



2013

## "Kill the Indian, Save the Man," Americanization through Education: Richard Henry Pratt's Legacy

Lindsay Peterson  
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SENIOR HISTORY THESIS – COLBY COLLEGE

**“Kill the Indian, Save the Man”**

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**Americanization through Education:  
Richard Henry Pratt’s Legacy**

**Lindsay Peterson**

Spring 2013



**Figure 1.1: Photograph of R.H. Pratt.**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

When I began this project, I initially wanted to look at Americanization through education in regards to both Native Americans and immigrants. However, after my first look at the Richard Henry Pratt Papers Collection at Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, I soon narrowed my focus to solely Native American education and Pratt's efforts at Carlisle. In reading Pratt's writings on Native American education, in his own handwriting, my entire thesis project truly came alive for me. My research at the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, brought further enlightenment to my inquiries as I walked the school grounds that Pratt once graced with his presence.

I extend a great thank you to the manuscript collections staff at the Beinecke Library and the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center for the assistance and support they provided me.

To my fellow thesis-writers, a special thank you to you. Through the late-nights and ups and downs of this project, you kept me sane and on task. I would not have enjoyed "thesising" as much without you guys.

To my parents, family, and friends, thank you for your support throughout this entire process and your understanding as to why I never had free time this year.

Finally, but most importantly, this thesis would not have been possible without the full inspiration, motivation, and support of the Colby history department faculty. To Daniel Tortora – working as your research assistant inspired me to write a thesis and taking your class intrigued me to learn more about Native Americans. And last, but certainly not least, to my thesis advisor, Elizabeth Leonard – your guidance throughout my Colby College career is what made this thesis project possible. You have taught me how to write and research, and for that I am eternally grateful.

## Introduction

“Even wild turkeys only need the environment and kind treatment of domestic civilized life to become a very part of it.”<sup>1</sup> Richard Henry Pratt made this observation while preparing for Thanksgiving with his family in 1867 in response to his interactions with Native Americans on the frontier. He served out West as second lieutenant in the 10<sup>th</sup> United States Cavalry, an African American regiment. The basic idea behind Pratt’s mentality was that the Indians’ inferiority was cultural, not racial, and that even Native Americans could become educated and “civilized” if only given the same opportunities provided to white Americans, African Americans, and immigrants. Pratt continued to apply this logic to white and Indian children, saying:

It is a great mistake to think that the Indian is born an inevitable savage. He is born a blank, like the rest of us. Left in the surroundings of savagery, he grows to possess a savage language, superstition, and life. We, left in the surroundings of civilization, grow to possess a civilized language, life, and purpose. Transfer the infant white to the savage surroundings, he will grow to possess a savage language, superstition, and habit. Transfer the savage-born infant to the surroundings of civilization, and he will grow to possess a civilized language and habit.<sup>2</sup>

Richard Henry Pratt wanted to ensure that Native Americans were not “left in the surroundings of savagery.” He instead wanted Native Americans to learn English and the ways of middle-class, white, Protestant Americans in order “to possess a civilized language, life and purpose.” His efforts to fulfill this goal took Pratt from the western plains, to St. Augustine, Florida, to Hampton, Virginia, and finally, to Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where he established the first off-reservation boarding school for Native Americans, Carlisle Indian Industrial School, in

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867-1904* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience 1875-1928* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1995), p. 52.



1879. Pratt left a lasting legacy in his Americanizing efforts of the Native Americans, and the consequences of his efforts are still evident today.

Educators have applied the term “Americanization” in different ways throughout the country’s history, but at the heart of “Americanization” has always been the principle that the “other” needs to be integrated into American society in particular ways. This integration has generally focused on language (learning to read, write, and speak English), and the “other’s” acceptance of mainstream cultural traditions and practices. When I use the term “mainstream” in this analysis I am referring to the accepted norms, actions, and beliefs of the majority of nineteenth-century, middle-class, white Protestant Americans. While it would be ignorant to say there was strictly one uniform American culture in the time period under consideration, it is nevertheless safe to say that to be part of the “mainstream” in America one spoke English, went to school and church, supported oneself and one’s family financially either through agriculture or other means, and one lived near other Americans like oneself.

From the perspective of nineteenth-century white Americanizers like Pratt, in order for these criteria to be met, all “others” – and here specifically the Native Americans – were forced to give up their languages, cultures, and heritage. Some modern historians believe that the treatment of Native Americans, especially in the way they were educated, amounted to cultural genocide. In this paper, this interpretation is juxtaposed with a discussion of good intentions Pratt and other educators had when they embarked on their educating efforts. When looking back on the efforts of Pratt and his predecessors in regards to “Americanizing” Native Americans, it is important to do so not only through a twenty-first-century lens. Reflecting on historical events can provide contemporary insight for understanding Pratt’s efforts. However, it is important to analyze the actions of Pratt in their historical context in order to better understand his motives. It

is in this light that I aim to evaluate the intentions and legacy of Richard Henry Pratt. The ultimate question this thesis will investigate is, what was Pratt's legacy in regards to Native American education and "Americanization" through education as a whole?

This paper has three sections. It begins with a brief general history of Americanization through education, in order to provide the context for the efforts at Carlisle. In this section I will also examine the Native American situation in the United States in the nineteenth century, as well as their earlier educational opportunities, in order to provide background for how Carlisle fits into the larger picture of Indian education. Next, I will introduce Richard Henry Pratt and the process of how the Carlisle Indian Industrial School emerged. I will also examine Pratt's vision and the programs at Carlisle and their effectiveness. The third part of this thesis will examine the mixed memories of Pratt in order to determine his ultimate legacy.

## **PART ONE: Setting the Scene:**

### **Early Americanization Attempts and White-Native American Relations before 1879**

#### **The History of Americanization through Education**

The history of "Americanization through education" began even before America gained its independence. Although they did not use this phrase, when Cotton Mather and the Puritans arrived in New England they had a desire to create a "City on a Hill," which led to a very homogenized society that emphasized conformity.<sup>3</sup> While Mather and others focused on white settlers, they applied the same basic principles to the Native Americans they encountered. In 1672 the Pilgrims wrote that "if any of the Indians shall be brought to civility, and shall come

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<sup>3</sup> Robert Carlson, *The Quest for Conformity: Americanization Through Education* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1975), p. 17-18.

amongst the English to inhabit in any of their plantations, and shall there live civilly and orderly, that such Indians shall have allotments among the English.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, early in the country’s history there was not only a stress for uniformity among whites, but this homogeneity extended to, and was expected of, Native Americans. What this Pilgrim writing seems to indicate is that if Native Americans acted like whites and accepted their way of life, the two groups could, in theory, live in harmony.

Once America gained its independence from England in the late eighteenth-century, the uniformity Mather encouraged evolved into what can be called “Americanization.” Noah Webster wrote textbooks, the first of which was published in 1829 and sold over twenty million copies, used for Americanization that focused on creating a uniform language and “harmony of the United States.”<sup>5</sup> Newly printed dictionaries stressed the uniqueness of the American language with specific pronunciations and the American spellings of the English words.<sup>6</sup> In addition to language, the Americanization effort established an overall separation from the country’s colonial past through a unified religious-political identity. The Americanizers focused on the rigidity of European religion and class, and the oppression and the lack of freedom found throughout Europe.<sup>7</sup> Americanization played a key role in solidifying the nation’s independence and creating a sense of national identity. The “true” Americans were increasingly understood to be the colonists who had fought for freedom and who in turn wanted any newcomers to the country to incorporate themselves into this society and adopt its principles and practices.

From this foundation, Americanization became a fundamental component of education. Schools aimed not only to Americanize “others” in the early national period, but also to make

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<sup>4</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, *The Indian Industrial School Carlisle, Pennsylvania*, 1979 reprint of 1908 text, p. 51-52, Collection on Richard H. Pratt 1862-1972, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center.

<sup>5</sup> Carlson, *The Quest for Conformity*, p. 42.

<sup>6</sup> Carlson, *The Quest for Conformity*, p. 43.

<sup>7</sup> Carlson, *The Quest for Conformity*, p. 43-44.

sure that white Americans themselves could read and write the English language and adhered to a certain set of “American” values. Instead of allowing different groups to maintain their own languages and cultures, Americanizers demanded that these groups assimilate. This phenomenon continued from the seventeenth century through the twentieth century, and even to today.

### **Native American Experience before Carlisle**

Whites’ attempts to educate Native Americans in their ways dated back to the arrival of the first Europeans to North America. As already noted, Cotton Mather focused on creating uniformity among the colonists in New England and, similarly, influenced the Native Americans in the vicinity. Moreover, some European missionaries focused specifically on “civilizing” the Native Americans even before the arrival of permanent settlers. From the start, these missionary reformers generally focused on Indian youth, as missionaries commonly deemed the older generations no longer capable of becoming civilized as they were too set in their ways. In examining the efforts of Christian missionaries, like Reverend John Eliot, Thomas Mayhew, and Eleazar Wheelock, this principle is evident.

These first educators of the Indians sought to “Christianize, civilize, and assimilate Indians into European culture.”<sup>8</sup> In the Northeast, Jesuits established missions beginning in 1611, which predates the arrival of the English in the Northeast and shows how important it was in the eyes of even the first European explorers in America to conform these Native inhabitants to their way of life.<sup>9</sup> While these missionaries focused on teaching students prayers and the tenets of the Catholic faith, the schooling they provided also taught students how to read and write in order to further their religious understanding. From the earliest attempts of white people to educate

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<sup>8</sup> Jon Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), p. 15.

<sup>9</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 19.

Native Americans, the emphasis was clearly on teaching the students how to read, write, and speak in the language of the missionaries. While not all of the early missionaries were English speakers, they all viewed their European languages as superior to the Native tongues.

Similar to the efforts in the Northeast, the 1606 royal charter for Virginia expressed a “desire for the Furtherance of so noble a work...in propagating the Christian Religion in such People, as yet live in Darkness and miserable Ignorance of the true Knowledge and Worship of God.”<sup>10</sup> King James of England organized a campaign to collect money in 1617 to build churches and schools to educate the Native Americans, but not much came from his efforts.<sup>11</sup> The more common approach to converting Native Americans before the 1640s, as the colonists understood it, was for the Virginia colonists to simply live in a godly and civilized manner to set an example for the natives.<sup>12</sup>

While substantial efforts did not materialize in Virginia, in New England, Native American education continued. The English Parliament passed a charter on February 7, 1662, for “the Company for the Propagation of the Gospell in New England,” which was referred to as the New England Company (NEC).<sup>13</sup> The NEC’s focus was the conversion of Native Americans in New England and their funding allowed Reverend John Eliot and Thomas Mayhew Sr. (and Jr.) to do just that.<sup>14</sup>

Reverend John Eliot arrived in New England in 1631 and established a school in Roxbury, Massachusetts, even before receiving financial support from the NEC. He soon created a series of self-governing praying towns where Indians could come together, dress, and live like the

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<sup>10</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 25.

<sup>11</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 25-26.

<sup>12</sup> Linford Fisher, *The Indian Great Awakening: Religion and the Shaping of Native Cultures in Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 23.

<sup>13</sup> Fisher, *The Indian Great Awakening*, p. 25.

<sup>14</sup> Fisher, *The Indian Great Awakening*, p. 26.

Puritan colonists. The best known praying town was established in Natick, Massachusetts, in 1650. Eliot also translated the bible into various Native American languages in an effort to convert more tribes. Interestingly, the Harvard charter in 1636 seemed poised to offer a new opportunity for Native Americans in regards to their education, as the charter included provisions for an Indian College. However, Harvard never implemented the Indian College plan.<sup>15</sup>

Thomas Mayhew Sr. and his son, Thomas Mayhew Jr., took a slightly different approach from Wheelock with Native Americans on Martha's Vineyard in the 1640s. Mayhew Sr. bought the Martha's Vineyard land and, together with his son, set out to educate the Native Americans living there. The Mayhews stressed the importance of instilling the belief in the Christian God as the basis for civilizing the Native Americans.<sup>16</sup> Much like Eliot, the Mayhews learned the native languages of the people in order to have more conversion success.

The schools the Mayhews set up on the island provided literacy training and education for women.<sup>17</sup> In including the women it is possible that the Mayhews hoped to extend the Christianizing process from mothers to their children. If so, this tactic was successful, as the conversion of a few Wampanoags on Martha's Vineyard led to a continuation of the trend in future generations. Mayhew Jr. also saw the necessity of training Natives as preachers and teachers in order to make the process of Christianization and education self-sustaining.<sup>18</sup> After Mayhew Jr. was lost at sea while travelling back to England for supplies in 1657, Mayhew Sr. took control of the efforts. He attempted to institute a feudal land system that included inheritance.<sup>19</sup> For Mayhew Sr., the conversion of Native Americans to Christianity was seen as

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<sup>15</sup> Genevieve Bell, "Telling Stories Out of School: Remembering the Carlisle Indian Industrial School 1879-1918" (PhD Dissertation, Stanford University, 1998), p. 27.

<sup>16</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 28.

<sup>17</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 28-29.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Dresser, *The Wampanoag Tribe of Martha's Vineyard: Colonization to Recognition* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2011), p. 52.

<sup>19</sup> Dresser, *The Wampanoag Tribe of Martha's Vineyard*, p. 54.

the first step to bringing the Natives into a “civilized” life based on Western ideas of private land ownership.

It is very probable that Native Americans did not accept the new religion entirely without some resistance because they had enjoyed their own traditions for generations, but the fact that families passed on this new religion from one generation to the next is evidence that the Mayhews had convinced the Native Americans, at least in some measure, of Christianity’s validity. It also suggests that the Mayhews treated the Natives with considerable respect, working more *with* these people than in the dominant and overbearing fashion of some other missionaries. However, because of the geographic location of Martha’s Vineyard, the conversion and Americanization efforts of the Mayhews toward the Wampanoag people remained isolated on the island.

Meanwhile, back on the American mainland, Rev. Eliot established fourteen praying towns between 1651 and 1674. These praying towns included 1,111 Indian inhabitants who, supposedly, willingly cut their hair, wore English clothing, adopted Anglicized names, and overall, accepted a Europeanized life.

In 1675, King Philip’s War erupted in the region, leading to the destruction of the praying towns as well as a severe depopulation of both Native Americans and Europeans in New England; five thousand Indians and 2,500 colonists died. The death figures for Native Americans were so high because they fought on both sides of the conflict. The Wampanoags, Massachusetts, Narrangansetts, Nipmucs, Pocomtucks, and the Abenaki fought against the New England colonists who enjoyed the support of the Mohegans, Pequots, Mohawks, Christian Wampanoags and other Christianized Native Americans.<sup>20</sup> In addition, colonists imprisoned

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<sup>20</sup> Fisher, *The Indian Great Awakening*, p. 25-27; See Figure 2.1 – a map of Native American tribes in New England at the time of King Philip’s War.

some Native Americans and sold them to slavery in the Caribbean.<sup>21</sup> This war was at least partly a reaction against efforts of Europeans to make the Native Americans conform to European ideals, which illustrates that not all Native peoples welcomed the civilizing efforts of Europeans. Also, many white colonists were uncomfortable with the elevated status of Christianized Native Americans, to their supposed equals, in the praying towns. Despite this sentiment and the destruction of the praying towns, funding continued from the NEC to missionaries and ministers in New England. Thus, the war was only a slight setback in the conversion process.<sup>22</sup> As Eliot wrote to Robert Boyle, the NEC governor, in 1680, “The Lord’s work still goeth on among them.” The printing of 2,000 additional copies of the Indian Bible in 1686 led Eliot to write to Boyle, again with a sense of optimism, that, “Our Indian work yet liveth, praise be to God.”<sup>23</sup> Despite the extreme loss of Native American life during King Philip’s War, the conversion attempts continued.

In the aftermath of the devastating King Philip’s War, Christianizing efforts persisted with Eleazar Wheelock. Wheelock was born in Windham, Connecticut, studied at Yale University, and became a leader of the Great Awakening and a prominent Christianizing agent in New England who, like Eliot, benefited from NEC funding.<sup>24</sup> His biggest success was the conversion of Samson Occom. In 1743, Wheelock began to teach Occom, a Mohegan Native American, how to read. Occom went on to become an ordained Congregational minister in 1759 and travelled to England to raise money for “the education and instruction of youth of the Indian

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<sup>21</sup> Fisher, *The Indian Great Awakening*, p. 27.

<sup>22</sup> Fisher, *The Indian Great Awakening*, p. 29.

<sup>23</sup> Fisher, *The Indian Great Awakening*, p 28.

<sup>24</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 29.



Tribes in this Land in reading, writing, and all parts of Learning which shall appear necessary and expedient for civilizing and Christianizing Children of Pagans.”<sup>25</sup>

Despite Occom’s efforts to secure money for additional Native Americans to become Christianized, however, he seems to have doubted the sincerity of the ministers he worked with, writing, “It seems to me that they are very indifferent whether the poor Indians go to Heaven or Hell. I can’t help my thoughts; and I am apt to think they don’t want the Indians to go to Heaven with them.”<sup>26</sup> These words show that Occom was aware that even if Native Americans converted and led a Christian life they would never enjoy the same privileges of white Christians. From examining the manuscripts of Occom the nature of this divide becomes evident from the fact that Occom, an ordained minister, seems to have only given sermons to Native American audiences.<sup>27</sup> It is possible that Wheelock believed Occom would experience more success in converting Native Americans than white ministers would and did not believe white audiences would respond well to an Indian minister.

In addition to not all white Americans acknowledging the sanctity of Occom’s conversion, many Native Americans did not support, and questioned, his religious decisions. Occom wrote to his mentor, Eleazar Wheelock, in 1756, about some Indians’ concerns for his safety.<sup>28</sup> While some of these apprehensions can be chalked up to the hostility between tribes in the New England area in the eighteenth-century, it is also very possible that because of his status as a Christianized Native American he was a target for attacks.

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<sup>25</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 33.

<sup>26</sup> Samson Occom, *The Collected Writings of Samson Occom, Mohegan: leadership and literature in eighteenth-century Native America*, ed. Joanna Brooks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 86.

<sup>27</sup> Manuscripts Related to Samson Occom and Eleazar Wheelock’s Early Indian Students, Dartmouth Digital Library Collections.

<sup>28</sup> Letter, Samson Occom to Eleazar Wheelock, November 12, 1756, Manuscripts Related to Samson Occom and Eleazar Wheelock’s Early Indian Students, Dartmouth Digital Library Collections.

Despite the sometimes unwelcoming character of white Americans and the apparent hostility from some Native Americans, Occom still dedicated the entirety of his life to attempting to Christianize other Native Americans. When he was 61-years-old in 1784, he wrote, “To All the Indians in The Boundless Continent.” In this work, Occom attempted to connect with his widespread audience as “an Indian also, your Brother and you are my Brethen the Bone of my Bone and Flesh of my Flesh,” and he described the “one, Great good Supream and Independent Spirit,” who was all powerful.<sup>29</sup> Occum tried to explain the Christian religion in a way he hoped his Native readers would understand. In spite of his extensive efforts to convert fellow Native Americans, however, the majority did not follow in his footsteps. While Occom is viewed as a “success” from the perspective of the European missionaries, there were also failures. Unfortunately, in studying the religious conversions and Americanization of Native Americans we are limited to the sources the missionaries left behind, and in many cases they did not record their failures.

In addition to focusing on Christianizing the Native Americans, English colonists also wanted to domesticate the Native American girls in order, through them, to civilize the entire race. To this end, in the 1760s Eleazer Wheelock established the Moors Charity School in Lebanon, Connecticut. This school’s mission was to “remove Indian youth from tribal influences and maximize their contacts with civilized life.” In particular, the school aimed to teach young Native American girls skills in “all the arts of good House wifery” and it did so by spending the majority of the time teaching these skills and not focusing on teaching them reading or writing.<sup>30</sup> While not all colonists at this time were concerned with Native Americans, the Americanizers,

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<sup>29</sup> Occom, *The Collected Writings of Samson Occom, Mohegan*, p. 196.

