ORTH VIEW OF THE VANNE HOUSE
President of the Society for the Preservation of Early Georgia History: B. C. Yates, Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, Marietta, Georgia. Secretary-Treasurer: Joseph B. Mahan, University Center, Columbus, Georgia. Editor of EARLY GEORGIA: Joseph R. Caldwell, Ocmulgee National Monument, Macon, Georgia.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD .......................................................... Dicksie Bradley Bandy  Page

THE CHIEF VANN HOUSE, THE VANNS, TAVERN AND FERRY ........................................... Clemens de Baillou 3

THE CHEROKEES BECOME A CIVILIZED TRIBE ............................................................. Henry T. Malone 12

EARLY GEORGIA is a quarterly magazine with issues during the Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter published by the Society for the Preservation of Early Georgia History. The yearly subscription rate is $3.00. Regular members of the Society may pay $5.00 annual dues and receive the Magazine as one of the privileges of membership. Membership in SPEGH is open to anyone interested in the objectives and purposes of the Society. The Constitution and By-Laws of SPEGH were printed in the Summer Number, 1950, of EARLY GEORGIA.

Manuscripts submitted to EARLY GEORGIA, material for the NOTES AND NEWS section and any communications relative to the contents of the magazine should be directed to the Editor, Joseph R. Caldwell, Ocmulgee National Monument, Macon, Georgia.
For many years I watched the old Vann House—a landmark of a civilization that has passed into history—deteriorate and crumble away, and I longed to see it restored and preserved for future generations.

It is an accepted fact that Will Rogers was part Cherokee. His father was named Clement Vann Rogers, no doubt for his grandfather, Clement Vann II, the builder of the Vann House. In 1948, I received a letter from Will Rogers, Jr., stating that his family came from Spring Place and expressed interest in the old Vann House. This fact was publicized, and did much to create and stimulate interest in saving this historic old Indian home that was built in 1803.

A group of interested citizens began negotiations with Dr. J. E. Bradford, the owner of the Vann property, and was able to obtain an option on the house and three acres of land for the sum of $5,000.00. Through the generous gifts of public spirited citizens from Whitfield and Murray counties, and friends from other sections of the state, the necessary money was raised. Mr. Watt Kennemer, Mrs. W. M. Sapp and myself from Dalton, along with Mr. R. E. Chambers, President of The Cohutta Bank at Chatsworth, handed $5,000.00 in cash to Dr. Bradford, and The Vann House property was deeded to The State of Georgia.

Since that time the State has spent approximately $50,000.00 for the restoration of the exterior and interior of the building. Mr. Ivan Allen of Atlanta was the first to make a gift of furniture to be used in the house, giving five interesting pieces.

It has been a heart felt pleasure for me to explain to any one interested what has been accomplished with the Vann House, and to enlist aid in obtaining suitable furnishings for it. Through these efforts we will have the exquisite draperies given by Mr. Franco Scalamandre from the internationally famous Scalamandre Silk Mills, the oil portrait of Chief Joe Vann, painted by Mr. Frank Mack of Atlanta, a bust of Vann by Dr. Davidson, sculptor of Brenau College, the old bell that hung in the Moravian Mission at Spring Place in 1800, the walnut hand-made bed given by Mrs. Emily Carter Zelinski, and a piano that was made in Leipsig, Germany, Circa 1840, the gift of Mrs. Paul Gurley, Sr. of Cartersville.

To each of these who has already given to the Vann House Restoration and to those who will give in the future, may I express my deep appreciation and lasting gratitude?

Dicksie Bradley Bandy
President
Whitfield-Murray Co. Historical Society
THE CHIEF VANN HOUSE AT SPRING PLACE, GEORGIA*

by Clemens de Baillou

The Chief Vann House in its faded dignity and its romantic decay, appealed to many minds and attracted not only historians but also those persons whose imagination loves to live in the past. While hobos and animals were seeking shelter in it, mystery stories of hidden treasure and legends about its origin were growing. The Georgia Historical Commission, approached from many sides, finally decided to save the historical landmark. In order to do so, it was first necessary to clear the historical background. Although much has been told and written about the Vann House, very little was actually known. It was therefore decided to look into its history. The only reliable source of information referring directly to Spring Place was the collection of Moravian diaries of the Spring Place Mission, which was founded soon after 1800. Those diaries are the simple and exact accounts of Moravian Brethren, and each of the missionaries was obliged to keep his diary. Those from Spring Place have never been published or even translated from the German original. It became our task to do this work, and we intend to publish parts of these diaries in the near future. The information that we found proved to be rather valuable. We read that the Moravians had already stayed at Tellico in 1800, long enough to plant potatoes to which they refer in 1801. They had accepted the invitation of James Vann, who had jurisdiction over this area, and who offered "Spring Place" (or "Brown's Place") to them. At that time there were only two cabins there, and these belonged to Brown, a Cherokee, who was about to move away. Spring Place was two and a half miles from Vann's Trading-post, which must have been toward the north near the Mill Creek. The cultivated land at Spring Place amounted to forty acres and had been under cultivation for thirty years.

