Goingsnake, which we also published.

June 22 - 1971

History Of Cherokee Baptist Mission

By A. D. Lester

Continued From Last Week

Cherokee agency,
Fort Gibson,
September 30, 1843

Hon. T. Hartley Crawford

Sir:

In compliance with the regulations of the Department of War, the undersigned submits the following report of the affairs of the Cherokee Nation. For a while immediately after the removal and settlement beyond the Mississippi, from causes incident to such a state of things, the Cherokees rather diminished than increased in population. They have devoted themselves with more steadiness and industry to the cultivation of the soil, which may be regarded as their national employment, and which affords an easy and abundant subsistence. From this, as well as other causes, their numbers are rapidly increasing. In their houses, farms, and fixtures, they have greatly improved the comforts of life, and show many evidences of a people advanced in civilization. They generally live in double cabins, and have about them the utensils and conveniences of such habitations.....

There are eleven common schools, under the superintendence of Stephen Foreman, a native Cherokee minister, in which are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, bookkeeping, english grammar, geography, and history. Nine of the teachers are white men, of whom one is an adopted citizen by marriage; and the other two are native Cherokees. The

expenses of these schools are defrayed from the national school fund. There is allowed to each teacher \$535, including the purchase of books. Also, \$200 for the support of orphan children while attending schools; and from five to ten orphans are annually supported at each of these schools. The number educated this year was about five hundred scholars.....

Besides the schools thus noticed, there are several missionary establishments, connected with schools and churches. Of these, "the American board of commissioners for foreign missions among the Cherokees" have four stations—Dwight, Fairfield, Park Hill, and Mount Zion; and also a native preacher, stationed at Honey creek. The Dwight mission, under the superintendence of Jacob Hitchcock, has a school; two teachers regularly employed—Mr. and Mrs. Doge. The Fairfield mission, under the care of Dr. E. Butler, has a school for girls and boys, averaging twenty-five... At Park Hill, in charge of Samuel A. Worcester, the whole number of scholars has been forty-seven... All Cherokees, except five. At Mount Zion, under the care of Daniel S. Butrick, there has been a school as high as fifty.....

The Cherokee Baptist mission formed themselves into a auxillary missionary society to the mother board in Boston, and have two schools, supported by their joint efforts. One is entirely a school for females, and is taught by Miss Hibbard; the other is under the charge of Miss Moss, and is for the instruction of both boys and girls... The first has thirty-five and the other forty-five pupils. They have a large brick school house, built by the Cherokees; and altogether, the schools are answering the most sanguine expectations of their friends... The Cherokees have a printing press, which has recently gone into operation; it will, no doubt have a decided influence on the intelligence character of the nation, as it will serve to disseminate knowledge and useful information... End of quote

from report made by Cherokee agent P. M. Butler.

The above report reveals the fact that the Cherokees has built a large brick school house, which sets forth that the first school and church, building was made of brick, rather than logs as we all at one time thought. This brick house caused this writer to rewrite an article he had written about the early Cherokee Baptist Mission Station. However this is not all we have on the brick building at Cherokee, and the church.

The writer is indebted to, Edward C. Starr, Curator for "The American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, New York," for the following information, which sets forth where the Baptist Mission Church was constituted, which was at its present site. Therefore both signs that was and is now over the church house door is in error. The church neither came from Georgia nor Tennessee. Mr. Starr sent me five Xeroxed pages of material, which pertains to the old Baptist Mission, of which I shall quote in part; taken from "The Missionary Jubilee:"

Two years after their removal (Cherokees) more than 130 were baptized and a new church organized. (May the writer say, this is the church that has caused so much controversy and debate for many years, even turning friend against friend, and church members against each other, which was all for no reason. The division was mostly one and state against state. Those from Tennessee claimed the church came from Tennessee and those from Georgia claiming the church came from Georgia, and both were wrong. The writer held membership in this church and church clerk thus I know a little about what taken place out there.) Quoting again from The Missionary Jubilee: Mr. Jones with his family, was reestablished with the nation June 25, 1841..... The members of all the churches (Baptist) were estimated at 1000. Stations, 3; out-stations, 2; na-

A school fund was established by the Cherokee National Council, sufficient to maintain a system of common school education, in which the Bible was to precedence.

Mr. Frye and Misses Morse and Hibbard joined the Mission near the close of 1842 all to be occupied in the teaching department. This year the Mission was visited, in behalf of the Board, by Joel S. Bacon. Ten public schools were maintained. The two Messrs. Upham arrived at Cherokee in July, 1843. A

printing-press, with English and Cherokee type, was also received before the close of the year. A brick structure for meeting-house and school was erected at Cherokee, and opened December, 1843. Additions were made to all the churches, and a commencement was made in printing, both in Cherokee and English.