<sup>30</sup> Bell, “Telling Stories Out of School: Remembering the Carlisle Indian Industrial School 1879-1918,” p. 27.

such as Wheelock, wanted to structure Native American society along the same gender lines found in mainstream society.

Efforts to educate and Americanize Native Americans continued into the nineteenth century. However, there was no widespread success. Of the over four hundred treaties the United States government signed with tribes, 120 included provisions dealing with education, but it seems that none brought significant results. A 1794 treaty between the federal government and the Oneida, Tuscarora, and Stockbridge Indians (located in current-day New York) provided for a teacher to instruct the Indians on how to be millers and sawyers.<sup>31</sup> This would have been an opportunity for the U.S. government to provide Native Americans with the necessary training to become what might be considered functioning members of society with Americanized jobs of millers and sawyers that would, theoretically, enable them to live in a similar way as white Americans. However, the treaty promises never fully developed.

Additionally, in 1795 the government established the factory system. This system of government-operated trading posts permanently tied the Native Americans economically to the United States government for trade goods. From the government's perspective, the idea was that if the Native Americans needed whites for food and other goods they would not attack them or endanger the peace, thus avoiding war. The United States fulfilled its goal of limiting war with the tribes, but it set a dangerous precedent for the way the government would deal with Native Americans.<sup>32</sup> The factory system relates back to the subject of education for Native Americans because it illustrates the government's focus on subjugating the race, instead of trying to integrate the tribes into American society – the ultimate goal of Richard Henry Pratt.

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<sup>31</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 41.

<sup>32</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 42.

In the early nineteenth century the federal government favored keeping Native Americans isolated on their reservations instead of bringing them into mainstream society – to fit in with the accepted norms, actions, and beliefs of the majority of nineteenth-century, middle-class white Protestant Americans. Thomas McKenney, who became superintendent of Indian trade in 1816, offered an alternative plan for Native Americans – relocate them west of the Mississippi River, but educate them so that they could survive as a race. McKenney lobbied Congress for funding to educate Native Americans, believing that if they received an education they would be able to survive and support themselves. He spoke to a House committee in 1818, stating:

In the present of our country, one of two things seems to be necessary: either these sons of the forest should be moralized or exterminated....Put into the hands of their children the primer and the hoe, and they will naturally, in time, take hold of the plough; and, as their minds become enlightened and expand, the Bible will be their book, and they will grow up in habits of morality and industry, leave the chase to those whose minds are less cultivated, and become useful members of society.<sup>33</sup>

McKenney looked to the Native American experience and realized that if something was not done they would become an extinct people. Through his lobbying efforts McKenney secured the passage of the Indian Civilization Act that provided funding for religious groups to educate the Native Americans. In addition to the religious component, McKenney also emphasized teaching Indians, specifically the children, the English language and agricultural skills. The Indian Civilization Act established the Civilization Fund, which helped to pay for eighteen new Indian reservation schools and for subsequent schools until the government repealed the act in 1873.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 43.

<sup>34</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 43-44.

President James Monroe's secretary of war, John C. Calhoun, oversaw the birth of the Civilization Fund and insured that the government would get its money's worth from its investment in Native American education. Calhoun demanded that teachers at Native American schools "impress on the minds of the Indians the friendly and benevolent views of the government towards them, and the advantages to them in yielding to the policy of the government and co-operating with it in such measures as it may deem necessary for their civilization and happiness."<sup>35</sup> Calhoun, essentially, insisted that teachers of Native American students "civilize" the students to the extent that the students would "give in" to the efforts of the federal government.

In 1824, Calhoun attempted to institutionalize these beliefs of Native American education in the creation of the United States Office of Indian Affairs under Thomas McKenney's leadership. By this time, 32 Indian schools existed, educating 916 students on reservations.<sup>36</sup> In addition to advocating the necessity to educate Native Americans, McKenney also supported "emigrating Indians," or spending federal money to relocate tribes west of the Mississippi away from the white American population. As the commissioner of Indian Affairs, McKenney's responsibilities included to report annually to the secretary of war.<sup>37</sup> In his 1828 report he wrote,

But the question occurs, What are humanity and justice, in reference to this unfortunate race? Are these found to lie in a policy that would leave them to linger out a wretched and degraded existence, within districts of country already surrounded, and pressed upon by a population whose anxiety and efforts to get rid of them are not less restless and persevering than is that law of nature immutable, which has decreed that, under such circumstances, if continued in, they must perish? Or does it not rather consist in withdrawing them from this certain destruction,

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<sup>35</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 44.

<sup>36</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 44.

<sup>37</sup> After 1849, when Indian Affairs was placed under the jurisdiction of the Department of Interior, this report was directed to the secretary of the interior

and placing them, though even at this late hour, in a situation, where, by the adoption of a suitable system for their security, preservation, and improvement, and at no matter what cost, they may be saved and blest?"<sup>38</sup>

McKenney seems to have been genuinely concerned about the survival of Native Americans as a race and strongly advocated on their behalf, but he did not support a system of integration into mainstream society.

McKenney remained in his position until 1830 when President Andrew Jackson's appointee, Samuel Hamilton (1830-1831), took over as the commissioner of Indian Affairs. The tone of Hamilton's annual reports differed from McKenney's. In 1830, Hamilton wrote, "The act to regulate trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes, and to preserve peace on the frontiers...is the principal one that governs all our relations with the Indian tribes."<sup>39</sup> Notably, he did not include any mention of educating the Native Americans or saving their race. Hamilton's successor, Elbert Herring (1831-1836), similarly, did not follow in the path McKenney had shaped. Instead, Herring's annual report for 1832 repeatedly refers to the Native Americans as "barbarous," "aggressive," and "hostile." He writes, "On the whole, it may be matter of serious doubt whether, even with the fostering care and assured protection of the United States, the preservation and perpetuity of the Indian race are at all attainable, under the form of government and rude civil regulations subsisting among them."<sup>40</sup> Like McKenney, Herring made reference to the survival of the Native Americans, but he did not seem to offer the same federal government support for the race. This change of tone is attributed to the different character of

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<sup>38</sup> Thomas McKenney, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, Washington, D.C. Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 1, 1828, p 80.

<sup>39</sup> Samuel Hamilton, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, Washington, D.C. Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 26, 1830.

<sup>40</sup> McKenney, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, p. 163.

each commissioner, as well as, possibly, the increased interactions between Native Americans and white Americans as settlers moved further west.

In Andrew Jackson's eight years in office he had three different commissioners, leading to discontinuity in the position. Jackson most likely appointed these three men for two reasons – 1) because they supported him politically and 2) they shared his view on Native Americans. Jackson was known for exploiting the spoils system and appointing people who supported him politically in the election to governmental positions. Second, Jackson himself was hardly eager to support the Native Americans. It is evident through actions he took as president that he did not respect their race and saw no possibility of them integrating in to mainstream American society. Most notable among Jackson's actions are the 1830 Indian Removal Act and the 1838 forcing of the "Five Civilized Tribes" from their land in the Southeastern United States to current day Oklahoma, in what came to be known as the Trail of Tears.<sup>41</sup> Despite the fact that the Cherokee had, in many cases, assimilated to the ways of whites, Jackson demanded that they leave the only home they had ever known. He forced them from their land with the help of the U.S. military, even though the Cherokee had the blessing of the Supreme Court and Chief Justice John Marshall to remain.<sup>42</sup>

T. Hartley Crawford, the commissioner of Indian Affairs beginning in 1838, after Andrew Jackson was out of office, further recognized the necessity of teaching Indian children

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<sup>41</sup> Even though Andrew Jackson was no longer president in 1838 he had set the process in motion to expel the Cherokee before he left office. Martin Van Buren was simply carrying out Jackson's policy.

<sup>42</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 48-49; *Worcester v. Georgia* was a Supreme Court case in 1832 in which the Court found that states do not have jurisdiction over Indian land. The Cherokee Nation had its own sovereignty and thus the national government had no authority in the area. In response, President Andrew Jackson said, "John Marshall has made his decision; now let him enforce it." The forced evacuation of the Cherokee was brutal, but supposedly came with a promise that if the Native Americans remained beyond the Mississippi River they would not be disturbed. This was not to be the case, as the federal government continued to intervene with the Native Americans. Jackson was able to change the federal government policies towards Native Americans so drastically because of his power as president to appoint a leader of the Office of Indian Affairs. Pratt often pointed to the corruption of the governmental Indian offices, and this lack of continuity began very early in the creation of the Office of Indian Affairs under President Andrew Jackson

“useful” agricultural and homemaking skills, saying in 1842 “the greatest good we can bestow upon [Indians] is education, in its broadest sense – education in letters, education in labor and the mechanic arts; education in morals; education in Christianity.”<sup>43</sup> Congress created the Department of the Interior in 1849, which would include the Office of Indian Affairs (later known as the Bureau of Indian Affairs). It is not apparent that this departmental change had much impact on the federal government’s treatment of the Native Americans and missionary education to Native American children continued.

The year 1849 was also important because the discovery of gold in California spurred the emergence of the idea of manifest destiny– that it was the fate of white Americans to occupy the land from sea to shining sea, with disregard for the land’s original inhabitants. The entire continent was claimed for the United States, and for the white settlers specifically, with no regard to the land’s original occupants. In addition, as white people moved across the country, they spread a particular form of “civilization” across the continent. With the Gold Rush of 1849 settlers rushed westward for land and gold, violating the precarious divide that had existed between whites and the Indians. Since the arrival of European explorers in North America, the Indians had been pushed westward and treated with disrespect as white settlers took the land and resources they desired without providing compensation for Indians.<sup>44</sup>

The government was not very focused on Native American affairs in the following decade, as the Civil War absorbed the government’s energies. Instead of intervening in Native American education, by the mid-nineteenth century the federal government’s answer for educating Native Americans seemed to be reservation day schools. The federal government

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<sup>43</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 46.

<sup>44</sup> These interactions were often of a violent nature. In the 1860s the federal government established the Doolittle Committee to determine the causes for continued violence between white settlers and Native Americans west of the Mississippi River. In their final report after a tour of the West in 1865, this committee acknowledged the corruption of the federal government in the handling of Native American issues but did not provide a solution for the problem.



funded the creation of these schools on the outskirts of Indian reservations and they acted as “educational outposts of civilization.”<sup>45</sup>

Following the Civil War, Ulysses S. Grant became president in March 1869 and in his first inaugural address he stated, “The proper treatment of the original occupants of this land – the Indians – is one deserving of careful study. I will favor any course toward them which tends to their civilization and ultimate citizenship.”<sup>46</sup> This was a bold claim for a president – that Native Americans should become citizens. Grant’s overall agenda towards Native Americans was his “Peace Policy” that was designed to improve relations between white settlers and the Natives. This plan included federal support for an increase in educational programming.<sup>47</sup> A symbolic example of Grant’s support for Native Americans was his appointment of Ely S. Parker as commissioner of Indian Affairs, the first Indian to head the Indian Bureau.<sup>48</sup>

As commissioner, Parker established the Board of Indian Commissioners to oversee the appointment of Indian agents and teachers for on-reservation schools; however, this organization never had enough power to overcome the status quo of below average Native American schools.<sup>49</sup> It is at this time that policymakers began to determine that reservation day schools were ineffective in assimilating Native American children because of the geographic proximity to their families and communities. Instead, reservation boarding schools emerged that would be located at agency headquarters. The headquarters were not located on the reservation, therefore eliminating the contact with family members once the reservation boarding schools emerged.

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<sup>45</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 28.

<sup>46</sup> First Inaugural Address, Ulysses S. Grant, March 4, 1869, Yale Law School: Lillian Goldman Law Library, the Avalon Project.

<sup>47</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 7-8.

<sup>48</sup> W.B. White, “The Military and the Melting Pot: The American Army and Minority,” (PhD Dissertation, University of Wisconsin 1968), p. 6; Interestingly, Ely Parker had previously acted as an interpreter for Seneca delegations and had sought to study law but was refused admittance to the New York bar because was an Indian.

<sup>49</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 61.

Officials hoped that there would be more control over the children in reservation boarding schools, as they would live at school for eight to ten months of the year.<sup>50</sup> At these schools, students became “civilized” – learning how to wear “clean garments of civilized men,” sleep in a bed, use utensils, and eat at a table.<sup>51</sup> In addition to these “civilizing” attempts, students also learned how to read and write and how to work to earn a living. While this model was viewed by many as an improvement, impediments to “civilization” remained, including continued contact with families. The issue of retaining the focus of students was central, as their families would visit the agency headquarters on ration day to receive their allotted flour, sugar, and coffee.<sup>52</sup> These interactions, as well as those that took place during vacation times, often contributed to problems with “relapse,” where students would forget the “civilized” habits they had learned and revert back to their tribal ways.

Although reservation day and reservation boarding schools continued to exist, the discovery of gold in the Black Hills of South Dakota in 1873 pushed the good-willed efforts of Grant in regards to Native Americans to the back burner, as economic motives dictated the federal government’s interactions with Native Americans. Instead of honoring the promises made with tribes, the federal government put its economic interests first. The federal government looked to gain financially from the gold in the West. Richard Henry Pratt later reflected on this event in recalling, the “dawn of a new and great emergency has [had] opened upon the Indian.”<sup>53</sup>

It is in this political atmosphere that Pratt embraced Commissioner of Indian Affairs Dennis Cooley’s observation that there was a better chance at progress in “civilizing” Native Americans at boarding schools, as compared to day schools, because it would be easier for the

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<sup>50</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 30.

<sup>51</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 31.

<sup>52</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 31.

<sup>53</sup> Address, “Re: civilizing the Indian,” 1879, box 19, folder 646, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

students to adopt the customs of civilized life if they were not in contact with “the idle and corrupting habits of savage homes.”<sup>54</sup> This examination led to the establishment of an additional attempt at Native American education – the off-reservation boarding school. He believed that the Native American students needed to be isolated from their families and communities to allow for a complete “civilization.” The off-reservation schools needed to be located in white communities where students would have the opportunity to observe civilization firsthand. However, it was also imperative that the boarding schools exist in an area where limited white prejudice against Indians existed.<sup>55</sup> Pratt viewed this as important because the community needed to embrace the Native Americans to include them in society. If prejudice existed, Native Americans would not have the chance to integrate into society and interact with white Americans, which would lead to the failure of the full effects of Americanization.

The idea for Carlisle Indian Industrial School took hold from this framework, in the mind of Richard Henry Pratt. The basis for educating Native Americans had transformed throughout the country’s history – first for religious purposes, next for economic reasons, and, with Pratt, ultimately, with citizenship and integration into society in mind.

## **PART TWO: Richard Henry Pratt and Carlisle Indian Industrial School**

### **Pratt’s Life**

Richard Henry Pratt was born to Richard Smalley and Mary Harrick Pratt on December 6, 1840, in Rushford, New York.<sup>56</sup> The family moved to Logansport, Indiana, in 1846 and his father soon left Indiana to join the Gold Rush in 1849. While his father was one of the few gold

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<sup>54</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 73.

<sup>55</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 56.

<sup>56</sup> Biography of Richard Henry Pratt, box 1, folder 1, Collection on Richard H. Pratt 1862-1972, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center.

rushers who were successful in finding gold, a fellow prospector in California killed him. As the oldest of three sons, it became Richard Henry Pratt's responsibility to drop out of school in 1853, at the age of 13, in order to support his family.<sup>57</sup> The young man shifted between jobs and earned money as a "printer's devil" (an apprentice in a printer's shop) and by splitting rails, managing to make ends meet for his family.

When the Civil War broke out in April 1861 with the assault of Fort Sumter, Pratt's army career began. Pratt campaigned in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Georgia, as a volunteer for the Union Army in the 9<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry and the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Indiana Cavalry regiments.<sup>58</sup> Following the war, Pratt returned to Logansport, Indiana, and tried to open a hardware store. Business was not good and Pratt was drawn back into the military life.<sup>59</sup>

On March 7, 1867, Pratt applied for a commission with the postwar army and was appointed second lieutenant in the 10<sup>th</sup> United States Cavalry, a unit made up of African American enlisted men and white officers. Pratt had received the brevet ranks of first lieutenant and captain during his Civil War service, and was therefore called "captain" during his frontier duty.<sup>60</sup> Pratt arrived at Fort Arbuckle, Indian Territory, in the spring of 1867 and thus began his "lifetime association with the American Indian."<sup>61</sup>

During his tour of duty with the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, Pratt oversaw African American "buffalo soldiers" and led Indian scouts. From his early observations it became clear to him that the Native Americans he came in contact with were not the "uneducated savages" they were often

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<sup>57</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. ix.

<sup>58</sup> Brad D. Lookingbill, *War Dance at Fort Marion: Plains Indian War Prisoners* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), p. 36.

<sup>59</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. x.

<sup>60</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. x.

<sup>61</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. x.

portrayed to be in the East.<sup>62</sup> Many of the Native Americans Pratt interacted with had received some English education at their reservation schools. Pratt wrote, “Their intelligence, civilization, and common sense was a revelation,” as he believed, originally, that he was out west to deal with “atrocious aborigines.”<sup>63</sup> Through his interactions with Native Americans, and also African Americans, as a result of his army assignment, Pratt realized the potential for civilization of the Native American race.

In 1867, while at Fort Arbuckle, Pratt observed, “Even wild turkeys only need the environment and kind treatment of domestic civilized life to become a very part of it.”<sup>64</sup> Pratt’s wife, Anna L. Pratt, had a similar epiphany. Mrs. Pratt had been familiar to some degree with Native Americans – “familiar with Indian atrocities that were too horrible to relate,” – as she accompanied her husband on his assignment out west. As time passed, however, Mrs. Pratt wrote, “We realized that they were untutored savages, and in many respects like ourselves, except we were civilized.”<sup>65</sup> This mentality was solidified after one particular interaction with a Native American woman. One day, Mrs. Pratt was in her house with her baby when she saw “the most miserable looking squaw I had yet seen” coming towards her. This Native American woman proceeded to enter her house and took Mrs. Pratt’s baby into her own arms. Mrs. Pratt reacted, screaming, “You horrid, dirty thing!” and took her baby back. Yet she soon understood the Native woman’s actions, as she “looked at me [her] in the most pitiful manner...at the same time making a mourning cry.” Mother to mother, this Native American woman communicated

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<sup>62</sup> From the Native American perspective, most interactions between Indians and the U.S. Army were violent confrontations. Etahdleuh Doanmore, one of the prisoners Pratt transported to St. Augustine, Florida, drew his interpretation of conflict between whites and Indians. His drawings provide insight into the Native American experience in regards to Pratt’s efforts. See Figure 1.10 in the appendix for Doanmore’s drawing entitled “Confrontation of Indians and U.S. Army.”

<sup>63</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 5.

<sup>64</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 24.

<sup>65</sup> Family Writings, Anna L. Pratt reminiscences, box 22, folder 718, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

that she had lost her own child, and Mrs. Pratt was “so moved that almost unconsciously I placed my baby in her arms...and I granted the request, to kiss my child, for this sorrowing mother was no longer revolting to me.”<sup>66</sup> Although Pratt’s wife was skeptical about Native Americans initially, viewing them as savages and people that could not be trusted, once she actually interacted with them she was able to see that they were human, too – capable of basic human emotions. Because she was able to relate to this woman Mrs. Pratt was able to see Native Americans as actual people.

In the same way, the observations Pratt made and the insights he gained while out west in Indian Territory with the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry became the basis for his decision to found the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. Pratt came to believe that Native American children needed an environment that would allow them to become “civilized.” The experiences he and Mrs. Pratt shared in the West also illustrate the good that could come from an off-reservation boarding school – that Americans with prejudice and predetermined notions about Native people could come in contact with them and realize that Native Americans were not as foreign as they had believed, and were, in fact, humans like themselves.

Because he dealt with African American “buffalo soldiers,” as well as whites, out west in the U.S. Army, Pratt often compared the Native American experience to the experiences of other groups, in light of the American ideals. Pratt found it problematic, for example, that Indian Scouts were dying to protect the ideals of the Declaration of Independence, specifically that “all men are created equal,” and the principles of the Constitution, while being “barred from these guaranteed opportunities.”<sup>67</sup> African Americans and immigrants had been, in his perspective, successfully integrated into American society and he wanted the same opportunities for Native

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<sup>66</sup> Anna L. Pratt reminiscences.