In the course of their first year here they built some better cabins, they cut boards, tested the clay and baked bricks with satisfying results. Much is said about their daily and their friendly contact with Vann. But most important for us were the exact data that we got about the Vann House. A builder named Vogt, who had promised to build a house for Vann, appeared in July 1803, and started to make preparations for its construction. Although it is not clearly stated what kind of preparations these were, it seems obvious that what is meant was the baking of bricks and cutting of lumber. We do not know from where Mr. Vogt came. His name is German, but the Moravians do not mention that he was German, which they certainly would have done, had it been so. Their communications seem all to have been in English, as with Chief Vann. On January 14, 1804, we read that "Brother Bayhan and Mr. Schneider are helping today with Mr. Vann's new house, which is being erected." Not until August 13 does one find reference to Vann's house as completed. "The Head Chiefs lodged in Mr. Vann's new house close to us, where also a talk will be held when the Commissioners are here". It was the conference on the projected Federal road. Vann was supporting this plan, which was also a factor in his choice of the situation of his house, since he knew that the road would pass just north of it. The house therefore was faced north, while on the south side was a garden. The fact that the house faced north is also indicated by the position of the famous stairway. This stairway is a very fine piece of construction, but it is not unique nor even as unusual as has often been stated. It is possible that the Moravians had something to do with this work, since they were excellent craftsmen. We have no doubt that the bricks used in the house were produced on the spot,


*This article is published through the courtesy of the Georgia Historical Commission.
because we found a place, east of house, and close to the first Moravian settlement, where a kiln had once stood. It seems almost unnecessary to mention that all the bricks show characteristics of the local clay. South west of Spring Place, we found some limestone deposits in which the stone had been broken ostensibly to provide mortar.

If we look at the house as it stands today, we must imagine that on its east side was attached a kitchen building, and at the north east corner of the kitchen, stood a neat square office building (or perhaps a guest house) with a fire place. Thus there was formed a court yard enclosed on three sides and paved with bricks. The whole ensemble of buildings constituted an architectural unit that was much more balanced and harmonious than it now looks. We do not wish to make exaggerated claims as to the magnificence of the place. We could even criticize some of the proportions, or some structural details such as the rather poorly constructed arches. But one thing we must admit, and that is that the Vann House was the first (twenty one years before New Echota) solid, architectural creation in the manner of an evolved architecture, to appear in the Indian Country, where heretofore had existed only log buildings. It was, in comparison with its surroundings more than a Palais de Versailles in France.

There has developed a theory according to which the attic rooms of the Vann house were used as council chambers and were indeed built for this purpose. This theory is based on the fact that both these rooms have curved walls on the side where one enters. We do not feel able to subscribe to such a theory for the following reasons. The basic form of a Cherokee council house is a windowless, circular structure embodying the idea of an uninterrupted circle, and having therefore its entrance at a slant in order to conceal the actual door. Furthermore, it was always necessary for a council house to have a large seating capacity, as for example the town house at Estanelly (which is by far not the largest) which could accommodate one thousand persons. The long, narrow attic rooms in the Vann House with windows has space enough for barely twenty people, and is thus out of the question. It was probably another source of misunderstanding that the above mentioned Meeting in August 1804 took place at the Vann House. As far as we know, it was the only meeting ever held there, and besides it was not a regular meeting anyway. The little Town Chief Vann, although influential, had not the authority to decide matters which were based on rank and traditions. That Vann succeeded in assembling some of the principle chiefs and the United States Government representatives, is due partly to the fact that his new mansion was attracting general curiosity, and moreover that the distribution of government money in support of the Federal road provided further enducement, and last but not least Vann’s new Still was now in operation, and whiskey was lavishly dispensed. Small wonder that the Meeting was well attended!

From March to May 1953 we made our archeological investigation of the Vann House. In the course of this were found the foundations of the kitchen building, and those of the “office”. Brick pavements and paths were also uncovered. The brick foundations of the kitchen were rather unsubstantial so that we are led to believe that the upper structure was of wood. Indeed we find it mentioned as such in the appraisal made in 1835. Other outlines of small wooden buildings were found, and some refuse pits which yielded pieces of fine, early 19th century china and glass, as well as various household utensiles. We succeeded in finding Vann’s mill, which, after an abortive start in 1803, was definitely in operation in 1804. It was one of the earliest mills in the territory. We have not as yet been able to locate the

*A meeting at South Westpoint was strongly opposed because it was not a traditional, “beloved” meeting ground, although it was the choice of the Cherokee Delegation at Washington.

*Moravian Diaries of Spring Place. 1803 and 1804.
MANTEL IN VANN HOUSE
Trading Post. All sites reported as such, proved to be good pre-Cherokee sites about six hundred years too old.