Jesse Bushyhead, a native preacher, highly esteemed, died July 1844. A. L. Downing was installed pastor at Flint, in his stead..... A monthly periodical, "The Cherokee Messenger," was commenced in July, 1844..... Mr. Frye relinquished the school at Cherokee in April, 1846. The national schools were increased to 24; there were several private schools..... In 1847, 122 were baptized in nine months, including four children of Mr. Jones. Mr. Upham's school numbered 41.....

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First school and church house at Old Baptist Mission

July 27 - 1871

CHEROKEE BAPTIST MISSION

Continued From Last Week

By A. D. Lester

Evan Jones reports by letter to Brother Peck of the Baptist Board, the death of Brother Bushyhead and the Baptist Church he was pastor of, until he died. The letter follows:

Cherokee, Cherokee Nation
August 6th 1844

My dear Brother Peck

On Wednesday July 31st we had our two monthly meetings of delegates from the churches, connected with missions. Twenty-nine brethren arrived on Tuesday afternoon, and stay till Thursday morning. The meeting was truly a visit to the house of mourning. The general salutation was silence and tears. Indicative of the deepest feelings of sorrow. The death of our beloved brother Bushyhead was an affliction and a loss, beyond our power to estimate. Yet I trust there was a felling of submission to the will of God, and a recognition of his hand. (I shall delete the reports from the several churches, and continue the letter report saying).

Saturday, August 3rd the church at Flint appointed a discourse to be delivered at their next monthly meeting, on the occasion of the death

of brother Bushyhead, their late pastor. They also took into consideration the propriety of calling brother Lewis Downing to the pastorate of the church. The vote was unanimous, and expressed with much affection.

.....We have issued our first number of the Cherokee Messenger. Brother Upham sent a few copies to the meeting of the brethren from the churches; they were received with delight and read with the greatest eagerness, many read them through the same night. I hope it will be greatly blest to them. End of quote from letter report.

From these letter reports, we find the two Baptist churches were brought to the new Cherokee Nation west of the Mississippi river, and were, after some time relocated. One at Delaware Town, in what is now Delaware County, Oklahoma. The other church was located some place near the present Stilwell, Oklahoma, and give the name "Flint" Baptist Church, with Jesse Bushyhead remaining as pastor until his death, after which Lewis Downing was elected to pastor the church... As far as this writer has been

able to learn, there is no visible trace or marks of this Baptist Church today. Seemingly it just faded away and its memory ceased to linger on, but has long ago been buried in the land of forget-

fulness, and its history would have remained buried if it were not for the letters, written by Evan Jones, history found other places, and the early copies of the American Baptist Magazine of which this writer has copies in his files. The writer does not claim to hold all the history that was made at, or near, the present site of the Baptist Mission Church, but all I have is reliable and true, something writers of history of this Baptist work cannot say.

"D. S. Butrick, the school teacher, whom we have quoted before, has some remarks in his Journal about the Bushyhead's, Jesse and his brother Isaac Bushyhead, of which follows:

This evening I went to Bro. Bushyhead's to a prayer meeting, but whether he saw me or not I cannot tell. "The Lord however, had nothing for me to do there, or at least I did nothing more than unite secretly in prayer...."

It seems here that Bushyhead did not offer Butrick any part in the prayer service, conducted at his home. Bushyhead being a Baptist caused him, no doubt, to not offer Butrick any part in the service, or just let him take over, which Butrick was always ready if offered the opportunity. Butrick further says:

Wednesday, July 15, 1840. Yesterday Isaac Bushyhead, brother to Jesse went to the

line (no doubt, this was the Arkansas line) where a white man keeps a grocery. He drank some, and a difficulty ensued between him and Robert Paris a mixed Cherokee. As Mr. Bushyhead left he followed, it seems by Paris and his son. They knocked him down with a club, cut two gashes in his head, broke in other places. His friends went after him in the night, and also to Fort Wayne (This place must have been the Fort Wayne, that was located at the present, Watts, Oklahoma) for a physician, who dressed the wounds on his head, but did not know then that he was wounded in any other place. This evening on discovering the other wounds they have sent again for a physician....(year, 1840)

Four years later, Butrick stated that Isaac Bushyhead was dead. So, he died before his brother Jesse died, in 1844.

Thursday, 1844. We rode to Brother Jones', (Bro. Jones

was Evan Jones, stationed at Cherokee, the present site of Old Baptist Mission Church, not far from Pleasant Hill, the home of Jesse Bushyhead). calling at sister Albertys and sister Jane Crittendens. Our dear Brother Jones and family appeared peculiarly kind, as usual, so that I am led to hope we are not entirely forsaken by them.

Friday, Brother Bushyhead called...he left for the council ground to attend a meeting of the national temperance Society. (May this writer say, it is not difficult to show that Jesse Bushyhead had very little to do with the work at the Baptist Mission Station, his time was occupied at other things).