<sup>67</sup> Manuscript, Richard Henry Pratt, *The Indian No Problem* (later draft), box 20, folder 693, p. 9, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Americans. Pratt believed that “different skin color and different cultural background did not automatically produce an inferior being” and that given the same opportunities, Native Americans could also integrate into American society successfully.<sup>68</sup>

In analyzing the experience of African Americans and Native Americans, Pratt believed that language and industry were the “first essentials to the unity of peoples.”<sup>69</sup> The millions of African Americans who came from Africa to the Americas as slaves gained these skills, while each of the three hundred thousand Native Americans remaining in the late nineteenth century “continued a non-citizen, made a pauper” through federal policies that left Native Americans “forced, hired, and persuaded tribally onto reservations.” Pratt felt that this differential treatment was the “perfect illustration of inconsistency” on the part of the federal government.<sup>70</sup> While it is obvious that educational opportunities for blacks at this time were limited and poor, Pratt still felt this differential treatment was unjust.

Pratt hoped that if he provided education and training for the Native Americans they would become “civilized” and, eventually, integrate into American society. Throughout his time on the frontier Pratt had time to formulate his thoughts on Native Americans and he received the chance to implement his ideas when he was charged with looking after seventy-two Native American prisoners at St. Augustine, Florida.

### **Pratt Takes Native American Prisoners to St. Augustine**

After serving in the postwar United States Army since March 1867 and having been stationed at forts throughout the West for many years, in 1875, Richard Henry Pratt finally

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<sup>68</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. xvii.

<sup>69</sup> Pamphlet of Speech by Richard Henry Pratt, “Why Most of Our Indians Are Dependent And Non-Citizen,” 1914, box 2, folder 1, Collection on Richard H. Pratt 1862-1972, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center.

<sup>70</sup> Pratt, “Why Most of Our Indians Are Dependent And Non-Citizen.”

gained the opportunity to act upon his vision to civilize and Americanize the Native Americans. After writing to General Philip Sheridan in April 1875 expressing that he “desire[d] a change” from the West, Pratt received word in May that he would be placed in charge of a group of Native American prisoners from the Red River War and other conflicts. Under Special Order 99, issued on May 11, 1875, the War Department placed Pratt in charge of seventy-four “dangerous and desperate red men” captives.<sup>71</sup> Pratt was to take these prisoners from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida, and was to remain in “immediate charge” of these Indians until further orders.<sup>72</sup>

When the prisoners first arrived at Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida, Pratt hit a few roadblocks before he was able to begin trying to “Americanize” his captives.<sup>73</sup> Pratt did not initially have a full-fledged plan for Americanizing the prisoners, but instead began to integrate his ideas on a trial-and-error basis, one step at a time. Among other things, some prisoners died from the summer humidity and heat to which they were not acclimated.<sup>74</sup> In addition to the hot weather, the “depressing effect of being in irons” seriously affected many of the Native Americans’ health. However, according to Pratt in a letter he wrote to the secretary of war soon after the prisoners arrived in Florida, a number of the young Indians soon became “accustomed to their new mode of life and interested in educational pursuits.”<sup>75</sup> It is apparent that not all of the prisoners shared this sentiment, as some propositioned to Pratt to have their families join them.

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<sup>71</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 109; Louis Morton, “How the Indians Came to Carlisle,” *Pennsylvania History* (1962): 56.

<sup>72</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 155; White, “The Military and the Melting Pot: The American Army and Minority,” p. 117-118; It is interesting to note that critics of Pratt point to the fact that his motives for accompanying these prisoners to Florida “were not entirely altruistic,” as in 1872 he had been tried by court-martial “for refusing to serve as officer of the day on one occasion because he felt it was not his turn.” These critics viewed the assignment as more of a vacation and therefore did not think Pratt was worthy of taking time off before he earned his due. Pratt insisted, however, that he had been out west for eight years and wanted a change of scenery.

<sup>73</sup> Refer to Figure 1.11 in the appendix for a visual of Fort Marion.

<sup>74</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 39.

<sup>75</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 298.



However, it can be deduced from Pratt's statements that the majority of his Native American prisoners did not resist. It is possible, too, that the prisoners simply wanted their families to enjoy the benefits of education as well. In any case, the treatment these prisoners would experience was dependent on their jailor – and in this, the Indians were lucky to have Pratt.<sup>76</sup> If the prisoners had been under the charge of a mean-spirited person who saw no worth to the Native American race this jailor would have made life miserable for them. Pratt treated them much better than the expected conditions elsewhere – as humans capable of “civilization.”

Upon arrival at St. Augustine, Pratt removed the shackles of the Native American prisoners and they received military uniforms and haircuts. The transformation in their appearances is visible in Figure 1.2 and Figure 1.3 below. When Pratt distributed the old military uniforms, however, it was clear that a cultural gap existed. The Native Americans cut the legs off of their given pants to create clothing more analogous to their traditional wear. Pratt watched this happen and concluded the need for “immediate correction.”<sup>77</sup> The Native Americans received a lesson in how to “properly” wear the pants and Pratt demanded they wear the clothing “as the white man wore it” and not mutilate it.<sup>78</sup> According to Pratt the prisoners “soon became accustomed to the white man’s toggery and wore it with satisfaction to themselves.”<sup>79</sup> This description simplifies the process of the Native Americans changing their minds and accepting their new way of life. It is possible that the prisoners followed the orders to wear the clothing as it was given to them out of fear of consequences because it was the property of the United States government and only on loan to them. Pratt’s explanation is also probable – that the prisoners wore the clothing to “dress becomingly, like the people they were meeting daily, and thus rid

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<sup>76</sup> Morton, “How the Indians Came to Carlisle,” p. 58.

<sup>77</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 118.

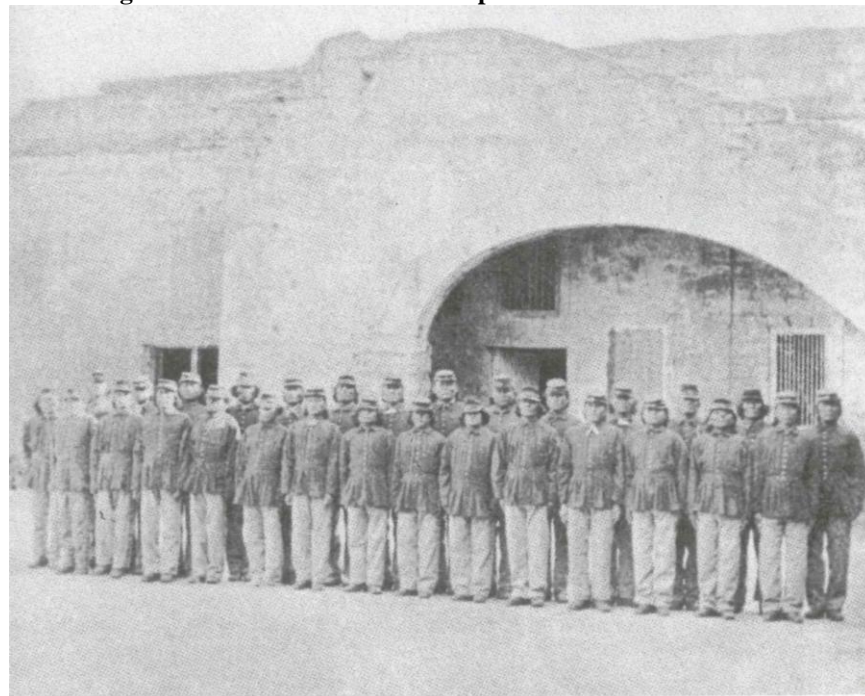
<sup>78</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 118.

<sup>79</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 119.

themselves of the stare of visitors who invariably noted every difference between them and ourselves.”<sup>80</sup> Precisely why the Native Americans changed their minds in regards to their clothing cannot be known; what is clear is that they knew they really had no choice in the matter.



**Figure 1.2: The Native American prisoners taken to Florida.**



**Figure 6.3: Prisoners in their new uniforms at Fort Marion.**

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<sup>80</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 118.

After Pratt began to make over the Native Americans in the image of the white man by cutting their hair and changing their clothes, Pratt began teaching them English, with the help of Miss Sarah Mather. Pratt believed there were four steps to Indian education: 1) teaching “usable knowledge of the language of the country”; 2) teaching a “skill in some civilized industry that will enable successful competition,”; 3) giving them “courage of civilization which will enable abandonment of the tribe and successful living among civilized people”; and, ultimately, 4) providing “knowledge of books, or education.”<sup>81</sup> The difference between the prior attempts at educating Native Americans, as described in part one, and Pratt’s efforts was the lack of religious language and the presence of the integration goal. Pratt was able to achieve the first three steps, at least partially, at St. Augustine.

In addition to teaching the prisoners English, Pratt also ran the captives through daily drills, which, as it turns out, “became the favorite period for visitors.”<sup>82</sup> Local people enjoyed witnessing this because it showed the Native Americans behaving in a non-savage way. While at the same time it kept the prisoners in a position that was inferior to whites – because they were still prisoners and had to obey Pratt’s orders – which helped perpetuate the image of “proper” race relations, in the mainstream white opinion.

Still, Pratt saw one downfall to the public attention. He feared that St. Augustine was not the ideal place to “advance” the Native Americans because the visitors wanted the army to “display” the “caged tigers” at all times, making the prisoners “simply objects of curiosity

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<sup>81</sup> Pratt, *The Indian Industrial School Carlisle, Pennsylvania*, p. 55.

<sup>82</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 120; In the appendix, Figure 1.12 shows the Indian prisoners at the ready at Fort Marion and Figure 1.13 illustrates Etahdleuh Doanmore’s remembrance of the roll calls, part of the daily drills at St. Augustine under Pratt’s direction.

here.”<sup>83</sup> Pratt countered this by issuing General Order No. 51 to help regulate the crowds by prohibiting them from visiting on Sundays.

It was not long before Pratt trusted the Native Americans to guard the fort, even providing them with the necessary weapons to guard themselves. As seen in Figure 1.4, below, Pratt issued the guards guns. He trusted these prisoners because he felt they were not necessarily bad people.<sup>84</sup> While these prisoners came from the Kiowas, Comanches, and the Cheyennes and were considered some of the most violent men of these tribes, Pratt did not believe this to be the case. Rather, Pratt observed that many of the young Native American men he had taken prisoner were “simply following their leaders, much as a soldier obeys his officers.”<sup>85</sup> Instead of as an opportunity for punishment, Pratt viewed their imprisonment as an occasion to reform these young men. Moreover, Pratt pointed out that if these were really the “bad men” of their tribes and he was able to successfully pacify them, it could only be imagined what he could do with the others.<sup>86</sup>



**Figure 7.4: Native American Prisoners as Guards at Fort Marion.**

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<sup>83</sup> Lookingbill, *War Dance at Fort Marion*, p. 84.

<sup>84</sup> White, “The Military and the Melting Pot: The American Army and Minority,” p. 117-118.

<sup>85</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 152.

<sup>86</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 238.

Pratt's decision to use the Native American prisoners as guards at St. Augustine made many townspeople nervous, but it proved to be an effective model. Bishop Henry Benjamin Whipple, the Episcopal Bishop of Minnesota and an advocate of Native American rights, reflected on Pratt's efforts at St. Augustine and wrote in the *New York Daily Tribune*, "Capt. Pratt's success is due to the fact that he has taught these Indians to obey."<sup>87</sup> Through his interactions with the Native American prisoners at St. Augustine, Pratt was able to show the country, and the public as far north at New York City, that the Indians could be civilized. While it can be argued that these prisoners were simply taught to obey on penalty of severe punishment, the dynamics of St. Augustine do not seem to support this theory. Pratt and others did not write about the need to use severe disciplinary measures, which leads to the conclusion that the threat of punishment was enough of a deterrent. Pratt trusted these prisoners and took the opportunity to "civilize" them through teaching them English as well as skills that allowed them to earn wages. However, Pratt viewed teaching obedience as a necessary first step because in order to make their education possible he had to make sure the prisoners would not be resistant and would also understand responsibility through serving as guards.

Pratt worked with this group of prisoners until April 1878 and was given very little direction in how to carry out his orders, which left the conditions of the imprisonment up to his discretion.<sup>88</sup> The War Department simply told Pratt that the chief quartermaster would provide the necessary arrangements for transportation, but there was no mention of supplies.<sup>89</sup> Once the prisoners and Pratt arrived in Florida it would all be in his hands. This lack of concrete directions made it so Pratt could "reform" these young Native American men in the way he saw fit once they reached Florida, and gave him the opportunity to implement many of his ideas about

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<sup>87</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 162-164.

<sup>88</sup> Biography of Richard Henry Pratt.

<sup>89</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 111.

Americanizing and educating them. He believed the “duty of the Govt. to these Indians...to be the teaching of them something that will be permanently useful to them” and he now had the chance to make this happen.<sup>90</sup> Pratt reflected on this objective with optimism, reporting to the commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1877, saying, “I am happy to be able to report a growing love for civilized ways, including labor for sustenance, increased area cultivated, gradual improvement in manner of living.”<sup>91</sup>

Through his interactions with his St. Augustine prisoners Pratt became even more certain that Native Americans could be civilized and integrated into mainstream, American society, and become self-sufficient in the “way of the white man.” In Pratt’s view this included speaking, reading, and writing English, as well as becoming an economically viable member of society. It is important, of course, to remember that these Native Americans had been self-sufficient in their own way within their tribes before. However, many tribes in the West had relied heavily on the buffalo for subsistence and by 1875 the buffalo population was depleted. This change in circumstances meant that the Native Americans had to change their way of life and Pratt believed that the government could, and should, provide the basics of vocational training and education to allow for integration into mainstream society.

Pratt also believed it was his “highest duty to correct the unwarranted prejudice promoted among our people against the Indians through race hatred and the false history which tells our side and not theirs, and which has been so successfully nursed by keeping them remote and alleging that they alone have irredeemable qualities.”<sup>92</sup> To facilitate this, Pratt gave the prisoners the opportunity to see American society up close and for local people and visitors to come to St.

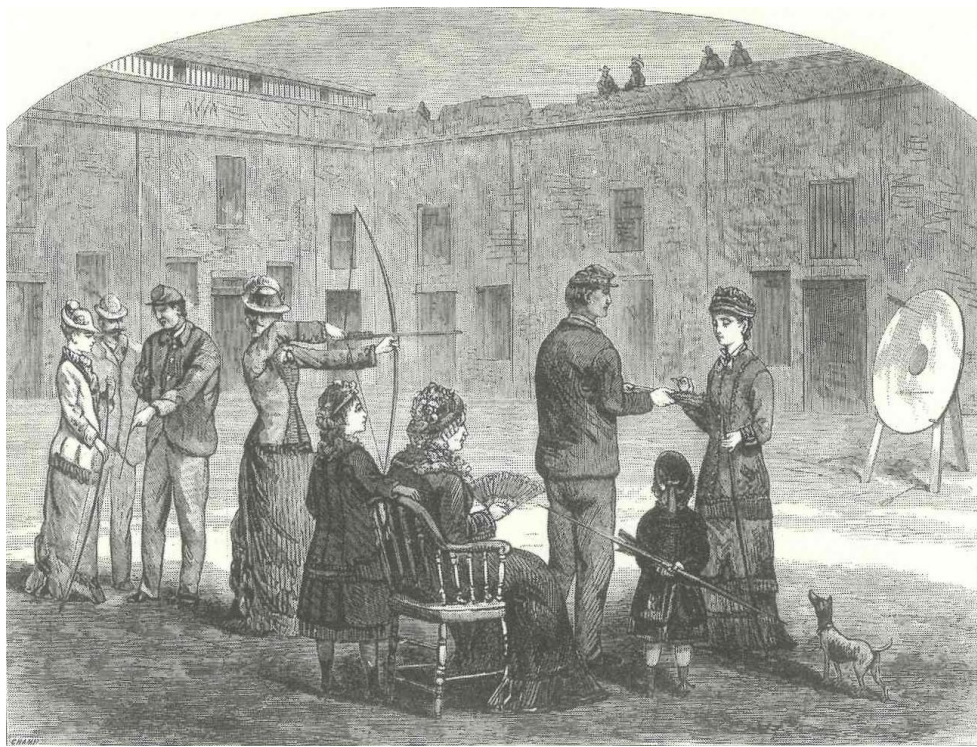
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<sup>90</sup>Letter, Richard Henry Pratt to General Townsend, June 29, 1875, box 20, folder 695, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>91</sup> Ezra Hayt, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, Washington, D.C. Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 1, 1877, p. 129.

<sup>92</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 120.

Augustine to see the Indians. One popular element of visits to the fort included archery lessons the Native Americans provided to townspeople and tourists for a fee.<sup>93</sup> An etching from *Harper's Weekly* in 1878 depicts this exercise (Figure 1.5, see below). The prisoners were allowed to keep the fees they charged for lessons. For observers the archery lessons represented the perfect example of Indian domestication by transforming archery into an act of showmanship and disregarding the importance archery played in Native American culture for the use of hunting and warfare.



**Figure 8.5: “Indian Prisoners Teaching Archery Lessons,” Etching. Illustration in *Harper's Weekly*, 11 May 1878.**

In addition to hosting visitors, Pratt's Indians also went out into the town. Indians went to bakeries to learn how to bake bread and also went fishing. They carried out many jobs on local

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<sup>93</sup> Linda Witmer, *Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, PA 1879-1918*, Cumberland County Historical Society, 1993, Collection on Richard H. Pratt 1862-1972, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center.

farms and had the opportunity to earn money through picking and packing oranges, working at a sawmill, and polishing sea beans for local curio shops.<sup>94</sup> Local grove owners “found the Indians increasingly satisfactory.”<sup>95</sup> Just as the prisoners could keep the money they earned from the archery lessons, the money they earned working could be kept or sent home to families on the reservations.<sup>96</sup>

Some townspeople petitioned Congress not long after Pratt and the prisoners arrived, “protesting against the Indian prisoners being allowed to go out to work.” However, the issue was resolved in August 1876 when, after Senator Charles Jones of Florida introduced a resolution, the Senate did not feel the need to act on the petition and it instead went into, as Pratt called it, “innocuous desuetude.”<sup>97</sup> In addition to the inaction of the Senate, a local grocer helped convince people that “the Indians were a great asset to bring visitors, who were the greatest source of income for the town.”<sup>98</sup> The townspeople did not pursue the issue further which seems to indicate that the initial resistance faded after it became apparent that the Native American prisoners did not pose a safety threat. While some locals were uncomfortable initially with the Native Americans having the freedom to go into town due to the stereotypical idea among white Americans that Native Americans were dangerous and savage, their presence was a huge economic asset to the town. The attraction of visitors to the area added to the overall income of the town, as these visitors needed places to stay, food to eat, and so forth.

As a result of Pratt’s experience with the Indian prisoners at St. Augustine his philosophy of Native American education developed further. Pratt compared the situation of educating Indians to that of helping drunkards – “reforming a drunkard by keeping him in a saloon would

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<sup>94</sup> Witmer, *Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, PA 1879-1918*; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 124-127.

<sup>95</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 128.

<sup>96</sup> Lookingbill, *War Dance at Fort Marion*, p. 87.

<sup>97</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 135.

<sup>98</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 134-135.



be quite as sensible as our method of trying to civilize and Americanize our Indians by keeping them separated in tribes on prison reservations excluded from all contact with our civilization and the advantages of our American life.”<sup>99</sup> Pratt knew that the environment Native Americans were in made all the difference in the education they could achieve.