With reference to the kitchen, the opinion has been expressed that the building adjacent to the house was not the kitchen. We do not know the basis for this opinion, but we do know that it does not accord with the facts established by archeological investigation. Moreover, the plan of the lay-out shows an arrangement of buildings entirely different from, and characteristic of an earlier date than, the typical Georgia arrangement.

The reconstruction of the Vann House is now well under way. The Georgia Historical Commission put the task into the hands of a specialist in historical reconstructions, Dr. H. Chanlee Forman. We hope that when the work is completed the Vann House will serve as a museum dealing with the history of Indian trade.

THE VANNS

We do not know very much about the Vann family and their origins. Many different stories have been told about them, but their Scotch origin is generally accepted, although somebody expressed the opinion that Vann was German. We see no reason to believe this since nothing indicates such a thing, and besides the name is not German. Some persons wanted to see in Clement Vann, a descendant of Scotch nobility, while others thought that he was a fugitive from justice. We only know that Clement Vann entered the Cherokee territory at some time during the second half of the 18th century, and that he came from Charleston, South Carolina. We are inclined to believe that the trading post south of Gainesville, Georgia, at the border line of Hall County, may have been his first establishment. Its exact location is not known, but was very likely on the Chestnut Hill Road. The area between there and the Chattahoochee was for a long time a disputed territory, until the Chattahoochee River itself was designated as the border. One should expect that it was after Clement Vann established friendly contact with the Indians that he went into their territory beyond the mountains, an adventurous and not necessarily lucrative undertaking. Inasmuch as he took as his spouse a chieftain's daughter, thus making him, according to Cherokee law, a member of his wife's clan and therefore her tribe, he had good reason for settling in his wife's town, founding a trading post there, and finally becoming Town Chief. His son James must have been born about 1770, and he became the most important figure in the Vann family. He had several wives, as polygamy was generally accepted among the Cherokees, but on the other hand he supported our Christian civilization as a means of progress for the Cherokees. He is decribed as good-natured but violent and a heavy drinker, but a shrewd trader with a very enterprising mind. In 1808 he shot his brother-in-law in a political duel that was fought with pistols. In 1809 he was killed by some relative in accordance with old tribal law, and probably as the result of some secret condemnation. His will was the object of a decree of the Council of Chiefs and Warriors, which annulled its provisions. These precious documents are herewith cited.

WILL OF JAMES VANN

To All To Whom It May Concern:

Know Ye that I, James Vann, being in the full possession of my health, and mental faculties and about leaving home on business of importance, have thought proper to make this my last will, and I do dispose of my personal property in the


*They were seen and copied in the Jackson County Court House in 1953 by Mrs. Herschel W. Smith of Winder, Ga. who called them to our attention at that time.
In the Name of God, Amen!

1st—I do hereby bequeath unto my beloved wife, Peggy, daughter of the late Wallace Scott, deceased, all my household furniture.

2nd—All the rest and residue of my property which I shall or may die possessed of be that whatsoever with me and wershsoever it may, I give and bequeath unto my natural son, Joseph, to have and to hold forever.

AND I do hereby constitute and appoint my trusty friend ..........................................................

executors of this my last will and Testament, requesting them to execute the same according to the true intent and meaning thereof. At the same time hereby revoking all former wills by me made.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I hereunto set my hand and seal this 7th day of May, in the year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eight.

Witnessed by:
Leroy Hammond
Lewis L. Hammond
James Vann (SEAL)

According to Dr. Henry Malone’s CHEROKEES OF THE OLD SOUTH (U. of Ga. Press, 1956) pp. 188-191, and note 39, Vann’s will was filed in Jackson County because he had holdings in that county. The Inferiour Court supported the Decree of the Chiefs and Warriors which was based on the first written laws (Sept. 11, 1808) of the Cherokees authorizing the newly legalized Regulating Parties to give their protection to children as heirs to their fathers’ property.

DECREES OF THE COUNCIL concerning J. Vann’s Estate, April 17, 1809

UPON a full consideration of the writing of James Vann, deceased, purporting to be a will, and also a Decree of the Chiefs and Warriors in Council, revoking, annulling and setting aside the said writing, determining that the same is not agreeable to the Rules and Regulations and Laws of the said Nation, and it being their wish that the property should be divided among all the children of the said James Vann and his widow.

IT IS ORDERED that the property be disposed of as directed by the said Council, as far as is possible and the will is being considered by this Court illegal and of no effect, and that David Fly Esq. be sworn in as administrator of the estate with the exception of the said writing, and that the Decree of the Council of said Nation be entered upon the Minutes of this Court.

WHEREAS a National Council having been held at this place, and the will of the late James Vann, deceased, having been read to the Chiefs in Council, and it appears from the face of the will that all the property was left to one child, named Joseph Vann, but the Chiefs think that all the other children are of one father, who ought to receive some share of the property, and that the widow, who ought to share alike with the other children, and to remain in the house as long as she pleases, and no doubt Joseph Vann will agree in an opinion with the Chiefs, when he comes to the years of maturity.