Brother Bushyhead returned after dark Saturday. He started to attend a meeting at Tahlequah, rode about three miles and was taken sick, so as to be unable to proceed or return home and therefore stopped at a house and spent the day and night.

Sabbath, July, 1844, Bro. Bushyhead returned home about six o'clock this morning....After meeting we visited Brother Bushyhead, and found him extremely sick. I enquired the state of his mind. He said th Saviour was with him. He had intended to have been preaching today. He said he had formed a plan to organize a temperance Society yesterday (afternoon) thus brother name-with-held, or someone of his agents had doubtless succeeded in getting him to substitute a temperance meeting for a preparatory lecture, as he asw to have administered the Holy Supper today. I told Brother Jones I hoped they would not unite in the practice of connecting temperance meetings with the Holy Sacrament.

Continued Next Week

Death of Bushyhead

CHEROKEE BAPTIST MISSION

Continued From Last Week

By A.D. Lester

About seven years after (1895) the foregoing indenture was recorded, the Missionary Baptist Church, at Baptist Mission, and The American Baptist Home Mission Society, become owners of a parsonage, near the Baptist Meeting House, due to the benevolent act of "W. R. (Bill) Quarles, or aunt Carrie, which name her admirers called her. C. E. Carrie Quarles was the daughter of Jesse Bushyhead, and resided at Pleasant Hill, the home of her father and mother. She spent most of her adult life in the school room. It was said she taught at Fort Gibson during the Civil War, but as soon as it was safe, she returned home and continued to teach. For particulars on the above named parsonage see the following under the caption: "Bill of Sale."

BILL OF SALE

KNOW ALL MEN BY THEIR PRESENCE The Baptist Church of Baptist Mission in the Cherokee Nation Indian Territory and the trustees thereof and Building Committee and W.R. Quarles C. E. Quarles of the same place parties of the first (part) in consideration of two Dollars to them in hand paid by the Said The American Baptist-home Mission Society of New York the Receipt of which is hereby acknowledged do hereby grant sell transfer and Deliver unto the said The American Baptist-home Mission Society the following personal property via the parsonage So called at Baptist-Mission Indian Territory Situated and Being on Land Belonging to and In possession of said W.

R. and C. E. Quarles being land Lying at the Eastern foot of Bushyhead Mountain and on the North Side of the Old Baptist Mission Meeting house and adjourning the land on which the Meeting house is Built about 141 (feet or yards)+ from said Meeting House together with the land on which said parsonage stands Being one Acre to have and to hold all and singular the property aforesaid to the said the American Baptist-home Mission Society its Successors and assigns to its own use and Behoof forever upon the Express condition however that the Said Church shall have possession of said Building and use the same as and for a Parsonge and for church purposes so long as said Church is and Remains a Regular Baptist-Church and Maintains Religious Services in said Church Building and keeps its church Organization It is also agreed the parties of the first part are to keep said church Building Insured for the Benefit of Said The American Baptist Home Mission Society and In its Name It is hereby understood and agreed by all parties In Interest herein that nothing herein is Intended or shall Be construed Into a violation of or be in conflict with Either the Constitution or laws of said Nation and the United States of America In witness Whereof the said parties of the first part have caused this Instrument to Be signed by the said church through its Trustees and also by its trustees In their own Behalf and by them Selves this July 1895 The Baptist-Church of Baptist-Mission

TRUSTEES

W. R. Quarles-Abraham Sixkiller X his mark

N O Sowers Chairman Mae Garner

W. R. Quarles C. E. Quarles's Building Committee of said Church

W. R. Quarles Abraham his X mark Sixkiller as trustees of Baptist Church of Baptist Mission

Indian Territory 1st Judicial Divison as on the 23rd day of July A D 1895 personally appeared before me a Notary Public of the above named Judicial Division William R. Quarles and Abraham Sixkiller trustees of the Baptist-Church at Baptist-Mission Indian Territory and N. O. So-

wers, Mae Garner and William R. Quarles the Building Committee of said Church also W. R. Quarles and C. E. Quarles the said Trustees acknowledge that they had Executed the same for the consideration and purposes herein set-forth on their full act and deed (and) out (of) their full act and deed of the said Church and their own free act and Deed and the said W. R. & C. W. Quarles Likewise acknowledged the Execution of the Within Instrument their free act and deed

In witness where of I have hereto I have hereto set my

hand on this 23rd day of July A D 1895

Chas L Morris Notary Public At Baptist Indian Territory. Term of office Expires May the 23rd 1899 Recorded this 2nd day of August 1895

W. W. Wright Clerk Going Snake District Cherokee Nation

All (words) inside brackets are added by the writer.

Cont mued Next week