This epiphany in regards to educating Native Americans came to Pratt while he was reflecting on the Kiowa escape plot in 1876. A group of the Native American prisoners had planned to escape from St. Augustine to be reunited with their families, but Pratt interceded and foiled the plan. Instead of heavily disciplining the planned escapers, however, Pratt overlooked this misconduct and gave them the same freedom and responsibilities they had had before, as he “had faith in them and believed that after this lesson there would be no more foolishness.”<sup>100</sup>

While this incident can be understood to demonstrate that not all Native Americans were content with becoming “Americanized,” it can also be explained in terms not unlike the townspeople’s initial resistance to the presence of prisoners – namely, that neither group was yet used to the idea of living together. After the Native Americans got used to St. Augustine, however, there were no further escape attempts. The townspeople also adjusted to the presence of the prisoners.

In addition to the importance of environment in his analogy between “civilizing” Native Americans and reforming a drunkard, Pratt also noted the need for the prisoners to learn a trade. He noted in his correspondence with the secretary of war in 1875 that criminals were taught trades “that may eventuate in placing them in a position to earn a livelihood after release.” His response to this situation was – “why not do the same for these people when they want it?”<sup>101</sup> Pratt aimed to make this possible by bringing the prisoners to study at Hampton Institute after their sentence was over.

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<sup>99</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 153.

<sup>100</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 151.

<sup>101</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 169.

## Native Americans at Hampton Institute

In April 1878, the War Department officially released the prisoners from Fort Marion to the Indian Bureau.<sup>102</sup> After their time at St. Augustine, many went home, but twenty-two of the Indians “were led to desire further development and training.”<sup>103</sup> It was reported in the 1881 Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs that the Florida prisoners that returned to their reservations “are...standing firm on the side of right, and as a result from their careful training while prisoners in Florida...they are the strongest lever we have at this agency in building up strength and hope for the future of their people.”<sup>104</sup> Even in their short exposure to “Americanization” Pratt was able to achieve results. For the prisoners that wished to continue their studies, Pratt was able to gain the support of the government to allow these students to attend Hampton Institute in Virginia. The general public, and most likely the government as well, viewed this as an “experiment” that Pratt and others ultimately would deem successful.<sup>105</sup>

Hampton Institute opened in 1868 under the leadership of General Samuel Chapman Armstrong as an educational opportunity for recently freed African American slaves. Armstrong believed that blacks “needed to learn the discipline and develop the character that came from productive labor,” and thus there was a focus on “education for life.”<sup>106</sup> This was much like Pratt’s view of Native Americans. In 1878, Pratt convinced General Armstrong to admit a group

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<sup>102</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 191.

<sup>103</sup> Biography of Richard Henry Pratt.

<sup>104</sup> John Miles, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, Washington, D.C. Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, October 24, 1881, p. xxxvi.

<sup>105</sup> Newspaper, *The Valley Sentinel*, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, October 17, 1879, box 22, folder 719, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>106</sup> Wilbert Ahern, “‘The Returned Indians:’ Hampton Institute and its Indian Alumni, 1879-1893,” *The Journal of Ethnic Studies* 10: 4 (1983): 102.

of his former Native American captives as students and he then secured four months of leave from the military to stay with them in Virginia.<sup>107</sup>

In addition to educating the Native Americans that had been at St. Augustine, the secretary of war allowed Pratt to select more Indian children to be educated at Hampton Institute. Special Order No. 190, signed in September 1878, extended Pratt's leave from his responsibilities with the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry and summoned him "for duty in selecting Indian children to be placed at the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute for a course of instruction."<sup>108</sup> Forty-three students arrived at Hampton and, like their predecessors at Fort Marion, were first "put through cleansing and vermin-destroying processes and habilitated in our garb." Seventeen of these Native Americans were the prisoners from St. Augustine, and the rest were Pratt's new recruits. The War Department and Secretary George McCrary had wanted Pratt to get fifty Nez Perces Native Americans, but after Chief Joseph resisted, Pratt recruited Native Americans from Fort Berthold in the Missouri River agencies.<sup>109</sup> Upon arrival at Hampton, Pratt noted, "in the course of a few hours [they] were a radically different and civilized looking crowd."<sup>110</sup> This was similar to the process that had taken place at Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida.

Some of the African American students were afraid of the Indian prisoners who first arrived on November 5, 1878, most likely because they shared the familiar stereotypes about the race – that they were violent, savage, and uncivilized.<sup>111</sup> This feeling intensified when the new Native American students came, especially those from the Sioux tribes. The people at Hampton knew vaguely about the history between the Sioux and the government and how they were a violent group. When the two races first met there was "fear and reprehension" on both sides, but

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<sup>107</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 192.

<sup>108</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 196.

<sup>109</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 197.

<sup>110</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 204; Morton, "How the Indians Came to Carlisle," p. 64.

<sup>111</sup> Donal Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute 1877-1923* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 31.

the interaction “struck terror in the hearts” of the black students.<sup>112</sup> From examining the sources it does not appear that Native American students knew much about African Americans at this point, so they did not have the share the same “terror” of the African Americans.

In addition to the tension between the African American and Native American students at Hampton, there was also anxiety within the Native American student population. Thirty-six Sioux were already at Hampton when thirteen Hidatsas, Mandans, and Arikaras from the Fort Berthold Agency arrived. The Fort Berthold Agency Native Americans had an ancient rivalry with the Sioux and these Indians complained that the Sioux threatened them and even carried knives in their shoes.<sup>113</sup> Despite these rivalries, Pratt and Armstrong avoided major altercations within the student body.

In creating the education system for the Native American students, Pratt looked to the experience of African Americans under slavery.<sup>114</sup> While this seems like a harsh comparison, his reasoning was sound. Pratt believed that under slavery the African Americans had learned the “domestic and industrial habits of ‘civilized’ Christian life.”<sup>115</sup> As he pointed out to an audience at the National Educational Convention, the ancestors of blacks had come from “the other side of the globe, and from a condition as purely savage as that of our Indians.”<sup>116</sup> Yet, since their freedom they had produced many professionals “worthy to stand upon the platform with those of

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<sup>112</sup> Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*, p. 35-36.

<sup>113</sup> Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*, p. 36.

<sup>114</sup> According to Pratt, the root of the differential treatment between African Americans and Native Americans was “the greed of the white man.” This greed had made African Americans into property, creating the incentive among white slave owners to “increase [slaves’] industrial capacity, to multiply [their] numbers, to make [them] forget [their] own tongue and learn that of the country.” Thus, in this way, the experience of African Americans as slaves in America set them up to have an advantageous entrance into mainstream society as compared to Native Americans. Although slaveholders denied African Americans an education as slaves, once they were freed they were able to become educated because they already knew English and the basic workings of white society and culture; Address, Re: Indian civilization before the National Educational Convention, August 11, 1883, box 19, folder 647, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana. Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscript Library.

<sup>115</sup> Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*, p. 37.

<sup>116</sup> Pratt, “Re: Indian civilization before the National Educational Convention.”

our own race in the same profession.”<sup>117</sup> While Pratt seemed to be exaggerating the progress African Americans had made in the mere twenty years since gaining their freedom, his point was still valid that African Americans and Native Americans experienced very different treatment and opportunities. Pratt examined slavery as a system in which blacks and whites interacted – the basis of Pratt’s vision for Native Americans at Hampton. Armstrong, however, had a different vision that segregated the African Americans and Native Americans from whites.

In the end, Pratt was not pleased with the nature of Native American education at Hampton and the idea that it was an “exclusively race school” where the two minority groups were educated together without contact with white students.<sup>118</sup> He also noted the tension between the races, and emphasized that there should not be a separation of non-whites from white society. Also, Pratt did not appreciate that he did not have sole authority over the education of the Native Americans at Hampton, as he did not have control over the education they received there. But Pratt also firmly believed that “the Indian” needed to be in contact with white people “to teach him to live and work and mingle freely with whites, thus removing the prejudice on both sides.”<sup>119</sup> For this reason he pursued the possibility of developing an institution where he could establish his own educational model for Native Americans. The federal government, in particular the Indian Bureau, noted that the progress of the Native Americans at Hampton had been “very satisfactory” and that “they [had] learned as readily as could have been expected.”<sup>120</sup> Because Pratt’s experiment first at St. Augustine, and then at Hampton, was deemed a success, the federal government entertained his pursuit of a separate school for Native American education, not in association with the reservations or missionary groups.

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<sup>117</sup>Pratt, “Re: Indian civilization before the National Educational Convention.”

<sup>118</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 213.

<sup>119</sup> Morton, “How the Indians Came to Carlisle,” p. 64-65.

<sup>120</sup> Hayt, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, p. viii.

In the spring of 1879 Pratt went to Washington to meet with German-American Carl Schurz, the secretary of the interior, reminding him, “You yourself, sir, are one of the very best examples of what we ought to do for the Indians... The Indians need the chances of participation you have had and they will just as easily become useful citizens. They can only reach this prosperous condition through living among our people.”<sup>121</sup> Pratt relied on Schurz’s experience as a German immigrant to help Schurz understand the importance of educating the Native Americans in off reservation boarding schools.<sup>122</sup> If immigrants could be educated and integrated into American society, Pratt believed Native Americans could do the same. Pratt suggested the abandoned military barracks at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, as a suitable place for a school. The barracks had closed in 1874 after complaints from the townspeople regarding noise on Sundays and it was “proving a political embarrassment” for the War Department that there was no use for this 27-acre installation.<sup>123</sup> Pratt also made sure to consult the leading citizens of Carlisle about his plan, gaining “another ally in his fight for the school” when he secured their signatures on a petition to Congress.<sup>124</sup> It is likely that the citizens of Carlisle endorsed this plan because, like the War Department, they wanted to see the barracks utilized. It is also possible that the residents recognized that the introduction of a school for Native Americans in their town would benefit their economy.

On March 19, 1879, Pratt received a letter from the War Department, directing him to go to Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania to inspect the place. On March 22, Pratt responded, writing,

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<sup>121</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 215.

<sup>122</sup> Pratt continued his comparison between Native Americans and immigrants, writing “If we had adopted the segregating Indian system for each language group of immigrants and held them in racial communities on reservations remote from the environment of our American life, it would have just as effectually prevented their Americanization... We have unlimited proof that Americanization is easily accomplished for hundreds of thousands of diverse language immigrants yearly, and also ample evidence that it can just as readily be accomplished for our few Indians, but the evidence also proves it can only come through giving the competitive opportunities for participating in the environment of America.”; Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 401.

<sup>123</sup> Morton, “How the Indians Came to Carlisle,” p. 66-67.

<sup>124</sup> Morton, “How the Indians Came to Carlisle,” p. 67.

“I have the honor” to report “the general adaptability of that post for the purposes of an Indian Industrial school for the benefit of our nomadic tribes.”<sup>125</sup> Pratt found barracks buildings that could be used as dormitories, as well as mess and kitchen rooms, laundresses’ quarters, stables, and buildings that could be used for blacksmith shops, a bakery, a commissary, and the quartermaster’s storehouse.

Pratt also recognized the location in Pennsylvania as ideal for his vision. It was far enough away from the West and the Indian reservations to remove the children from their cultures and deter students from running away. At the same time, the geographic proximity to Washington, D.C., would allow Pratt to easily show federal officials the students’ progress. Also, in general the location in the east was “closer to civilization.”<sup>126</sup> Pratt wanted the Native American students to interact with white Americans and being on the east coast made sense, as the majority of the country’s white population lived there.

In the 1878 Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Ezra Hayt stated that “education of their children” was the most efficient way to civilize Indians,” as was the goal for educational efforts towards Native Americans throughout the country’s history.<sup>127</sup> However, Pratt’s efforts were different because he not only wanted to educate and “civilize” the Native Americans, but then wanted to integrate them into American society. The government backed Pratt’s vision in September 1879 when Secretary of War George McCrary signed the order that gave Carlisle Barracks to the Department of the Interior for the purpose of creating an Indian school. That August, McCrary’s Special Order No. 194 stated that Pratt was approved “for

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<sup>125</sup> Letter, Richard Henry Pratt to War Department, March 22, 1879, box 14, folder 495, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>126</sup> Witmer, *Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, PA 1879-1918*, p. 12.

<sup>127</sup> Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, p. 71.

special duty with reference to Indian education” and that he would be reporting to Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz.<sup>128</sup>

Now that Pratt had permission to open an off-reservation boarding school for Native Americans, he needed more students than just those Hampton. For this purpose, Commissioner of the Indian Affairs Ezra Hayt granted Pratt “authority to proceed to the Indian Territory...to select one hundred and twenty (120) Indian youths.”<sup>129</sup> The federal government, particularly Secretary of Interior Schurz wanted Spotted Tail and Red Cloud, both Sioux Indian Chiefs, to have the “first chance” to send children to the school. Pratt would have preferred to first recruit the Kiowas, Comanches, Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and other groups from the Indian territory with which he had prior experience.<sup>130</sup> Instead, the government tied Pratt’s hands and wanted him to persuade the Sioux to send their children, who could then be used as a bargaining chip for good behavior. After the recent Red Cloud’s war the federal government wanted to calm the animosity between the Sioux and federal troops. The government thus used Pratt and his recruitment of Native American students as a political pawn to demand cooperation from the Sioux and other tribes. However, it became apparent that the use of students as collateral was not a successful strategy for the United States, as violence continued in the West.<sup>131</sup>

Moreover, Spotted Tail was deeply opposed to sending members of his tribe to Carlisle, saying “The white people are all thieves and liars. We do not want our children to learn such things.” Pratt, however, responded in a convincing manner via a speech to Spotted Tail:

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<sup>128</sup> Special Order No. 194, August 23, 1879, box 14, folder 499, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Ironically, the final approval of Congress did not come until July 1882, three years after the official opening of the school.

<sup>129</sup> Letter, Commissioner of the Department of Interior Hayt to Richard Henry Pratt, September 6, 1879, box 14, folder 495, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>130</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 314.

<sup>131</sup> This was especially seen at the massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890 many Sioux, including women and children, were killed unjustly.



Spotted Tail, you are a remarkable man. Your name has gone all over the United States. It has even gone across the great water. You are such an able man that you are the principal chief of these thousands of your people. But Spotted Tail, you cannot read or write. You cannot speak the language of this country. You have no education. You claim that the government has tricked your people and placed the lines of your reservation a long ways inside of where it was agreed they should be....If you, yourself, had had an education you might be owning the Black Hills and be able to hold them...If you had been educated, Spotted Tail, you might be helping to make the laws that take care of us in these United States...Spotted Tail, do you intend to let your children remain in the same condition of ignorance in which you have lived, which will compel them always to meet the white man at a great disadvantage through an interpreter?<sup>132</sup>

On the surface this argument seems to have been convincing enough, as Pratt noted how “enthusiastic” Spotted Tail and all of the Rosebud Indians became about getting their children a spot at Carlisle. Pratt wrote, “The Indians were so enthusiastic that repeatedly parents who had not tried to get their children into the party came forward and asked me to have their children go, and I could have had several times as many as my authority allowed.”<sup>133</sup> However, it is hard to believe that the Native Americans, especially the leaders, changed their minds in such a dramatic fashion. This suspicion can be confirmed by the observation that when Chief Spotted Tail visited Carlisle in its first year, he brought his children home with him because he was unsatisfied with the treatment they received. Specifically Spotted Tail did not approve of the erased Native American culture or the fact that Pratt was, in his view, turning the students into soldiers with all of the drilling. However, the rest of the students Pratt recruited remained at Carlisle. While there was initial skepticism by many Native American tribes about permitting Pratt to take their children east to educate them in the “ways of the white man,” Pratt was able to convince Native

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<sup>132</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 313.

<sup>133</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 318.

American leaders to allow 82 of their children from the Rosebud and Pine Ridge Agencies to attend Carlisle.<sup>134</sup>

In the same year that Pratt acquired the Carlisle Barracks to establish a boarding school for Native American students, he reflected on the subject of “civilizing the Indian.” Reflecting on early American history, Pratt noted that:

Heretofore the Indian had a vast country filled with game and abundance of the few things he required for his savage life. Generations of tribal wars and association with the wild beasts of the forests and the plains; heir to no higher ambition than was found in the practice and recital of deeds connected with the one or the other, he clung to his life of freedom with the greatest tenacity.<sup>135</sup>

It is in this context that Europeans colonized North America and first interacted with the natives. Pratt added that the “mass of the Indians” had “remained until very recently in the enjoyment of their savage life” until a change took place when “our civilized population from the east, has reached the heart of the continent.”<sup>136</sup>

Pratt highlighted that now the “dawn of a new and great emergency” had “opened upon the Indian.” He continued,

He is in childish ignorance of the methods and comes best to pureness. We are in possession of the information and help and are able to give the help that he now so much needs.... These men have reached this credible state of civilization in two or three generations, and that too under many unfavorable circumstances.<sup>137</sup>

It is in this context that Pratt viewed the establishment of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School as necessary in order to “save” the Native Americans from their “childish ignorance” and

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<sup>134</sup> Pamphlet, “How Carlisle School Originated” box 25, folder 776, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>135</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, “Civilizing the Indian,” Box 19, Folder 646, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>136</sup> Pratt, “Civilizing the Indian.”

<sup>137</sup> Pratt, “Civilizing the Indian.”

“civilize” them. Pratt believed the best “cure for this condition of the Indian” was education “reaching every Indian child of school age, and so arranged as to bring the subject as quickly and for the longest time possible into personal contact with the masses of our own children.”<sup>138</sup>

Carlisle was the next step towards Pratt’s implementation of this goal.

### **The Carlisle Indian Industrial School under Pratt**

On October 5, 1879, eighty six Indian children – 63 boys and 23 girls – arrived in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, with Captain Pratt. The students ranged in age ten to seventeen and, according to local observers, “their dress was curious, made of different cheap material, and representing all the shades and colors.” The arrival of these students was commemorated with photographs, Figure 1.6 and 1.7 seen below. A week later, on October 12, another fifty-eight Indian students arrived – including Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Kiowas, Pawnees, Comanches, Poncas, Nez Perces, Wichitas, and Seminoles. The townspeople noted the jewelry the Native Americans wore, cheap according to their standards; the beadwork of the moccasins; the blankets, and “all the varieties of aboriginal frippery” worn.<sup>139</sup> While observers considered some of the Indian children “very pretty,” others they found “extremely homely.” One described the group as a “motley crew.”<sup>140</sup> A newspaper account of the first Indian students’ arrival at Carlisle noted that all the children “possessed the large black eye, beautiful pearl-white teeth, the high cheek-bone, straight-cut mouth and peculiar nose.”<sup>141</sup> Even though the students wore the clothing

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<sup>138</sup> Pratt, “Civilizing the Indian.”

<sup>139</sup> Scrapbook of clippings compiled by A. Laura Pratt 1879-1891, newspaper clipping, “The Carlisle School: Eighty-six Little Indians on the Way to Civilization – An Important Enterprise,” box 28, folder 806, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>140</sup> Scrapbook of clippings compiled by A. Laura Pratt 1879-1891.

<sup>141</sup> Newspaper, *The Valley Sentinel*, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, October 10, 1879, box 22, folder 719, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

that they left the reservation with, observers had expected to see the students in more dramatic fashion, in “their native garb,” but they were disappointed.<sup>142</sup>



**Figure 1.6: Sioux Boys as they appeared on their arrival at Carlisle Barracks on the 5th of October 1879.**



**Figure 1.7: Sioux Girls as they appeared on their arrival at Carlisle Barracks on the 5th of October 1879.**

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<sup>142</sup> Newspaper, *The Valley Sentinel*, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, October 31, 1879, box 22, folder 719, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

November 1, 1879, marked the opening of the new school with, after the first two waves of student arrivals, 147 students. The Carlisle Indian Industrial School was open for the next twenty-four years and in total it educated over 10,000 Native American children from over 140 tribes.<sup>143</sup> The first years of the school's existence are valuable in examining the efforts of Pratt at Carlisle and in order to better understand the early days of the school it is imperative to examine firsthand accounts of the students who attended. The most famous primary source account of the Carlisle Indian School, *My People, The Sioux*, by Chief Luther Standing Bear, provides the closest thing we can get to an evenhanded account. Born on the Pine Ridge Reservation to an Oglala Lakota family, Standing Bear was the first Indian to "step inside the Carlisle Indian School grounds."<sup>144</sup>

When the first group of children arrived, Luther Standing Bear recalled how nothing was set up or ready at Carlisle, as it had previously been a "soldiers' home."<sup>145</sup> At first, the students "ran all over the school grounds and did about as they pleased"<sup>146</sup> before the Americanization process began. Based on the federal government's cooperation with Pratt in getting Carlisle set up, and based on the statements of the commissioner of Indian Affairs Ezra Hayt in the 1879 annual report, it seemed that Pratt was in good shape to get started. In this document, Hayt stated,

The work of promoting Indian education is the most agreeable part of the labor performed by the Indian Bureau. Indian children are as bright and teachable as average white children of the same ages; and while the progress in the work of civilizing adult Indians who

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<sup>143</sup> "Carlisle Indian Industrial School (1879-1918) Tribal Enrollment Tally," Barbara Landis, accessed March 4, 2013, <http://home.epix.net/~landis/tally.html>; It is interesting to note that in the introduction of the 1987 publication of Pratt's *Battlefield and Classroom*, it is noted that 4,903 Native American children from 77 tribes attended Carlisle. However, the numbers used in my analysis reflect the recent historical analysis of Barbara Landis in conjunction with the Cumberland Historical Society in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. For her breakdown of students and tribal affiliation, see Figure 3.2 in the appendix.