WHEREFORE, we the Chiefs and Warriors in Council make the following provisions for the children and the executors will allow the greater share to Joseph, and after which you are to allow the other children and widow such part of the property as you may judge right and to the following children: Mary Vann, Robert
Vann, Lily McNair, Sally Vann, Jenny Vann, and allow some to Jesse Vann, and the executors will take of the farm and Ferry at the Chattahoochee.

The Chiefs and Warriors expect that Peggy will treat the people as usual when they come to your house.

DONE IN COUNCIL, in Oostenaleh
April 17, 1809
Charles Hicks

Rabbit
John Beamer
Noon Day
Cotaquarkee
The Chip
Woman’s Nephew
Oclahetta
Chatloe
Path Killer
The Boots
Sam Mush
Rushing Fawn
Tusquokeukee
The Bug
The Hawk
Going Snake

In addition to this will we found at the Gilcrease Foundation in Tulsa, Oklahoma the original document of a court ruling which provided that the widow of James Vann have the right to a number of slaves from the estate.

About James’ son Joseph Vann, known as “Rich Joe”, there is available much fuller information. He was born on February 11, 1798. His Cherokee name was Teaultle. He seems to have taken good care of his inherited property, and to have increased his wealth. When he was expelled from his house and land early in 1834, he did not join any other group of Cherokees. He and his family had to spend the winter in a poor log cabin, but he did succeed in saving some of his wealth. Later he received at least some compensation for his lost property. He settled in Webber’s Falls on the Arkansas River, and became a great enthusiast for racing his steamboat the “Lucy Walker”, on the rivers. Once too often he overheated its boiler, and he died in the ensuing explosion, on October 26, 1844 near Louisville, Kentucky.

We do not doubt that more facts about the Vann family will be obtained. At a brief visit at the Archives of South Carolina in Columbia, we had an opportunity to look through some records, and thanks to the kind help of the staff, we found that the name of Vann occurs in South Carolina already early in the 18th century. One Vann (not Clement) obtained together with a McNair* and another man, a license to trade with the Choctaws in the middle of the 18th century. A Mrs. Vann, bequeathed a field to some heir. And finally, in the latter part of the same century, a Vann was pardoned for horse stealing! This means that he must have been a fairly influential citizen, because horse stealing at that time was usually a very severely punished crime!

Inasmuch as we do not feel it our task to collect all biographical data about the family, we would like to refer the reader to an article by Penelope Johnson Allen, called “Leaves From the Family Tree”, published in the Chattanooga Sunday Times on July 26, 1936. There are however certain points in this article which we hope Mrs. Allen can explain. For example: How can one reconcile the statement “the year of his Clement Vann’s coming among the Indians 1780” with “Clement Vann and his wife, Fa-wli . . . . had issue among other children: I James Vann, born 1768? And another puzzle: “Delilah Vann, who was born 1795 . . . married Dec. 30, 1801”, (at the age of six years?).

*One of James Vann’s daughters married a McNair.
TAVERN AND FERRY

The Georgia Historical Commission has been interested for a long time in the Vann Tavern and Ferry sites (9 Fo. 52, 53, 54 and 44) and in the possible preservation of the remaining buildings there. The main objective of the archeological investigation of the Vann Tavern (once the Boyd Farm at Oscarville, Forsythe County) was to establish some facts about the relationship between the white settlers and their trade with the aborigines, Cherokee, in their territory. The excavations, which began in February 1954, seemed to be an urgent matter because the area in which the Tavern was situated was soon to be flooded as a result of the construction of the Buford Dam, a Federal project.

The Tavern must have been erected at some time after 1804, since the Federal Road, leading through the Cherokee County, was prematurely opened by James Vann late in 1804 . . . after the Spring Place meeting. Although the new road followed in general the Indian trail, it did not do so at that point. The old trail crossed the shallow waters of the Chattahoochee about a mile further north east, while the road with its ferry crossed at a point of deep water and in a straighter line.6

The house, originally a log structure, covered with weather boards, and had been enlarged by additional rooms. The farm overlooked the river bottoms from eroded hills of red clay, with outcroppings of rough quartz. One barn, an old log building, belonged to the early period, probably before or about the time that the Boyd family acquired the property (1851).

Directly below the house in the bottom land we found a slight elevation extending as a smooth ridge parallel to the river, and in the direction of the nearby Summerour Mound. At the spot where the Federal Road once crossed this ridge, the surface of the ground was strewn with evidence of five to six thousand years of human occupation. The fact that the ridge below the Tavern reveals this long occupation, and also the fact that no Indian town was ever reported as existing in this spot, permits the conclusions: a) that this spot was geographically of special importance, and b) that although Vann needed deep water for his ferry, he still chose a location which must have been known as a preferred camping ground and likely on an alternate trail.