<sup>144</sup> Chief Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux* (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1928), p. 134.

<sup>145</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 134.

<sup>146</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 135.

have had no educational advantages is a slow process at best, the progress of the youths trained in our schools is of the most hopeful character.<sup>147</sup>

These statements suggest extreme cooperation on behalf of the Indian Bureau with Pratt's efforts of "civilizing" Native American students at Carlisle. However, Pratt soon learned that there was disconnect between what the Indian Bureau said about Indian education and what they actually did.

For example, when Pratt arrived at Carlisle with the first group of students the Indian Bureau had not sent the requested food, clothing, or other supplies. In addition, Pratt was frustrated that among the first furniture to arrive at Carlisle was one of the least necessary items, a small organ "to help in assembly singing."<sup>148</sup> And, when the Indian Bureau eventually sent clothing it was the "shoddiest of shoddy."<sup>149</sup> After the clothing acquired holes in the first week of wear, however, Pratt complained quite vocally, and the Indian Bureau then provided the necessary money to clothe the students properly. Still, it seems that the government's claim to support Pratt's agenda was not completely sincere. They were willing to provide what they viewed as the bare minimum, but nothing more.

Subsequently, Pratt continued to bump heads with the Indian Bureau in regards to food rations. The rations that the Bureau insisted on supplying would have left the children perpetually hungry, and Pratt recognized that this would not foster a positive learning environment and that it would be "impossible for me to conduct a school of hungry children with any hope of success."<sup>150</sup> Pratt adamantly requested that the Bureau adhere to the army's regular ration table, which, it should be noted, would have differentiated Carlisle from prior schools as

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<sup>147</sup> Hayt, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, p. vii.

<sup>148</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 323.

<sup>149</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 326.

<sup>150</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 327.

other Native American schools for which the federal government provided food received the lower standard of food rations. Pratt adamantly fought for this, however, showing he truly wanted Carlisle and its students to succeed. When Pratt asked Commissioner Ezra Hayt in the first year why the rations had been low, Hayt responded, “I knew no other way. No one had complained and I thought it right to economize.”<sup>151</sup> In the end, Pratt succeeded in securing the proper rations for his students. Much like the government’s initial support of the education of Native American students, the government here was thinking in economic terms instead of in terms of what was best for the students.

The economic motivation behind educating Native Americans was further seen when in 1882 Secretary of the Interior Henry Teller calculated that over a ten year period, the annual cost of war against Native Americans was about \$22 million – four times the cost of educating 30,000 children for a year.<sup>152</sup> Thus, the government funded Native American educational efforts, at least partly, because it would be “less expensive to educate Indians than to kill them.”<sup>153</sup>

In addition to problems Pratt ran in to with the Indian Bureau, he also had issues with the townspeople. He soon found it imperative to build a fence around Carlisle in the school’s early days because “the Indians were a great curiosity,” and the low fence that existed “enabled free access from every side, and the numbers and quality of visitors interfered with the work.”<sup>154</sup> This was similar to the problem Pratt experienced at St. Augustine, for which he had to issue General Order No. 51 to help regulate the crowds by prohibiting visitations on Sundays. Pratt secured money from the Indian Bureau and then built the fence with the help of the students. In addition to a fence being necessary to keep outside people from entering Carlisle, there was most likely

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<sup>151</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 327.

<sup>152</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 20.

<sup>153</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 20.

<sup>154</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 328.

also an implicit understanding that it would help to keep the students inside. From early in their attendance at Carlisle, the students learned that they were required to participate fully in their learning experience – building fences or in any other capacity Pratt deemed necessary.

The first step for the arriving students, as had been the case for the Native Americans at St. Augustine in Florida and at Hampton Institute, was to begin being remade in the image of white men and women. This included, first, a haircut and new clothes – much like the experience for Native Americans upon arrival at St. Augustine and Hampton Institute.

Before Pratt left Carlisle to go back to the Indian Territory to recruit more students, he “employed a couple of barbers to cut the hair of the boys.”<sup>155</sup> Two boys refused to allow the barbers to cut their hair because in their culture that symbolized severe mourning. Standing Bear overheard one of the older boys say, “If I am to learn the ways of the white people, I can do it just as well with my hair on.”<sup>156</sup> In films and popular culture references to Carlisle, this comment is often quoted as representing the sentiment of Indians in regards to the boarding schools. The reference is seen in Steven Spielberg’s television series *Into the West*, PBS’s *In the White Man’s Image*, and the Rich-Heape film *Our Spirits Don’t Speak English*.<sup>157</sup> Mrs. Pratt oversaw the haircutting while Pratt was out west recruiting students. On the night of the haircutting Mrs. Pratt was “aroused by a very discordant wailing, which grew in volume.”<sup>158</sup> She called for an interpreter and learned that the boy had cut his own hair. This defiant act symbolized the young Native American boy separating himself from his culture on his own terms, instead of allowing Pratt to define the process. Even though only two students seem to have adamantly opposed the

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<sup>155</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 324.

<sup>156</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 140.

<sup>157</sup> *Into the West*. DVD. Directed by Steven Spielberg. (U.S., Dreamworks Television, 2005); *Our Spirits Don’t Speak English: Indian Boarding School*. DVD. Directed by Chip Richie. (U.S., Rich-Heape Films, 2008); *In the White Man’s Image*. VHS. Directed by Christine Lesiak. (U.S., PBS Home Video, 1992).

<sup>158</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 325.



hair cutting, Luther himself reacted to his hair being cut in much the same way as the others – “it hurt my feelings to such an extent that the tears came into my eyes.”<sup>159</sup> Without his hair Luther felt he could no longer be an Indian and would instead have to be an “imitation of a white man.”<sup>160</sup>

While Luther Standing Bear admitted to feeling “lonesome...for my father and mother,”<sup>161</sup> when he recalled this moment, he also remembered feeling excited to receive white man’s clothing. He recalls, “How proud we were with clothes that had pockets and with boots that squeaked!”<sup>162</sup> This account contrasts with others in which former students remember the clothing, especially the stiff boots and woolen underwear, as uncomfortable.<sup>163</sup>

After the boys all had uniform, Americanized haircuts, not unlike the captives at Fort Marion, they were issued old Civil War army sky blue trousers, and the dark navy blue coats.<sup>164</sup> The girls similarly were given identical haircuts and dresses.<sup>165</sup> This clothing was affordable, but it contributed to the criticism many had of Pratt – that he was running a highly disciplined military institution. He insisted, however, that the boys’ uniforms were not designed to instill the feeling of a military school but instead were only used because of their cheap price. While many people did not believe this claim, it is entirely possible that Pratt truly was trying to economize and spread the funds he had as widely as he could manage to.

The dress code and expected appearances of the Carlisle students was strict. The only reference apparent in Pratt’s writings to Native Americans being allowed to dress in their typical attire was during Thanksgiving Day celebrations at Carlisle, as well as the student production

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<sup>159</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 141.

<sup>160</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 141.

<sup>161</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 139.

<sup>162</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 142.

<sup>163</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 108.

<sup>164</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 333.

<sup>165</sup> Photograph, “Our Little Girls,” Box 23, Folder 730, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

“Columbia’s Roll Call,” first performed at Hampton Institute and later at Carlisle.<sup>166</sup> On this occasion students dressed as soldiers, colonists, or in typical Native American attire. From Figure 1.8, below, it is not clear if the students were also able to celebrate their culture at this time, or could just pretend in their “costumes.”<sup>167</sup>



**Figure 1.8: Thanksgiving at Carlisle.**

After the students were made to look “American,” they needed to choose new names. In some cases the students chose their names from a list; in others, an untranslated Indian name was shortened or used as a surname.<sup>168</sup> Some examples of names include Robert Redhawk, William Swiftriver, Ruth Chesehesbega, and Conrad. Standing Bear entered Carlisle as “Ota Kte,” or

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<sup>166</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 196-198.

<sup>167</sup> Photograph, “Thanksgiving at Carlisle,” Box 23, Folder 730, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>168</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 109.

“Plenty Kill,” because his father had killed many enemies. He chose the name Luther, to which he added his last name, Standing Bear. This surname reflected his status as the first son of Chief Standing Bear the First. The origin of the name “Standing Bear” was the bravery of Plenty Kill’s father to “face the enemy, even if that enemy was ready to shoot.”<sup>169</sup> It was significant that Pratt compelled the Native American students to take a new, Americanized name, as one’s name is linked to one’s identity and culture. The act of forcing the students to separate themselves from their past lives was a traumatic process – a symbolic way of killing who the person used to be. In addition to further removing the Native American students from their “uncivilized” lives, Pratt also believed that with the new names the students would be able to work within civilized society just as an American.<sup>170</sup>

The Native American students were then ready to begin their official education. It is clear that informal education had already begun, as the students had been learning the workings of the school and what was expected of them in their new setting since they first arrived. Their lives at Carlisle were extremely regimented, with bugles and bells to dictate the schedule.<sup>171</sup> Carlisle had a stern discipline policy, as Pratt knew that order was necessary for learning and “Americanizing” to take place. Indeed, this illustrates an interesting aspect of what Pratt meant by “Americanizing.” He felt it was necessary to teach the Native American children order because part of the “Americanization” process was to teach the Native Americans how to be controlled citizens. At the same time, Pratt acknowledged, though, that many of the discipline problems (such as confusion with directions because of the language gap, or students speaking in their native languages) resulted from misunderstandings, especially in the beginning, and he

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<sup>169</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 3-6.

<sup>170</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 109-111.

<sup>171</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 117; See Figure 3.3 in the appendix for the daily schedule at Carlisle. While this is the schedule of Carlisle in its final years of existence, it is clear that Pratt established a regimented schedule that remained even after his time as superintendent.

begged the teachers to be patient.<sup>172</sup> While many teachers followed this advice and were very successful, other teachers used corporal punishment to instill discipline.<sup>173</sup>

Pratt dealt with discipline issues early on by creating an effective system in which students themselves would be the enforcers of the rules through a “court-martial format.” This was a similar set-up to the Fort Marion captives guarding themselves. A group of students would act as judges and Pratt made a point to include as many tribes as possible, acknowledging this potentially divisive element of the student body at Carlisle.<sup>174</sup> There is no evidence to suggest that there were any real conflicts among the students based on tribal identity, but it was a definite concern of Pratt’s – especially after tribal rivalry was an issue, initially, at Hampton. He had witnessed the contention between different tribes while out in the West and therefore knew he had to take this into consideration at Carlisle. This was not necessarily the standard view at the time, as many people viewed “Native Americans” as a homogeneous race. In reality, however, the different tribes lived in different geographical situations and each had unique languages and cultures, crucial elements that Pratt recognized.

While discipline wasn’t a big problem, one of the difficulties Pratt encountered in establishing Carlisle was finding appropriate teachers for the task of educating and Americanizing these students. Fortunately, Pratt was able to draw on people from his prior interactions and experiences in putting together a teaching staff.<sup>175</sup> In the situation of Miss Burgess and Miss Ely, however, the women simply showed up with “commendatory letters” from members of the Society of Friends who had worked with Native Americans under President

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<sup>172</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 111.

<sup>173</sup> Unfortunately this continued even after the federal government published, in 1898, the *Rules for the Indian School Service*, stated that “In no case shall the school employees resort to abusive language, ridicule, corporal punishment, or any other cruel or degrading measures; Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 122.

<sup>174</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 124.

<sup>175</sup> Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 323-324.

Grant's Peace Policy and Pratt hired them to teach.<sup>176</sup> Both of these women turned out to be great teachers.

As had been true at Fort Marion and at Hampton, the first step in the academic realm was to teach the students to speak, read, and write English. Luther Standing Bear remembered how the students drew pictures on slates before starting to learn the alphabet.<sup>177</sup> Learning the alphabet and English in general was an incredibly difficult task. Not only were these students learning a second language, but there is a strong correlation between culture and language. This connection is the exact reason Pratt saw the necessity in learning English first, in order to facilitate the acculturation of these students. However, this made it difficult for the Native American students because they were trying to learn a new language and adapt to a foreign culture all at once. Pratt and the other teachers at Carlisle enforced a rule that required English to be the only language spoken. If students spoke in their native tongues they would be punished, usually by having to eat soap. This was not necessarily a common occurrence, as the threat of this punishment deterred most students from speaking in their native tongue. The only documentation of an exception to this rule was when Pratt gave Luther Standing Bear and other students special permission to speak in their native language when Standing Bear's father visited Carlisle.<sup>178</sup> Pratt did not provide justification for this action, but it is probable that was cognizant of Carlisle's image to outsiders. Generally, though, the speaking of native languages was not a problem because the students were from different tribes and did not share a common language other than the English they learned.

Pratt believed teaching English was the first step in an Indian education, to be followed closely by learning a skill that would allow the student to be self-sufficient and gain a job after

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<sup>176</sup>Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 324.

<sup>177</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 136-138.

<sup>178</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 150-151.

graduating from Carlisle. This was an idea he had previously instituted at St. Augustine with the imprisoned Native Americans, and he continued it at Carlisle. To this end, the boys learned trades, including blacksmithing, wagon making, carpentry, harness making, tinning, shoe-making, tailoring, printing, and baking. These students were then responsible for helping to run the school through fixing things and providing finished goods for use in the classrooms and dormitories. For example, students learning printing worked with the school newspaper and the shoe making students provided footwear for the other students. Additionally, students farmed at Carlisle to contribute to the school's food supply. In 1881, just two years after the school's opening, the budgets for the shoe, tin, harness, wagon, and blacksmith shops all posted balances in favor of the school.<sup>179</sup> Compared to other Native American schools, Carlisle utilized its budget very effectively, as seen in Figure 3.1 below, and provided the most services for its students for less money. . While data is not present for every year of Carlisle's existence, the overall trend is evident.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Cost per Pupil at Carlisle</b>	<b>Cost per Pupil at all other non-reservation schools</b>	<b>Difference</b>
1895	\$148.51	\$193.18	<b>\$44.67</b>
1896	\$137.65	\$186.37	<b>\$48.72</b>
1897	\$140.03	\$229.22	<b>\$89.19</b>
1898	\$131.60	\$213.10	<b>\$81.50</b>
1899	\$125.53	\$223.52	<b>\$97.99</b>
1900	\$152.29	\$230.25	<b>\$77.96</b>
1901	\$154.94	\$221.55	<b>\$66.61</b>
1902	\$145.21	\$243.11	<b>\$97.90</b>
1903	\$152.75	\$242.15	<b>\$89.40</b>
1904	\$151.78	\$246.12	<b>\$94.34</b>
1905	\$174.59	\$263.04	<b>\$88.45</b>
1906	\$164.12	\$215.31	<b>\$51.19</b>
1907	\$174.80	\$219.55	<b>\$44.75</b>
1908	\$174.23	\$223.77	<b>\$49.54</b>
1909	\$169.50	\$203.25	<b>\$33.75</b>

**Figure 3.1: Money spent at Carlisle versus other Non-Reservation Schools.**

<sup>179</sup> Miles, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, p. 186-187.

Meanwhile, much like had been the case at Eleazar Wheelock's Moors Charity School in the 1760s, the girls followed "the routine of household duties pertaining to the sex" – such as sewing, cooking, and cleaning. Much like the boys, the girls contributed to the overall operations of the school by making all of the girls' and the majority of the boys' clothing.<sup>180</sup> This allowed for the phasing out of the army uniforms. The combination of student efforts led to Carlisle itself ultimately becoming self-sufficient.

In addition to teaching functional skills, the next step in Pratt's educational model, which coincided with step two, was academic instruction beyond the English language. This included math, geography, nature, physiology, and United States history. Pratt's idea was that these Native Americans would need to master these subjects if they were going to thrive as citizens within American society. Math skills would be utilized for managing a farm – keeping track of finances, calculating prices, and avoiding being cheated. In teaching geography, the fact that the world was round was stunning to some. One student, Charles Eastman, when confronted with a globe and told this is how the world looked, remarked, "I felt that my foothold was deserting me."<sup>181</sup> The teaching of physical distances as part of geography also taught students the infeasibility of escaping home from Carlisle.

Pratt expected that United States history knowledge would contribute to the citizenship training of the Native Americans. One teacher, however, felt guilty teaching U.S. history to her Native American students, feeling as though she had "the sins of her fathers to answer for before her class."<sup>182</sup> From reading testimonials of Carlisle teachers, however, it is evident that most teachers focused more on the positive elements of U.S. history and did not emphasize whites' destruction and brutality towards the Native American race. Geography, nature, and physiology

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<sup>180</sup>Pratt, *The Indian No Problem*, p. 347-349.

<sup>181</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 144.

<sup>182</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 147.

further altered the base knowledge of the students. In many Native American religions and cultures, children were taught that Indian people were at the center of the world and that nature was connected to the gods. As historian David Wallace Adams puts it, the teaching at Carlisle instead emphasized the fact that the earth was round, the universe was without boundaries, and that nature could be “conquered, and finally, exploited.”<sup>183</sup> A key differentiation between Carlisle and prior Americanization and civilization efforts towards Native Americans is the absence of emphasis on religion and Christianity.

In addition to the academic curriculum, another key element of Pratt’s educational design at Carlisle was the “Outing” program. Under this program students spent time during vacations living with white families in order to be Americanized first hand in an environment where the students would also be separated from one another. Pratt wanted the Native American students to have “privileges among our farmers” in order to “gain practical knowledge for managing their own farms.”<sup>184</sup> He believed very strongly that “The contact of peoples is the best of all education.”<sup>185</sup> While participating in the outing program some students had the opportunity to earn money, which they were allowed to keep. This amount totaled over \$30,000 each year and became “a great stimulus both to the pupils and to their parents in favor of individual effort and escape from tribal thralldom.”<sup>186</sup>

Pratt saw benefits of the outing arrangement for both whites and the Native Americans. First, outing reduced the prejudice on both sides. Whites were able to see the efforts and abilities of the Native Americans on a personal level and the students were able to view their white hosts not as the “brutal conquerors.” Outing also allowed students to learn how Americans lived in a

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<sup>183</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 143-145.

<sup>184</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 193.

<sup>185</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 194.

<sup>186</sup> “How Carlisle School Originated.”



“civilized” way. Most of the girls performed house work while the boys worked either in an industrial or an agricultural placement. Many students found outing to be a very beneficial experience if they had positive interactions with their host families, but there were others that were not treated so well by their white “hosts.” Some of the hosts took advantage of their Native American labor. Indeed, one of Luther Standing Bear’s friends, Clarence Three Stars, decided to go back to the reservation after working at a Mr. Wanamaker’s store in Philadelphia.<sup>187</sup> Clarence did not like how the clerks called him “Indian,” saying it made him nervous.<sup>188</sup> However, overall the program enjoyed much success.<sup>189</sup> This interconnection between whites and Native Americans, of course, had its roots in Pratt’s programs at St. Augustine.