Further to the south west in the direction of the Summerour Mound, an Indian village site had already been found in the course of River Bottom Research by Dr. Joseph R. Caldwell. We should like to take this opportunity of expressing our gratitude to Dr. Caldwell for the invaluable help that he gave us during our work in this general area.

Near the Tavern we found an old refuse pit which produced early 19th century china as well as an old stone bead, household goods and iron parts. In the above mentioned village site, all the pottery that we found was Cherokee check-stamped. There was a confusion of post holes, but also two rather small hearths. The entire area seemed to be a temporary camping ground. The structures did not follow any pattern and we must even consider the possibility that trees were used as supports, and thus incorporated into the structures. Among the material found here were a few bits of old, broken glass, pieces of metal, and one hand wrought nail, definite indications of contact between Indians and white traders. We therefore may consider this camp as contemporary with the Tavern.

Further towards the river began the village site which surrounded the Summer-

our Mound and therefore belongs to a much earlier period than the tavern. In a deep cooking pit here we found Middle Swift Creek pottery.

On the highest point of the small ridge, just below the Tavern and close to the track of the old Federal road, the surface of the ground displayed material dating to about eight thousand years ago. “Old Quartz” (cf. J. R. Caldwell’s Clark Hill material) blades and scrapers, projectiles, archaic knives, Stallings Island aplitic blades and points, parts of a pre-pottery steatite bowl, Kellog pottery, as well as Etowah, Lamar and Cherokee. Most striking is a microlithic graver which may belong to the period of finely worked, flint “Mississippi points” found near by. Besides this Indian material, there also occurred bits of crockery, glass, nails and a lead bullet. It is probable that the house of the ferry attendant stood here.

On the river bank we found the spot where the ferry once must have been. Examination of the area across the river from this point showed clearly the connection of the Federal Road and the ferry. It seems most likely that also on the left bank of the Chattahoochee there stood a ferry building, and a spot was found which could be the house site. (Prof. Goff mentioned such a house site to us).

We would like to quote a page of Rev. F. R. Goulding’s book “Sapelo” (1870). It offers a contemporary description of the ferry. Rev. Goulding then a boy (1817) was travelling with his father.

“In the course of two or three days, we came to a river, which was crossed by means of a ferry-boat, the first that I had ever seen. It was a broad, shallow, flat-bottomed thing, with double floor built of very thick planks, having space enough for a large wagon and team, and making one think of an ordinary plank-bridge turned bottom upwards. A rope of twisted hide was stretched across the river and fastened to a tree on each side. The flat was pulled across by means of this rope.

“The river was very beautiful, its waters clear as crystal, and overhung to their very edge by luxuriant trees and vines, growing in the rich banks, so different from the muddy rivers of tidewater, flanked with wet marshes or miry swamps. A short distance above the ferry the river was double: for there the waters of two rivers unite in their sparkling race to the Gulf of Mexico. The Chestatee above the junction and the Chattahoochee below it, formed the boundary, at that time, between the ill-starred Cherokees and the white people of the State of Georgia.

“Near the ferry, and in sight of numerous smokes from Indian houses on the other side of the river, was a large trading-post. This was abundantly supplied with knives, hatchets, axes, gunpowder, lead, looking-glasses, beads, and gaudy calicoes of red, yellow, and blue, conspicuously festooned to attract the attention of Indian purchasers. Little money was received or expected in payment: the goods were exchanged for showy moccasins, dried venison, bear meat, cane baskets, and skins of all sorts, from those of the bear and panther, and the rich peltries of the beaver and otter, down to those of the mink.” Later in the course of his description, he speaks of the hundreds of drunken Indians camping near Vann’s Tavern and the Trading Post. This would seem to confirm our theory of a “rather temporary camping ground”.

Our hope to preserve the original Tavern on the Boyd Farm is fullfilled. The area is now flooded and the water will rise eight feet above the roof level. The beautiful valley with its fertile land and marks of millenia of history is already drowned. It is bitter for those who is the short span of a century had begun to put down roots. They are washed away to make room for a project which seems almost of doubtful importance in our Atomic age. So far as time and means permitted, we
hope to have taken the most necessary steps to preserve the memory of this place. Aerial photographs and topographical maps have been secured and are in the files of the Georgia Historical Commission. The Tavern itself was purchased by the Commission and given to the New Echota Cherokee Foundation Inc. in Calhoun, Ga. We stripped the building of its late additions, and moved it, including the forty ton chimney, together with the well-house and the barn, to New Echota. In November 1956, the money was finally made available to begin the delicate and costly task of reconstruction. Inasmuch as Vann’s Tavern had undergone many striking changes in its 150 years we decided to restore it as it had been at the time of New Echota. Following various indications, we therefore built it as of about 1825. It is now standing on the site where once stood Horn’s Tavern, which had faded away from the fields of New Echota, leaving behind only small traces and a filled-in well.
THE CHEROKEES BECOME A CIVILIZED TRIBE

by

Henry T. Malone

Department of History

Georgia State College

During the first part of the nineteenth century the Cherokee Nation of Indians underwent a distinctive transformation. With the help of Christian missionaries, friendly government agents, and wise counsel from within the tribe, these Indians became more nearly civilized—in the white man’s sense—than any other red men of their day. Within three decades many Cherokees had adopted much of the white man’s way of life, including his government, his agriculture, his religion, and his food, clothing, and shelter.