In addition to the outing program, Pratt also had frequent interactions himself with the public during his years as Carlisle’s superintendent. The main reason for this was to secure donations for Carlisle, but he also gave many speeches to a wide range of audiences to spread his message on educating and “civilizing” Native Americans. While the federal government provided adequate money to keep the school functioning, the allotment was not enough to allow the school to make improvements as needed. One instance where fundraising was necessary was when the school needed a gymnasium. Pratt organized an event in which the different industry departments showed off their work and the school’s band performed. Ticket sales to the exposition covered the \$1,200 that was needed.<sup>190</sup>

Pratt secured money from different donors to supplement the federal funding Carlisle received throughout his tenure. In his reflections of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School he noted, “One regret in connection with this brief history is the fact that it would consume much

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<sup>187</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 157.

<sup>188</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 183.

<sup>189</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 156-161.

<sup>190</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 323.

more space than the whole paper ought to cover to speak of acts of generous friends, of able assistants and of the gracious sympathy and help” he received from members of government, as well as private donors.<sup>191</sup> One particularly heart-warming story was of a \$2,000 donation Presbyterian minister Rev. W. H. Miller from Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, made to Pratt for his efforts at Carlisle, early in the school’s existence. This large amount of money was even more extravagant due to the fact that Miller had an annual salary of only \$1,200. Miller viewed Carlisle as worthy of the inheritance, all in the form of bonds, he had received when his father died. He felt that Carlisle would be a reinvestment “at once where it will bring me one thousand per cent.”<sup>192</sup> Miller felt this way because he had seen the positive results Pratt achieved in educating the Native American students. Miller’s donation, as generous as it was, made up only a small percentage of the \$150,000 Pratt received in addition to government funding over the years to improve the education experience for Native Americans at Carlisle.<sup>193</sup>

The donations Pratt collected made his different approaches in his aims in Americanizing the Native American students possible. Not only did he seek to have the students look “American” with their haircuts and tidy clothing, but he also wanted them to speak, think, act, and work in an “Americanized” manner. Every practice at Carlisle had its roots in Pratt’s goal to Americanize the Native Americans students in order to integrate them into mainstream, middle-class, white Protestant society. From the skills Carlisle taught the Indians it is obvious that they were slated to be part of the lower classes, but Pratt nonetheless wanted them to be part of American society. Pratt was very determined to be successful in this endeavor and the efficacy of his efforts can be gauged by looking at how governmental officials, students and others remembered him.

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<sup>191</sup> Pratt, *The Indian Industrial School Carlisle, Pennsylvania*, p. 45-46.

<sup>192</sup> Pratt, *The Indian Industrial School Carlisle, Pennsylvania*, p. 45.

<sup>193</sup> Pratt, *The Indian Industrial School Carlisle, Pennsylvania*, p. 46.

Pratt had completely revamped the way the government dealt with Native American education and had, according to his supporters, created a much more worthy alternative to the government schools of the past. In 1890 Pratt received a letter from John Eaton, the former U.S. commissioner of education, who had been an ardent supporter of Pratt's education of the Native Americans from the beginning. Eaton wrote, "Ah, my dear Captain .... You are leading them into the Promised Land."<sup>194</sup> Pratt's goal was to ensure that once the country saw the strides of improvement the Native Americans at Carlisle made and their successful Americanization they would continue to support the off reservation boarding schools as the model for how to deal with Native Americans in the future.<sup>195</sup> To pursue this goal Pratt was constantly corresponding with senators, congressmen, and other people in power to secure additional funding for the school. However, Pratt was frustrated with the lack of response from many of the commissioners of Indian affairs. Only one of the twelve who served in this office actually visited Carlisle while Pratt was superintendent, as they did not make Carlisle one of their priorities.<sup>196</sup>

In contrast to problems he encountered in his initial recruitment of Sioux students, at one point Pratt had the problem of too many students being interested in attending Carlisle. In 1890, Pratt wrote a letter to a member of the U.S. House of Representatives stating that the Navajoes were "asking to get some of the children of their chiefs and head men here."<sup>197</sup> Similarly, Pratt wrote to Carl Schurz in the same year, stating, "You have but to offer the chance and either the Cheyenne and Arapahoe or the Rosebud or Pine Ridge Agencies would send us more children

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<sup>194</sup> Letter, John Eaton to Richard Henry Pratt, December 12, 1890, box 3, folder 86, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>195</sup> It is important to keep in mind that Carlisle was not the only off-reservation boarding school, but it was the first of its kind.

<sup>196</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 312.

<sup>197</sup> Letter, Richard Henry Pratt to Representative Thaddeus Coleman Pound, January 14, 1890, box 10-4, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

than we could accommodate.”<sup>198</sup> Pratt eventually made additional recruitment trips out west in which he was able to secure Native American students from the tribes he had former experience with, eventually increasing the annual enrollment to about a thousand students. However, because of its size, Carlisle was never able to accommodate all of the Native Americans that sought a Carlisle education.

Throughout his time working with the Native Americans, Pratt had been very critical of the Indian Bureau and other federal government agencies that dealt with them. He found the act of each new president appointing his own nominee for patronage reasons very distracting from the long-term goals of the organization. Pratt also viewed the governmental jobs dealing with Native Americans as having ulterior motives in how the agencies dealt with Native Americans. Pratt’s impression was that the “government-salaried denizens” in the Indian Bureau “saw their occupation vanish with every development of the Indian into the ability of citizen.”<sup>199</sup> Thus, instead of being motivated to “civilize” the Native Americans and integrate them into mainstream society, Pratt believed that it was in the interests of the government employees to keep the Native Americans in a state of subjugation. Pratt even claimed that the Bureau employees “lobbied against” letting the Native American children be taken from the tribes for educational purposes.<sup>200</sup> For these reasons Pratt never worked harmoniously with the federal bureaucracy that was charged to deal with Native Americans. This dynamic impeded the effect Pratt could have, as he could only influence a small percentage of Native Americans without the support of the federal government to start more off-reservation boarding schools similar to Carlisle.

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<sup>198</sup> Letter, Richard Henry Pratt to Carl Schurz, April 30, 1890, box 10-4, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>199</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 283.

<sup>200</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 291.

In addition to sharing his Carlisle experience with the federal government, Pratt also voiced his opinions concerning Native American education more generally in response to the proposed Morgan Plan. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas Morgan put forth the Morgan Plan in 1890. He proposed that there would be four categories of schools for Native Americans – the bottom level would be day schools for students who could not attend boarding school, then primary schools, followed by grammar schools that would be boarding schools to teach children “civilized” life and give them “moral training,” and, finally, the top level would encompass a 5-year course to develop “Indian manhood,” for the male teenagers. Pratt was against this program, an opinion he voiced to Senator Henry Dawes in a letter in February 1890, because, “A public school system for the Indians, which means practically a tribal school system would be an invitation to them to continue Indians and tribes... We don’t want a public school system for the Indian but we do want them in the public school system of the country.”<sup>201</sup> The distinction Pratt made emphasized his view that Native Americans should be integrated into the current education system and be taught alongside white students. Pratt was a strong advocate for Native American education not being a separate entity from public education. This seems ironic because Carlisle only catered to Native Americans. However, his belief was that if Native Americans could be brought into mainstream society, the next generation of Native Americans would be educated alongside white children. This idea is a distinguishing factor between Pratt and previous Americanizers.

Despite trying to work in the interests of the federal government, Pratt’s frustration with his dealings with the bureaucratic nature of the government was apparent beginning as early as the 1890s. In response to a recovered runaway student who stated, “I just wanted to let you know

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<sup>201</sup> Everett Arthur Gilcreast, “Richard Henry Pratt and American Indian Policy, 1877-1906: A Study of the Assimilation Movement.” (PhD dissertation., Yale University, 1967) p. 345-349, Collection on Richard H. Pratt 1862-1972, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center.

I wasn't stuck on your durned old school!" Pratt responded, "I am not greatly stuck on it myself. I have been here much longer than you and am perhaps more tired of it than you are, but the Government says I must stay and makes it my duty to keep you here until you know enough to be of some use. I shall have to stick to it and hold onto you until you graduate."<sup>202</sup> Thus, it would seem that in the years prior to Pratt's departure from Carlisle, he no longer felt the same towards the school as he had at the beginning. This is not to say Pratt no longer believed in the Americanization ideals he had been teaching. Instead he just became too fed up with the governmental bureaucracy and the way it obstructed his work.

Pratt's feelings towards the Indian Bureau worsened at the turn of the century when the Indian Bureau began to advocate moving Carlisle west and changing the school into an Indian military training school in order to save money, as advocates believed it would be more economical to educate the Native American students on their reservations.<sup>203</sup> Ultimately, the disagreement between Pratt and the Bureau led to the Bureau asking for his resignation.<sup>204</sup>

Pratt's association with the government came to a boiling point after his speech to the Baptist Ministers' Conference in May 1904. At the turn of the century, newspapers were publishing defamatory allegations about Carlisle students returning to the reservations, including "An Attack on the Educated Indian Contrasted with Figures from the Famous Carlisle Indian School." The reporter notes that on the Ponca and Oakland Indian reservations (in current day Oklahoma and Nebraska):

Hardly any of the young Indians – those who have graduated from non-reservation schools...do any work at all. It can be set down as a perfectly safe rule that as a class the young educated Indians are the most worthless ones in the whole tribe. Nearly all of the work

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<sup>202</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p 309.

<sup>203</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p 335.

<sup>204</sup> Witmer, *Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, PA 1879-1918*, p. 59.

done by the tribes is performed by the middle aged, able bodied ones, who cannot write or speak English.<sup>205</sup>

This represented a scathing examination of the efforts of non-reservation schools, including Carlisle that discredited the positive results Pratt had achieved. Pratt argued that the names and stories that newspapers published were “fictitious” and provided many examples of made-up names and wrongful allegations against students. One article referred to an Apache named “Kid” who was educated at “Carlisle Indian University” and returned to Arizona to become an outlaw. However, there was no record of “Kid” ever attending Carlisle. In another case, a Cheyenne named White Buffalo was wrongfully accused of committing three murders at his agency after attending Carlisle.<sup>206</sup> Pratt was frustrated that the government, and the press, did not acknowledge the progress he had made at Carlisle by protecting his good name and the reputation of Carlisle. It is unknown why newspapers published stories like this, but it is unfortunate that it happened because it contributed to Pratt leaving Carlisle.

When Pratt was invited to give a forty-five minute paper before the Baptist preachers’ weekly meeting at a Madison Avenue church in New York in early 1904, he took this as “the occasion I needed to help force the issues” to the federal government. Parts of the speech ended up in newspapers throughout the East, resulting in a letter from E.A. Hitchcock, the secretary of the interior, on May 11, 1904. The letter enclosed clippings from the *New York Daily Tribune* of the speech, quoting Pratt as saying,

I believe nothing better could happen to the Indians than the complete destruction of the Bureau which keeps them so carefully laid away in the dark of its numerous drawers, together with its varied influences, which only serve to maintain tribal conditions.

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<sup>205</sup> Newspaper, “New York Tribune Illustrated Supplement,” no date, box 25, folder 787, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>206</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 334.

Better, far better, for the Indians, had there never been a Bureau. Then self-preservation would have led the individual Indian to find his true place, and his real emancipation would have come speedily. The early death of the Freedmen's Bureau, with its "forty acres and a mule," was an infinite blessing to the Negro himself, and the country as well.

Indian schools on the reservation are weak and inefficient, because lacking in the essential elements of practical experience, association and competition, and are calculated to educate the Indian to shrink from the competition necessary to enable him to reach his place as an independent man and citizen."<sup>207</sup>

The next day Pratt replied to Hitchcock, writing, "I have to respectfully enclose to you a full copy of my address." Pratt clearly indicated in this letter that he was not backing down from his claims against the Bureau, thus sealing his fate. On June 11, 1904, Pratt received a letter from the War Department saying that Pratt was "relieved from the further operation of Paragraph 7, Special Orders, No. 194, August 23, 1879, Headquarters of the Army, and from all duty under the Interior Department, to take effect June 30, 1904."<sup>208</sup> Thus, Pratt's passion for advocating his model of Native American education resulted in his ultimate demise when he came in conflict with the government and was forced to resign.

### **PART THREE: Conclusion: Pratt's Legacy**

#### **How Pratt is Remembered**

Richard Henry Pratt devoted over twenty-five-years of his life to the issue of Native American education. From his initial observations of America's native people while out West to his experience with the Indian prisoners at St. Augustine, Florida, Pratt developed an ideology about Native American education that focused on the race's "civilization" and ultimate

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<sup>207</sup>Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 336.

<sup>208</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 337.



integration into American society. Pratt's final legacy is determined in the effectiveness of his efforts and how he was remembered after his resignation as superintendent at Carlisle by the government, students, and history.

First, however, Pratt's own view of his mission and its success must be examined. In 1883, early on in Carlisle's existence, Pratt gave a speech to the National Education Convention in Ocean Grove, New Jersey, entitled "Indian Civilization a Success." He used this opportunity to argue that Indian civilization was actually *not* a success, and he defended his conclusions by comparing the conditions and treatment of African Americans and Native Americans. Pratt was extremely frustrated with the fact that blacks in America had been granted access to education and (supposed) equality while the Indians were relegated to suffering as inferior beings on reservations without the opportunity for citizenship.<sup>209</sup> He viewed his efforts at Carlisle as an important first step in "civilizing" Native Americans, but recognized that for this goal to be achieved much more was needed. When Pratt resigned, he had succeeded in educating and Americanizing thousands of students, yet this was a small percentage of the Native American population. His mission was not applied to more Native children because the Indian Bureau did not provide additional support to Pratt's efforts. Therefore, Pratt viewed his life's work as achieving only partial success in regards to its full potential.

When it became obvious that Pratt would not remain at Carlisle for much longer, there were many people who did not want him to leave. He received many letters from supporters begging him to continue his work for the Native Americans. W.P. Campbell, from the U.S. Indian Training School in Chemawa, Oregon, wrote to Pratt in February 1903, "I cannot tell you how grieved and shocked we all were to hear the news of your retirement and cannot believe but that something will yet turn up to change the trend of affairs. ....I cannot imagine a Carlisle

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<sup>209</sup> Pratt, "Re: Indian civilization before the National Educational Convention."

without you at his head....I do sincerely hope that they will refuse to accept your resignation.<sup>210</sup> Another admirer noted that the news of Pratt's resignation "gave me quite a shock."<sup>211</sup> Still another wrote, "If consistent with honor withdraw your resignation."<sup>212</sup> Despite his ultimate downfall, his actions while superintendent ensured that Pratt's efforts of Carlisle would never be forgotten.

After Pratt was forced out as superintendent, he was succeeded by William Mercer (1904-1908), Moses Friedman (1908-1914), Oscar Lipps (1914-1917), and John Francis, Jr. (1917-1918). Immediately with Mercer as superintendent there was a change in the way Carlisle operated – the industrial and academic programs weakened, the emphasis on athletics, especially football, increased, and the discipline and structure disappeared.<sup>213</sup> Friedman continued to emphasize athletics and focused on recruiting student athletes. Under Friedman's watch Carlisle also focused more on vocational training than academics, as the institution was forced to become even more self-sufficient and cost-effective as federal funding decreased. Friedman was fired as superintendent after a 1913 congressional investigation of mismanagement of athletic funds exposed "low student morale and a general lack of school discipline." It is very possible that Friedman favored athletics because he viewed this as the only real avenue for success for Native American students. In 1914 Lipps faced many problems, including low student enrollment and limited money, and could not turn the school around. John Francis Jr., Carlisle's last

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<sup>210</sup> Letter, W. P. Campbell to Richard Henry Pratt, February 24, 1903, box 2, folder 49, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. While at this point Pratt was still the superintendent at Carlisle, the inevitability of his falling out with the federal government was increasingly apparent.

<sup>211</sup> Letter, Marsy Dilsette to Richard Henry Pratt, March 8, 1902, box 2, folder 67, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>212</sup> Letter, James O'Connor to Richard Henry Pratt, February 19, 1903, box 7, folder 234, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>213</sup> Witmer, *Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, PA 1879-1918*, p. 59-73.

superintendent, faced similar problems and the school was closed on September 1, 1918, with the War Department reclaiming the barracks as a military post.<sup>214</sup>

Many students shared memories, similar to those expressed by Luther Standing Bear in his memoirs, on the occasion of Pratt's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on December 6, 1920. Former colleagues and students took the occasion as an opportunity to write Pratt letters praising his efforts. Chase E. Dagenett, a Peoria and an 1891 Carlisle graduate who became a supervisor of Indian employment for the federal government, wrote, "It is an inspiration to your old pupils to remember your helpful thoughts and encouraging words... You never failed to raise our hopes and lift our drooping spirits and cause the sun to shine in our hearts."<sup>215</sup> Many addressed Pratt as "Dear General and School Father," such as Pueblo Joseph Ruiz, who recalled, "so many times you spoke to us with tears in your eyes and pointed to us the right and the wrong in such a forciful way no one will forget. Dear General, it is those thoughts that have kept me on my feet because I always trusted in you and I knew you spoke to us like your family and it came straight from your heart."<sup>216</sup> Hugh Sowcea, an 1894 graduate, looked back "upon my young and happy days at Carlisle" in which Pratt was "encouraging and admonishing up [Carlisle students] to rise from our savagery and to move on to a higher plane of civilization and attainment."<sup>217</sup> The compliments continued with George Balenti writing, "I can't help but think of my dear old school days at Carlisle, and the wonderful things she has done for me, and the greatest pleasure,

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<sup>214</sup> "The Carlisle Indian Industrial School" R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc publication on behalf of Carlisle Barracks, 1991; Following the closure of the Carlisle Barracks to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, the space was utilized as a Medical Field Service School.

<sup>215</sup> Letter, Chase Dagenett to Richard Henry Pratt, November 26, 1920, box 1, folder 9, Correspondence – Letters from former students to Pratt on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, United States Army Heritage Education Center.

<sup>216</sup> Letter, Joseph Ruiz to Richard Henry Pratt, December 1, 1920, box 1, folder 9, Correspondence – Letters from former students to Pratt on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, USAHEC.

<sup>217</sup> Letter, Hugh Sowcea to Richard Henry Pratt, December 1, 1920, box 1, folder 9, Correspondence – Letters from former students to Pratt on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, USAHEC.

to graduate under your leadership of that once great school for the American Indian.”<sup>218</sup> The phrase “once great” indicates what was previously mentioned – after Pratt’s forced resignation Carlisle was no longer the same institution.

While these comments represent the sentiments of only a small percentage of Carlisle’s graduates, it is clear from the students that wrote to Pratt on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday that many students had positive memories of their time at Carlisle. Clearly Pratt was successful to some extent in reaching out to Native Americans and integrating them into American society. From a contemporary standpoint, many of the methods Pratt utilized may seem harsh (including the total erasure of their Native American culture and language and the threat to eat soap if the student spoke their native tongue), but when examined in the historical context it is clear that at least some students reacted positively to their experience of “Americanization” under Pratt.

For his part, Luther Standing Bear eventually returned to his reservation. He recalled going home “with a better understanding of life,” in which the Indians would have to work for food and clothing. In his memoir he compared this situation to the “Garden of Eden after the fall of man.”<sup>219</sup> Upon returning to the reservation he was accepted by his people, although they noted that he looked like a white man because his skin had lightened from working inside and because of his haircut and clothing. Luther exclaimed that it made him “feel very proud to have them compare me to a white boy.”<sup>220</sup> However, the people hesitated at first to greet him, which he later found out was because when some students returned from Carlisle they were “ashamed of their

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<sup>218</sup> Letter, George Balenti to Richard Henry Pratt, December 1, 1920, box 1, folder 9, Correspondence – Letters from former students to Pratt on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, USAHEC.

<sup>219</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 190.

<sup>220</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 191.

old people” and had “forgotten the Sioux language.”<sup>221</sup> This was not his experience and overall, Luther Standing Bear conveyed positive results from his time at Carlisle.

Many students, however, were not as lucky as Standing Bear upon returning to their reservations. At least a handful of former Carlisle students felt like they did not belong in either world – they were neither accepted into American society nor welcome in their Native American lives. One such student who occupied this shadow world was Plenty Horses, who had been a student at Carlisle for five years, at which point he returned to his tribe only to realize that he was an outcast when his people would not welcome him back. In the hopes of regaining the respect of his people he shot and killed Lieutenant Edward Casey in the aftermath of the massacre of Wounded Knee in 1890. Although Plenty Horses was convicted and sentenced to be hanged, he claimed that he was comfortable with this verdict, justifying to himself that he would die a warrior for his people.<sup>222</sup> In the eyes of Pratt, however, the fact that many of his former students led successful lives after Carlisle “illustrates that the Indian, when given a fair chance, becomes entirely equal to all the demands of a useful life in our modern civilization.”<sup>223</sup>

In addition to noting the life-changing influence Pratt and the Carlisle Indian Industrial School had on their own lives, on the occasion of Pratt’s 80<sup>th</sup> birthday many former students also pointed out how Pratt was “popular with the Indians” generally on account of his support for Indian causes. Students wrote that all Indians appreciated his efforts, and considered him “the first white man to have the courage to make people believe that the Indians were worth educating,”<sup>224</sup> a man whose “noble work...cannot be measured.”<sup>225</sup> Others, including Nettie

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<sup>221</sup> Standing Bear, *My People, The Sioux*, p. 191.

<sup>222</sup> White, “The Military and the Melting Pot: The American Army and Minority,” p. 151.

<sup>223</sup> Biography of Richard Henry Pratt.

<sup>224</sup> Letter, Martha Napawat Thomas to Richard Henry Pratt, December 1, 1920, box 1, folder 9, Correspondence – Letters from former students to Pratt on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, USAHEC.

<sup>225</sup> Letter, Bortha Jamison to Richard Henry Pratt, December 1, 1920, box 1, folder 9, Correspondence – Letters from former students to Pratt on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, USAHEC.

McDonald, proclaimed how they were taking what Pratt taught them and “instilling into these little ones of mine” those teachings, meaning she was passing along the lessons she learned from Pratt to her own children.<sup>226</sup> The letters Pratt received make it clear that many students appreciated the education and opportunities they received at Carlisle Industrial Indian School.

In addition to fond memories of students, Pratt’s fight against the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in regards to what Native Americans needed was kept alive by Representative Clyde Kelly of Pennsylvania. Pratt had stood against the BIA throughout his life because the agency lacked sincerity in actually aiding Native Americans in the civilizing process. On January 11, 1924, Kelly gave a speech to Congress, entitled, “Banish Indian Bureaucracy.” In this speech he forthrightly stated, “There is one bureau that should have been abolished 25 years ago, and it would have been better for everybody concerned had it been done. That is the Bureau of Indian Affairs.”<sup>227</sup> Kelly took issue with the fact that the Bureau had become a system “for servitude on the part of human beings” – that the funds were not being appropriated to help Native Americans, but to ensure that their position within society would remain the same. These were the exact sentiments of Pratt and it is encouraging to see that these ideas did not die with Pratt, but that others after him continued to fight for the Native Americans.

The discussion on Native Americans continued in the government when Representative Homer Snyder, a Republican from New York, proposed granting full U.S. citizenship to the country’s original inhabitants. Some Native Americans had citizenship at this point but it was not universal. The Congress passed the Indian Citizenship Act on December 3, 1923, and President

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<sup>226</sup> Letter, Nettie McDonald to Richard Henry Pratt, December 4, 1920, box 1, folder 9, Correspondence – Letters from former students to Pratt on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, USAHEC.

<sup>227</sup> Speech, Hon. Clyde Kelly of Pennsylvania in the House of Representatives, “Banish Indian Bureaucracy,” February 11, 1924, box 26, folder 798, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Coolidge signed it into law on June 2, 1924.<sup>228</sup> While nothing changed overtime for the experiences of Native Americans, this was a symbolic act. Pratt did not live to see this momentous moment, as he died less than two months prior.

Much like the positive way in which students remembered Pratt at the time of his eightieth birthday, he was forever memorialized following his death on April 23, 1924, when a group of former students bought a marble headstone for his grave. The headstone reads, on one side, “Erected in Loving Memory by his Students and other Indians,” and on the other, “Friend and Counselor of the Indians. Founder and Superintendent of the Carlisle Indian School 1879-1904.”<sup>229</sup> This headstone is not the one at his grave in Arlington Cemetery and the actual location of this monumental headstone is not clear. However, the record of this visual celebration of Pratt’s service to Native Americans illustrates the positive influence he had on at least some of Carlisle’s students.

The headstone memorial was in addition to the fact that Pratt’s pallbearers were all graduates of Carlisle, including Charles Hood of Oregon, Louis McDonald of Oklahoma, Howard Gansworth of New York, Fred Teak of Minnesota, Dennison Wheelock of Wisconsin, and Thomas Sloan of Nebraska.<sup>230</sup> The reality that these students remained “civilized” throughout their lives and did not “regress” back to their Native American lifestyle would have made Pratt very proud and says something about his success at Americanizing his students

Letters that reflect more negative sentiments from former students are harder to come by, however, it cannot be assumed that these feelings did not exist. Indeed, it is recorded that throughout the history of the school some students ran away from Carlisle in an attempt to return

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<sup>228</sup> U.S. 68<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session. *Bill No. 175. An Act to Authorize the Secretary of the Interior to issue certificates of citizenship to Indians.* Washington, Government Printing Office, 1923.

<sup>229</sup> Bell, “Telling Stories Out of School: Remembering the Carlisle Indian Industrial School 1879-1918,” p.27.\

<sup>230</sup> Newspaper, “The Evening Star,” Washington, D.C., March 22, 1924, box 25, folder 795, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

home. In other words, despite all the letters filled with well wishes, clearly not all students were content with their time at Carlisle. Moreover, students who absconded from Carlisle often expressed shame for having done so. In fact, many students apologized if they ran away or otherwise exhibited bad behavior. One such student, Howling Wolf, wrote to Pratt, addressing him as “Friend,” in 1879, apologizing for his behavior with the “hope all is forgiven.”<sup>231</sup> It is clear from this that Pratt garnered respect, or possibly fear, or a combination of the two, from his students.

Of the ten thousand students who attended the school over its 39 years of existence, at total of 1,850 students attempted to run away from Carlisle. About one-third of those who tried were successful. Of the students who escaped, 97% were male.<sup>232</sup> These men came predominantly from the Iroquois, Chippewa, Lakota, Cherokee, and Oneida tribes, while there were significantly fewer deserters from the Pueblo, Apache, and Kiowa tribes.<sup>233</sup> It is probable that this differentiation is due to geography – Native American students who knew they were from reasonably close to the school would be more likely to believe they could successfully return home than students who were from halfway across the country or more.<sup>234</sup>

During his time as superintendent at Carlisle, Pratt experienced the least number of student deserters, on average, compared to his successors. Pratt dealt with an average of twenty students per year deserting, which he chalked up to the “growing independence” of students as they began to “feel at home in the East” and got used to the railroads and interacted with white

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<sup>231</sup> Letter, Howling Wolf to Richard Henry Pratt, no date, box 4, folder 133, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>232</sup> Bell, “Telling Stories Out of School: Remembering the Carlisle Indian Industrial School 1879-1918,” p. 27; Bell does not provide insight into why almost all of the runaways were male, but I would speculate that the male students would have felt more of a sense of honor in regards to returning to their people. Also, male students would have been more self-sufficient and capable of surviving on their own – hunting and gathering food and navigating their way back to their reservations.

<sup>233</sup> Bell, “Telling Stories Out of School: Remembering the Carlisle Indian Industrial School 1879-1918,” p. 27,

<sup>234</sup> See Figure 2.2 in the appendix for a map of the United States describing the geographic locations of the Native American tribes.



Americans. In many cases Pratt was able to utilize the telephone and telegraph to track down runaway students. One boy, James, was intercepted in his attempt to escape Carlisle. When Pratt asked him why he ran away, James responded that he didn't get enough to eat. Pratt questioned the boy, "As I am the father of the place, don't you think you should have told me?" When the boy agreed, Pratt continued, "Then don't you think it was your own fault if you did not get enough? ... Well, now, James, this is your school as well as the Government's. It belongs to all of us and we are all trying to make it do the work the Government intends. ... Don't you now think it is your duty as well as mine to help make things go right at the school?"<sup>235</sup> This conversation took place during the 1890s and illustrates two things. One, that the federal government was still not supplying Pratt and Carlisle with the food and supplies necessary to run the school properly; and, two, that Pratt genuinely wanted to ensure a good experience for his students. When this young boy was delivered to him from the chief of police of a town in Ohio where the boy was found, Pratt did not punish him or berate at him. Instead, he tried to get to the root of the problem in order to create a solution and establish a better learning environment for James and his classmates. James eventually graduated Carlisle and became a cattle-raiser.<sup>236</sup> It is not known how many of the runaways had complaints about the amount of food they were provided versus how many missed their families and did not like their new "Americanized" culture. However, Pratt's enthusiasm and sincerity for the Americanization process at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School helps explain why there were the fewest runaways during his tenure as superintendent.

In comparison to Pratt, William Mercer, the superintendent directly after Pratt (1904-1908), had an average of 87 students per year desert. The statistics continued to worsen with each successor – Moses Friedman (1908-1914) averaged 90. There were slightly fewer deserters

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<sup>235</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 308.

<sup>236</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 309.

under Oscar Lipps, (1914-1917), with an average of 64 students a year deserting, but under the last superintendent of Carlisle, John Francis, Jr., 115 students deserted in just 16 months.<sup>237</sup> The increase in deserters after Pratt left Carlisle correlates with the accounts of Carlisle in the post-Pratt era – when the superintendents apparently began to focus more on the athletics at the school and none of the superintendents were as invested in the success of Carlisle as Pratt.<sup>238</sup> There was incentive for the Native American student-athletes to stay, but it is apparent that the rest of the student population was not as satisfied with their experience in the post-Pratt Carlisle years.

Besides the students seeking to leave Carlisle, there were a handful of students that Pratt and subsequent superintendents had to expel because they were disrupting the education of their fellow students. Again, his numbers here were better than those of his successors. On average Pratt only had to resort to expelling 4.6 students per year, while three of his successors (Mercer, Friedman, and Francis, Jr.) averaged seven, and Superintendent Lipps averaged 19 students expelled per year. The increasing numbers of students expelled in later years is, most likely, a consequence of the decreasing sense of discipline at Carlisle after Pratt left the school. While numerically Pratt dealt with the most students expelled as a whole, 107 (85 male and 23 female), this is to be expected, as he was superintendent for 25 years.<sup>239</sup> The fact that he had to expel the fewest students per year, on average, in comparison to later superintendents speaks to the respect he garnered from the student body – something that his successors were not able to manage as effectively. It also speaks to the tighter discipline Pratt established at Carlisle, something the future superintendents did not emphasize. In examining the statistics of run-away and expelled students, a more negative side of Carlisle and Pratt's legacy is apparent.

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<sup>237</sup> Bell, "Telling Stories Out of School: Remembering the Carlisle Indian Industrial School 1879-1918," p. 27.

<sup>238</sup> See Figures 3.4 and 3.5 for charts pertaining to the rates of runaway students and students expelled, broken down by superintendent.

<sup>239</sup> Bell, "Telling Stories Out of School: Remembering the Carlisle Indian Industrial School 1879-1918, p. 27.

In spite of the small percentage of runaway and expelled students, Pratt was intent on recording the progress made by his Native American students at Carlisle. One of the major ways he did this was to commission photographers to document the progress his students made – juxtaposing pictures of the children upon their arrival at the school with images of their “Americanized” selves. The most famous representation and the most frequently reproduced photographs today depict the transformation of Navajo student Tom Torlino, seen below in Figure 1.9. In the “before” image Torlino is depicted with long, unruly hair, large hoop earrings and a prominent necklace, Native clothing, and a dirty face. The “after” image depicts the Navajo student in his “civilized” state – cut hair, a “proper” suit, and a clean face.<sup>240</sup> Pratt sent his entire collection of photographs to the Smithsonian Institute to ensure that the progress he enabled would be documented and remembered. In addition to the photograph collection, Pratt also sent many papers and accounts to the Library of Congress so that a record would exist explaining what happened at Carlisle and the success, according to him, that was achieved.

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<sup>240</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 104-105; For another example of the photographs taken to commemorate the transformation of the Native American students from “savage” to “civilized,” see Figure 1.14 in the appendix – a depiction of Wounded Yellow Robe, Henry Standing Bear, and Timber Yellow Robe upon their arrival at Carlisle and their appearance six months after entering the school.



**Figure 1.9: Tom Torlino, Navajo, before and after.**

Another way to examine Pratt's legacy in the "Americanization through education" field is to look at how he is remembered and portrayed today, especially in the geographic location where his efforts focused. If you examine the "Walking Tour Guide to Historic Carlisle Barracks," a pamphlet available at the Carlisle Barracks, you won't find a lot of information about the educational program during the "Carlisle Indian Industrial School Era 1879-1918." The focus is instead placed on athletics and the role Pop Warner and Jim Thorpe played at the school. While Jim Thorpe was a prominent alumnus known for his athletic accomplishments at the 1912 Olympics in Stockholm (gold medals in the pentathlon and decathlon) as well as in professional football, basketball, and baseball, there is little recognition of the actual education he received at Carlisle. Sports did play an important role in the culture of Carlisle as the football team was

competitive with the powerhouse teams in the country, including Yale and Harvard. The competition between Carlisle and these elite institutions allowed the emerging leaders of the next generation to see the Native American's "civilization." The Native Americans that played football benefited from this experience and Pratt was also able to attract funding and donations because of Carlisle's football team, but Pratt definitely viewed the education as superior, and more important, to the athletics.<sup>241</sup> Thus, it is interesting to note that a walking tour of the barracks overlooks Pratt's efforts in regards to educating and civilizing the Native Americans.

In other publications from the area around Carlisle, notably the "History of Carlisle Barracks" guide published by the U.S. Army War College (which now occupies the Carlisle Barracks site) there is discussion of Pratt's assimilationist teaching methods. This document is much longer, so as expected, a thorough, and accurate, discussion of the education is included. Visitors that examine both sources gain a more balanced perspective of Carlisle Indian Industrial School and Pratt's legacy.

Part of the walking tour of the Carlisle Barracks includes the Carlisle School cemetery. The cemetery is the only reminder within the barracks of the Native American school that once occupied the vicinity. The Native American students who died while attending Carlisle came from a wide variety of tribes and geographic locations, and they are buried in this simple cemetery. The headstones memorialize the diversity of the Native Americans that attended Carlisle – Sioux, Pima, Alaskan, Chippewa, Apache, Nez Perce, Niagotoc, Mandau, Oneida, and Washoe, to name a handful.<sup>242</sup> However, these tiny headstones do not represent all of the deaths that took place at Carlisle, as many students that died while participating in the outing program

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<sup>241</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 323.

<sup>242</sup> See Figure 1.15 for photographs from the Carlisle school cemetery. Moved from its original site, the cemetery is in the Carlisle Barracks. From the headstones that commemorate the students that died while at Carlisle, the geographic diversity of the student body is apparent.

were not brought back to school for burial and in some cases sick students were sent home to die with their families.<sup>243</sup> It has been argued by some historians that the “very existence of this cemetery contradicts the school’s declared mission to assimilate Indian children into white society.”<sup>244</sup> However, this claim is unnecessarily harsh. There were obviously going to be deaths in the process, as students with different immunities and germs were coming in contact with one another in a new environment. In Carlisle’s initial year measles and scarlet fever were rampant, as the Native Americans did not have the immunity to withstand the white man’s diseases.<sup>245</sup> Student deaths were not a widespread problem for Pratt or Carlisle.

While Pratt’s legacy has both positive and negative aspects, he undoubtedly succeeded in bringing white Americans and Native Americans into peaceful contact on a large scale for the first time and for increasing the discourse on the subject on Native American education. Pratt advocated the potential of Native Americans in speeches to many different audiences throughout his life. His ideas were heard by senators, teachers associations, different religious groups, schools, the Good Citizenship Convention (a woman’s suffrage group), and various groups of Native Americans. These speeches and the diffusion of his ideas to diverse audiences started a dialogue on the subject of Native American education.

In addition to speeches to educate the public, Pratt also facilitated conversation on the subject of Native American education at the Lake Mohonk Conferences among a group of reformers who included philanthropists, government officials, religious figures, and military personnel. Under the hospitality of Albert K. Smiley, a Quaker philanthropist and member of the Board of Indian Commissioners, the group came together at the resort he owned on Lake

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<sup>243</sup> Jacqueline Fear-Segal, *White Man’s Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), p. 231-232.

<sup>244</sup> Fear-Segal, *White Man’s Club*, p. 233.

<sup>245</sup> Miles, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, p. 184.

Mohonk in New York. These meetings between “friends of the Indian” began in 1883 and the group – considered “the most influential force on the reform scene” – published their conclusions for Congress.<sup>246</sup> Pratt’s participation in these conferences provides yet another example of his interactions with the public in regards to Native American education. Also, it is evident from the time frame of these meetings, beginning four years after Carlisle opened, that Pratt was interested in the issue of Native American education more broadly than just his own institution.

Pratt also introduced the country to his “civilized” Native Americans at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. For many people attending the World Exposition it was their first time seeing a Native American and what they found was not the savage image they had expected. Pratt’s students were well-dressed and well behaved and he even had the marching band perform, although this was not the presentation fair organizers had originally wanted to show. Their initial plan had been to show Native Americans in their “primitive conditions” as “barbarians.”<sup>247</sup> Pratt instead insisted that the students be displayed in accordance with his ideas of civilization. Pratt divided the male students into ten platoons for the opening ceremonies, having each group represent a characteristic of the school. The first group carried books and slates, the next represented printing, and the third, agriculture. The remaining platoons represented the baking, carpentry, blacksmithing, shoemaking, harness-making, tinsmithing, and tailoring departments of Carlisle.<sup>248</sup> Pratt remembered the marching experience as exhausting, later, saying to his students, “Boys, I don’t remember that I was ever more tired in my life than I am now. My feet are sore and it is very difficult to keep my legs going, but I am not going to let a single one of those regulars in there see that I am a bit tired.”<sup>249</sup> This seemed to

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<sup>246</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, p. 11.

<sup>247</sup> Fear-Segal, *White Man’s Club*, p. 179.

<sup>248</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 295.

<sup>249</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, p. 297.

motivate the students, as there was “no fatigue apparent” as the students executed their routine. Pratt struggled to pay for the trip, but was ultimately able to raise the money through donations and agreeing to exchange daily drills at the Fair, as well as band and choral performances, for his students’ entrance fees.<sup>250</sup> The joint committee organizing the event wrote Pratt “to extend their thanks for your courteous offer” to have the band perform in the Civic Parade.<sup>251</sup> In providing a counter example to the stereotypes many Americans who came to the fair held about Native Americans, Pratt was successful once again in bringing the two races into contact with one another on peaceful terms.

Overall, Richard Henry Pratt truly believed he was acting in the best interests of the Native Americans in his efforts at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. In 1893, Frederick Douglass noted in a letter to Pratt, “This country will probably never realize the comparative mental and moral poverty it has entailed upon itself in refusing to incorporate the mental and moral capabilities of the Indians – and the wealth of his poetry and traditions.”<sup>252</sup> Pratt’s actions in creating Carlisle and educating Native Americans were a direct response to his conviction that America needed to incorporate them, not abandon them to their reservations. However, Pratt did not acknowledge the second part of Douglass’s point – “the wealth of his poetry and traditions.” Pratt believed that Native Americans should enter American society in an “Americanized” way and did not see value in traditional Native American culture. Pratt did not advocate education for Native Americans because he respected their culture, however, but instead because he saw it as a “cure” for their “condition.” The possibility of civilizing Native Americans and allowing for their eventual inclusion in mainstream society, he wrote, “is to be found in the establishment of a

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<sup>250</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom* , p. 300.