This unusual Indian development began after the American Revolution. During that war the Cherokees had the misfortune of fighting on the losing side. Following several heavy losses to white soldiers, the Indians were pushed southward into an area stretching from Eastern Tennessee through Western North Carolina and Northwest Georgia into Northeastern Alabama. Within this beautiful region of fertile valleys, rolling hills, and numerous rivers the Cherokee Indians had to begin life anew. Nearly all of them turned to agriculture, especially when game supplies in the new country were found to be in less abundance than in their former hunting grounds. For many years previously they had practiced a rude sort of agriculture. But now they began to farm as white men farmed. They built cabins and barns and tried to make most of their living from the soil.

Throughout this new era Cherokee Indians found some white men to be a source of help and encouragement. Naturally, there were many whites who hated Indians, and they continued to settle on the outskirts of Cherokee lands in increasing numbers. Frequently they led militia companies into tribal territories in search of missing livestock or hunted for Cherokees suspected of crimes. But there were a few white men who treated the Cherokees with friendliness and kindness. Notable among these were two agents of the United States government, Colonels Benjamin Hawkins and Return J. Meigs.

During the years 1799 to 1801 Benjamin Hawkins served as United States Superintendent of Southern Indians. In this position he had control over the Cherokees and he paid frequent visits to their territories and tribal councils. Hawkins was especially interested in seeing the Cherokee become civilized, and his reports to the War Department indicate that these Indians were quickly settling down on small farms.¹

When Colonel Return Jonathan Meigs was named United States Agent especially for the Cherokees in 1801, these Indians began to receive even greater help from the American government. He distributed farming implements and household utensils to Indian men and women, along with expert advice on their use. He stood up for Indian rights at treaty conferences; and encouraged Cherokee efforts to reform their government along more practical lines. Agent Meigs recovered stolen property, settled disputes, gave medical aid, and ordered out intruders. He was useful to missionaries, too, for he was much interested in their projects. None of his deeds shows better his deep friendship for the Cherokees than that which brought about his death. On a cold night in January, 1823, the eighty-two year old Agent slept

¹—The best account of Hawkins' life and contributions is Merrit B. Pound, Benjamin Hawkins—Indian Agent (Athens, Ga., 1901). Also useful is Letters of Benjamin Hawkins (vol. IX, Collections of the Georgia Historical Society, 1916).
in a tent so that an aged Cherokee Chief might have Meigs' comfortable quarters. The result of this kind and generous act was a siege of pneumonia which led shortly to his death.²

Another group of white men who aided Cherokees were the missionaries. From early times white preachers had ventured into the Indian country hoping to spread the Kingdom of God to the natives, but had had little success. Organized church groups, however, became more active in this work by 1801, and from that time more and more religious work was carried on in the Cherokee territories with far greater success. There were Moravian, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist missionaries preaching and teaching during the 1820's. It was the teaching which appealed most to the Indians, and many young and old Cherokees attended mission-schools all over the nation. Native understanding and acceptance of the white man's religion proceeded more slowly. As late as 1830 about ten percent of the Indians were claimed as members of the various churches.³

During the 1830's the missionary work was unhappily entangled with the problem of removing Cherokees to the west. Yet almost thirty years of the mission work had produced good results. Some Cherokees had become acceptable preachers who could work among their own people with much success. Many others had learned to read and write English by attending the white man's mission schools, and a few had even graduated into special mission academies in New England. During a period when the Cherokee Indian was receiving and learning to use the white man's farming tools and household equipment, missionaries brought further knowledge in that progress, along with culture, refinement, and religious improvement.⁴

Perhaps the most striking early change made by these Cherokees was the adoption of the white man's method of government. The earliest important change came in 1808 with the introduction of written laws. At first they were kept in English, for Cherokees had no written tongue of their own. Then, two years later, a sweeping decree did away with the time-honored system of clan-revenge. No longer were Indians to avenge murders by killing others in the particular clan of the suspected murderers. Now it was the duty of the Council to locate and try suspected criminals, and to administer any punishments necessary.⁵

The Council itself was revised in two important laws of 1817 and 1820. Prior to this period the National Council consisted of representative groups of local

²—The detailed records of the Cherokee Agency Files in the Bureau of Indian Affairs Records of the National Archives, Washington, D. C., include a considerable amount of materials pertaining to and/or written by Agent Meigs.

³—Missionary records of work among the Cherokee Indians are varie d and scattered. Harvard's Houghton Library houses a voluminous collection of letters, diaries, accounts, etc., of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which was largely Presbyterian and Congregationalist in aim and support. The Moravian records are housed in the Moravian Archives at Winston-Salem, N. C., but most of the manuscript material is in German. Adelaide Fries edited a translation of some of these in Records of the Moravians in North Carolina (Raleigh, N. C., 8 vols., 1943-55). Methodist activity accounted for more than 1,000 conversions among Cherokees. This process is interestingly described in Walter B. Posey, Methodism in the Old Southwest (Tuscaloosa, Ala., 1933), especially Chapter VI. For a summary of Baptist missionaries in the Cherokee Country see James W. Moffitt, "Early Baptist Missionary Work among the Cherokees," Publications of the East Tennessee Historical Society, XII (1940), 16-27.

⁴—Two works serve interestingly to illustrate the nature of this phase of missionary activity: Althea Bass, Cherokee Messenger (Norman, Oklahoma, 1936), which relates the life and contributions of the Rev. Samuel A. Worcester, missionary to the Cherokees in the East from 1827 until Removal; and Ralph H. Gabriel, Elia Boudinot, Cherokee, and His America (Norman, Oklahoma, 1941), the life of a Cherokee who became a licensed preacher and later Editor of the Cherokee newspaper.

⁵—A chronological understanding of these governmental developments may be gained from consulting Laws of the Cherokee Nation (Tahlequah, Cherokee Nation, 1852), which contains not only the enactments of the Cherokee Council but also the Constitution of 1827.
leaders usually called “Town Chiefs.” Often one of these whose power was strongest was referred to as “Principal Chief.” When a Cherokee Town Chief named “The Little Turkey” became Principal Chief late in the 1790’s he was often called “The Great Beloved Man of the Whole Nation.” Other important leaders of the next several years included Doublehead, James Vann, Black Fox, Path Killer, The Glass, and Charley Hicks.

In 1817 the Cherokee Council reorganized itself into two groups: the Standing (or “National”) Committee and the National Council. A few years later the entire nation was divided into eight districts, each of which was to send four delegates to the central government, which was to choose from its members a Principal Chief and an Assistant Principal Chief. Path Killer and Charley Hicks were chosen for these positions of leadership, which continued for nearly ten years.

Within the eight districts marshals and rangers were appointed to maintain law and order, and special court-houses established for each district. In 1823 the Cherokee government created a Supreme Court, which heard cases forwarded from the district courts, as well as cases against the Indian central government. Peace was to be kept in each district by a group of native soldiers called the “Light Horse Guard,” whose commanders were to cooperate with district marshals.

Indians elected to the National Council chose the members of the National Committee, who in turn elected the officers of the government—Principal Chief, Assistant Principal Chief, and Treasurer. A white man who visited the Indian legislature in 1822 recorded the names of those Cherokees then holding office. He named the following as members of the National Committee:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>John Ross</th>
<th>George Lowrey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richard Taylor</td>
<td>Cabin Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Baldridge</td>
<td>Sleeping Rabbit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Forman</td>
<td>The Hare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Beemer</td>
<td>Kee-la-chu-lee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kur-ro-hee-ih</td>
<td>Roman Nose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Downing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the visitor’s list of Council members, the following are examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Ridge</th>
<th>Old Turkey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Hicks</td>
<td>Choo-no-yuh-kee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrapin Head</td>
<td>Big Rattling Gourd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rising Fawn</td>
<td>Samuel Gunter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking Stick</td>
<td>Slim Fellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Feather</td>
<td>Gone to Sleep</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Cherokee government created a capital for the Nation in 1825 when the town of New Echota was established at the junction of the Connesaugua and Coosawatee rivers (near present-day Calhoun, Georgia). Here were built a council house, court house, and later, a printing office.

In 1827 Cherokees went still further in making their government like that of the white man. They elected delegates to a special convention and there wrote a constitution for the Cherokee Nation. Then in the summer of 1828 a national election was held for office in the new Constitutional legislature. Thus within a period of only twenty years the Cherokee Nation had made unusual progress in changing their government to a form strangely like that of the white man.

The frequent occurrence of Anglo-Saxon names among the leaders of the Cherokee is representative of another source of interest in Cherokee progress. Since early in the eighteenth century white tradesmen had resided in the Indian country, and had married into Indian families. Descendants of these white-red relationships were usually anxious to learn English, arithmetic, and the white man's way of living. Furthermore, they usually desired the same advantages for their children. Consequently the missionary effort benefited from these progressives, as did the other factors responsible for changes in the Cherokee way of life.

While these changes were taking place Cherokees were also improving their ways of life. In 1824 a census conducted by the Indian government revealed that a total population of about 15,000 Cherokees owned about 1,000 Negro slaves; 22,400 cattle; 7,600 horses; 40,000 swine; 3,000 sheep; 1,850 spinning wheels; 2,450 plows; 475 goats; 700 looms; 120 wagons; 12 saw mills; 20 grist mills; 55 blacksmith shops; 6 cotton gins; 10 ferries; and 9 stores.

The average Cherokee built a cabin for his family by splitting and notching logs, forming a one or two-room building. Split logs with unfinished edges usually formed the floor. Open fireplaces were used for heat, light and cooking. Some houses had lofts and porches. A few prosperous Cherokees built fine mansions, such as the James Vann house, a two-story brick building still standing near Chatsworth, Georgia. Similar progress occurred in diet and clothing.

Perhaps the most remarkable of all Cherokee changes came early in the 1820's. This was the adoption of a native written language, the invention of the half-breed Sequoyah (George Guess, Gist, etc.). With only a few months after the Cherokee Council adopted Sequoyah's language, several thousand Cherokees had learned its use. Hopes for greater Cherokee progress were very much alive, and much talk was heard in the Council of a national academy and a national printing press.

While the academy was not founded until after the Cherokees removed to the west, a printing press did emerge. With the help of missionaries from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, press, types, and other equipment for a newspaper were secured. As a result, the Cherokees became the first Indians to have a native newspaper. The Cherokee Phoenix, as it was called, began operations in the little printing office at New Echota on February 21, 1828, and lasted six years. Under the editorship of Elias Boudinot (a full-blood Cherokee) and later Elijah Hicks (a mixed breed) the little weekly paper published news and thoughts about Indian affairs in both English and Cherokee, and was eagerly read by hundreds of subscribers. The paper and press were of especial help to the Christianizing process.

Thus by the 1830's the Cherokee Nation of Indians were making outstanding progress along "the white man's road." There were Cherokee farmers, newspaper workers and readers, business men, preachers and church members, and statesmen. Perhaps they might have become very far advanced in civilization in their southern homelands if their progress had not been suddenly cut off by the appearance of white troops and settlers in large numbers, who forced them to move west.

7—The census was taken by the Indian government in 1824 and published in the Cherokee Phoenix in the issues of May 14 and June 11, 1828.

8—The standard source on the life of Sequoyah is Grant Foreman, Sequoyah (Norman, Oklahoma, 1938).

9—The writer has used a microfilm containing nearly every issue of the Cherokee Phoenix, micro-photographed principally from the collection in the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, and supplemented by several photographs from the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California. For a summary of the six years of the existence of the Cherokee paper, see the writer's, "The Cherokee Phoenix: Supreme Expression of Cherokee Nationalism," in the Georgia Historical Quarterly, (September, 1950), 163-88.
EDITED BY ELIAS BOUDINOTT.
EDITED WEEKLY BY ISAAC H. HARRIS.

NEW ECHOTA, WED.

AGED FOR THE CHEROKEE NATION.

TO ALL OTHER OFFICERS WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE DISTRICTS.

NEW ECHOTA, OCT. 11, 1836.

JNO. BONDS, PROCTOR N. COM.

MAJOR BRIDGE, Speaker.

Appellant—CHARLES HICKS.

A. MCGOW, Clerk of the N. Com.

E. BOUDINOTT, G. N. Com.

Resolved by the National Committee and Council. That a minor under the age of twelve years, whose tender age renders it improbable that he or she should be impressed with a proper 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 of a lesser crime or of a person insane without legal inducements, shall be found guilty of any crime with which he or she may be charged: Provided the act so charged in a criminal shall have been committed in the condition of such incapacity 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 prosecuted for such offence when committed as principal, and if found guilty shall suffer the same punishment as would have been inflicted on such child, lunatic or idiot, if he or she had possessed discretion, and had been guilty.

NEW ECHOTA, OCT. 14, 1836.

AGENTs FOR THE CHEROKEE NATION.

WHEREAS the persons herein authorized are empowered to receive subscriptions and payments for the Cherokee Phoenix.

HOMA HILL, Esq., Treasurer of the A.

CORRESPONDENTS.

Between Council and the United States, 1833. (Cont.)

The following is a note from the Office of the

NEW ECHOTA, WED.

AGENTS FOR THE CHEROKEE NATION.

WHEREAS the persons herein authorized are empowered to receive subscriptions and payments for the Cherokee Phoenix.

HOMA HILL, Esq., Treasurer of the A.

POVIDENCE

[Paragraph starting with "Honesty is the

...s").

[Paragraph starting with "Don't you think that

...rishes which

...arate and receive them into force and protection. The language of the

...s a submission, and accepts

...s failed.

...s completed was the au-

...selves into these monstrous operations.

...s territory of all

...s was made the subject of

...s which they may hold, has been

...s to them. Their original title is forever

...s, by the Constitution of the

...sletters, or of their representatives. This

...s a matter of distinction, to be con-

...s and dependant upon the

...s, the United States -

...s are twenty-four states and

...s which are found to

...s. The advantage is yours.

...s give, give stabil-

...s, and the states give obedience, sup-

...s..."

BROTHER:...We have

...h the admission into the
government of the United States. -

...s the government be-

...s the division, it

...s as relating to the

...s that Indians who have

...s, and..."