<sup>251</sup> Letter, E.C. Culp to Pratt, July 21, 1889, Box 2, Folder 47, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>252</sup> Letter, Frederick Douglass to Richard Henry Pratt, February 22, 1893, box 3, folder 81, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.



general system of education, reaching every Indian child of school age, and so arranged as to bring the subject as quickly and for the longest time possible into personal contact with the masses of our own children.”<sup>253</sup> Pratt wholeheartedly believed that “unless we admit our Indians to fullest liberty and opportunity, we shall continue to fail in our work for and duty towards them, and they will remain savages among us and a blot upon our history.”<sup>254</sup> It is clear from his statements that although he did not respect Native American culture and viewed their way of life as “savage,” he still saw the necessity of providing them educational opportunities.

This mindset explains why the first phase of his education protocol was to “civilize” the Native American students. This lack of respect for Native American culture and traditions a major component of the true legacy of Pratt. However, that does not account for the entire story. Richard Henry Pratt was a complex man and it is no surprise that his legacy is mixed.

Pratt also influenced the creation of the Canadian system of education for its Natives from the late nineteenth century through the twentieth century.<sup>255</sup> In addition, Carlisle hosted Canadian visitors in the 1880s. While the two programs look different in both countries, the fact that Canadian authorities consulted Pratt’s model at Carlisle in the creation of the Canadian system illustrates an important element of Pratt’s reputation. At the same time, it is interesting to note that in Canada today, people are starting to acknowledge the problems the government created in regards to Native Americans. Prime Minister Stephen Harper offered an apology to the former students of Indian residential schools in 2008, saying, “The treatment of children in Indian residential schools is a sad chapter in our history.”<sup>256</sup> Harper continued, “We recognize

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<sup>253</sup> Pratt, “Re: Indian civilization before the National Educational Convention.”

<sup>254</sup> Pratt, “Re: Indian civilization before the National Educational Convention.”

<sup>255</sup> John Sheridan Milloy, *“A National Crime”: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879-1986* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999).

<sup>256</sup>Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s Statement of Apology” *CBC News, Canada*, June 11, 2008. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2008/06/11/pm-statement.html>.

that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country.”<sup>257</sup> Time will tell if the American government will respond in a similar manner for its role in the Americanization of its own indigenous people.

By 1902 it was evident that Pratt had achieved an international level of prestige extending even beyond Canada. That year Pratt received a letter from Anagarika Dharmapala, a Buddhist representative from Ceylon (now known as Sri Lanka), which was then under British control. Dharmapala reached out to Pratt in an attempt to understand his methods of educating the Indians, as he had heard that Pratt’s “institute affords the best education in this country” for the Native Americans.<sup>258</sup> Dharmapala contacted Pratt because Ceylon had an ethnic divide between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils, and the entire population was subjugated under British colonization. He drew a comparison between the United States federal government’s treatment of the Native Americans in regards to education and the British government’s treatment of people in India and Ceylon, writing, “Indeed it is a shame that the British govt has deliberately denied the blessings of progress and education in India and Ceylon.”<sup>259</sup> It is unclear how the Sri Lankans believed Pratt could improve their situation. However, Pratt’s international recognition and acclaim on the subject of educating minorities shows that he had a far lasting legacy in the field of education of minorities.

Domestically, the federal government examined the effects of Pratt and other Native American educators in the twentieth century. In 1969, on behalf of the Committee of Labor and Public Welfare Senator Edward “Ted” Kennedy of Massachusetts submitted a report to the Senate entitled, “Indian Education: A National Tragedy – A National Challenge.” Robert

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<sup>257</sup> Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s Statement of Apology.”

<sup>258</sup> Letter, Anagarika Dharmapala to Richard Henry Pratt, October 26, 1902, box 3, folder 76, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>259</sup> Letter, Anagarika Dharmapala to Richard Henry Pratt, November 11, 1902, box 3, folder 76, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Kennedy initially led the committee, but after his assassination, his brother and others continued his work, eventually publishing this lengthy report. The report attacked the assimilationist policies of Pratt and others towards Native Americans. The report states, “Our failure to provide an effective education for the American Indian has condemned him to a life of poverty and despair.”<sup>260</sup> According to the report, the situation created as a result of the assimilationist educational methods was a “national tragedy and a national disgrace,” transforming the “first American” into the “last American” in terms of an opportunity for employment, education, a decent income, and the chance for a full and rewarding life.”<sup>261</sup> While this report condemns assimilationist methods as a whole and does not specifically chastise Carlisle, the contemporary view of Pratt’s efforts is clearly unfavorable.

The long term effects of Pratt’s well-intended education methods at Carlisle have had negative implications for the survival of Native American culture, as this report points out and concludes that assimilationist methods are the root of all problems with Native Americans today. In addition to spelling out the problems with Americanizing methods, this report provides sixty recommendations on how to deal with the consequences. The recommendations focused on the fact that Native Americans should have a say in their education and that the government should provide culturally-sensitive curriculum materials, bi-lingual programs, and education on nutrition and alcoholism.<sup>262</sup> However, these recommendations have not been implemented on a wide scale. Additionally, the United States government had not issued a public apology that would take responsibility for the negative consequences of assimilation, as Canada has done. From the Native American perspective, the discontent of many individuals of their race’s historic

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<sup>260</sup> Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, Special Subcommittee on Indian Education, *Indian Education: A National Tragedy – A National Challenge*, 91<sup>st</sup> Congress, S. REP. No 91-501 (1969), p. ix-x.

<sup>261</sup> *Indian Education: A National Tragedy – A National Challenge*, p. x.

<sup>262</sup> *Indian Education: A National Tragedy – A National Challenge*, p. xiv.

treatment emerged in the form of the Indian rights and Red Power movement in the 1960s and 1970s.

While the 1969 Senate Report focuses on Pratt's legacy as being overtly harmful, as mentioned in the outset of this paper, it is important that Pratt's actions be analyzed in their historical context before being judged from a contemporary viewpoint. In the historical context, it is clear that Pratt's efforts had varied outcomes. He was successful in creating an educational experience for a select group of Native American students in the "American" way of life and in bringing whites and Native Americans in contact. In the process, however, these students were forced to give up their families, languages, cultures, and complete way of life in order to adopt the "civilized" life of the white man. Still, Pratt's genuine intentions were often muddled by the actions of the federal government – first, in their authoritarian insistence that the students must come from problematic tribes to act as bargaining chips, and second, in the lack of support Pratt received for his initiative. While the government initially provided the Carlisle Barracks for the school, the measly funding Pratt received was not enough to make Carlisle into what he had envisioned. Pratt overcame this through fundraising on his own to make Carlisle the best educational experience it could be for the Native Americans. Always struggling to gain money for new facilities at Carlisle and also to do things like pay for a school trip to the Columbian Exposition, Pratt was going above and beyond the call of duty – he was not just simply acting as a cog in the governmental bureaucracy machine, but instead provided his Native American students with an education and a "civilizing" experience. He was constantly doing more than was expected from his position to ensure the best, in his opinion, for his students. Pratt became fed up with his job only after his frustrations with the federal government reached an unbearable level. Pratt's efforts with the Native Americans, first at St. Augustine, then Hampton, and eventually

Carlisle, represented a break from the popular conception of Native Americans in America at that time. The majority of the country followed the mantra, “The only good Indian is a dead Indian.” Pratt added some humanity to the way Native Americans were viewed, instead saying “Kill the Indian, save the man.” If the student became Americanized and shed their Native American identity they could be integrated in to American society, thus being saved.

On the other hand, when examined from a contemporary vantage point, as depicted in the 1969 Senate Report, the actions of Richard Henry Pratt may seem to some like acts of cultural genocide. With his fundamental disrespect for the Native American cultures and ways of life, Pratt forced the students to conform to his view of what an American should look like and be.

However, it is not fair to pin all of the blame for the flaws in the “Americanization” program on Pratt. For one thing, while he did establish the first off-reservation boarding school for Native American students, he inherited this belief from the Americanizers that came before him. Beginning with Cotton Mather, the emphasis in the American colonies, at least in New England, was on conformity. Reverend John Eliot, Thomas Mayhew, and Eleazar Wheelock continued this agenda in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries through their Christianization of the Native American populations in the Northeast. Over one hundred years passed between Eliot’s praying towns, Mayhew’s schools on Martha’s Vineyard, and Wheelock’s Moors Charity School, but the Americanization message remained. In the early 1800s, Thomas McKenney, as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, insisted that education for Native Americans was a necessity to enable the race’s survival. This education included learning English and some type of vocational or agricultural skill. In 1838, Hartley Crawford, a subsequent commissioner of Indian affairs agreed that education was the best gift for the Native Americans. Richard Henry Pratt then entered the stage in the late nineteenth-century when he had the opportunity to push for

education for Native Americans. Pratt followed the path that had been blazed by Americanizers before him, continuing to implement the ideas of Americanization. He did, however, take the idea to a whole new level by stressing the need for the races to interact and for Native Americans to integrate into mainstream American society, which became a major part of Pratt's legacy.

In examining Pratt's complex legacy in regards to Native American education, it is impossible to conclude that it was completely negative or completely beneficial. While some may argue that cultural genocide took place when Pratt lifted the students from their reservations and forced them to be remade in the image of white men and women, the question is, what was the alternative? If Richard Henry Pratt had not attempted to educate and integrate these Native Americans into mainstream American society they would have either been killed in the Indian wars or subjected to a life of poverty due to the federal government's treatment of the tribes on their reservations. Pratt aimed to offer these Native Americans an alternative to these dire conditions and an opportunity for a new life through education. In the process he certainly was not as culturally sensitive to Native American peoples as some would have preferred. This paradox is the reason Pratt has such a mixed legacy in American history.

## **Conclusion**

The Carlisle Indian Industrial School closed its doors to students over one-hundred years ago, but the efforts of Richard Henry Pratt in creating an institution to "civilize" and Americanize Native Americans are still relevant today. When Pratt petitioned the government to support an off-reservation boarding school for Native Americans, he looked around the country and saw the abysmal conditions that Native Americans lived in and the prejudice that existed between mainstream America and the country's original inhabitants. The Native American race

was on the verge of extinction if nothing was done, so Pratt attempted to throw a lifeline to the Natives in order to avoid this, supposed, inevitable conclusion.

Today, we are in a similar situation – Native Americans are relegated to a life of poverty, hidden away on their reservations with limited interactions with mainstream society. Prejudice and stereotypes are still rampant and Native American culture and identity is disappearing, again on the verge of extinction. The government has largely avoided this issue, begging the question what should be done? This is the same question Pratt asked himself, and he decided to take a chance to save the Native American people. While not everyone agrees that Pratt’s intervention was beneficial, the point is that he cared enough to actually *do* something to try to help these people. And for this reason, his initiative must be applauded. As Frederick Douglass wrote in his letter to Pratt in April 1893, “How good a thing Captain Pratt that you were born and have come in time to help save a permanent of these people – our brothers and sisters – to themselves and to the world. May you and Carlisle live forever.”<sup>263</sup>

In order to understand and tackle the current predicament of the Native American experience in this country, it is imperative that we understand how we reached this point. Pratt’s effort to Americanize and civilize Native American students at Carlisle is a major milestone in this story, as well as a critical event in our country’s history, and thus should not be forgotten.

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<sup>263</sup> Letter, Frederick Douglass to Richard Henry Pratt, April 1, 1893, box 3, folder 81, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.





## APPENDIX

### Appendix I: Pictures



Figure 9.10: Confrontation of Indians and U.S. Army, drawn by Etahdleuh Doanmoe.

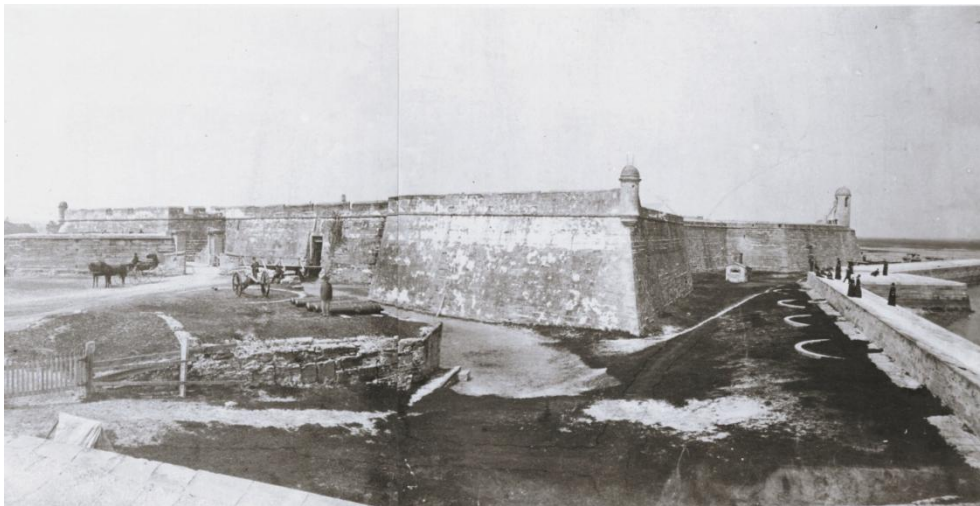
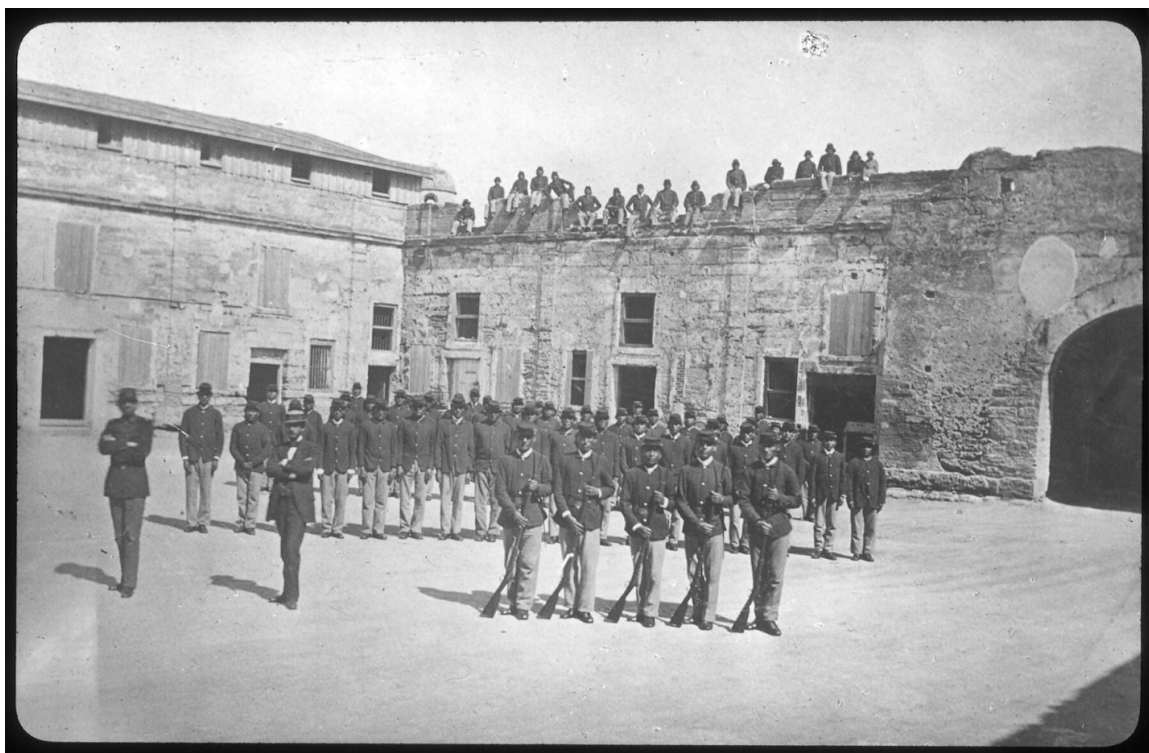


Figure 1.11: Photograph of Fort Marion, St. Augustine, Florida.



**Figure 1.12: The Indian company at Fort Marion.**



**Figure 1.13: Roll-call, Fort Marion [18]75-78, drawn by Etahdleuh Doanmoe.**



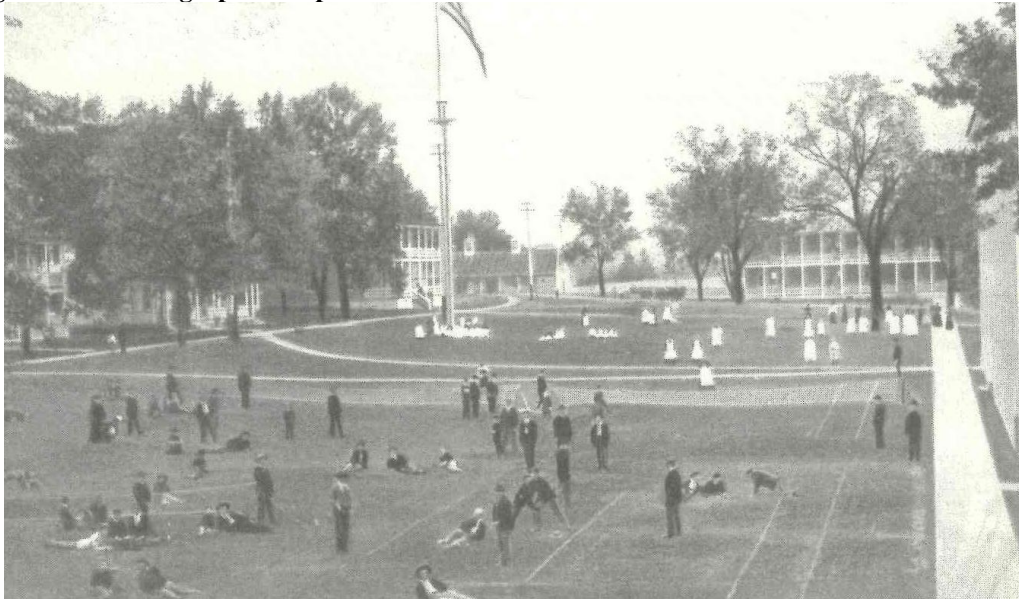
**Figure 1.14: Wounded Yellow Robe, Henry Standing Bear, and Timber Yellow Robe upon arrival at Carlisle and 6 months after entrance to school.**



Figure 1.15: Photographs from Carlisle Indian Industrial School Cemetery



**Figure 1.16: Photograph of Captain Pratt and students at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School.**



**Figure 1.17: John Leslie, "View of the Campus," 1895.**

## Appendix II: Maps



Figure 10.1: Map of Native American tribes in New England at the time of King Philip's War



Figure 2.2: Native American Tribes Location.

### Appendix III: Charts

Figure 3.2: Carlisle Indian Industrial School (1879-1918) Tribal Enrollment Tally

Tribes	# of Students
Abenaki	5
Alaskan	130
Algonquin	1
Allegheny	1
Apache	269
Arapaho	116
Arikara	26
Assiniboine	56
Bannock	16
Blackfeet	187
Caddo	41
Catawba	12
Cayuga	39
Cayuse	8
Checto	3
Chehalis	2
Chelan	1
Cherokee	370
Cheyenne	249
Chickasaw	16
Chinook	3
Chippewa	998
Chitimacha	23
Choctaw	82
Challam	15
Coahuilla	1
Colville	23
Comanche	60
Concow	1
Coos Bay	4
Coquell	1
Coeur d'Alene	4
Covelo	1
Cowlitz	1
Cree	1
Creek	104
Crow	97
Dalles	1
Delaware	27
Digger	22
Ehnek	1
Filipino	1
Flathead	19
Gopah	2
Gros Ventre	42
Hiawatha	1
Hoopa	8
Hopi	18
Iowa	16
Iroquois	31
Kalispell	1
Kaw	11
Keechi	1
Kickapoo	32
Kiowa	65
Klamath	69
Klickita	1
Kootenai	3
Lapwai	1
Littlelake	6
Longhorne	1
Lummi	12
Makah	2
Mandan	7
Menominee	141
Miami	17
Mission	75
Modoc	17
Mohawk	352
Mojave	3
Mono	1
Munsee	3
Narragansett	3
Navajo	41
Nez Perce	126
Nomelaki	7
Nooksack	5
Okanagan	8
Olampoli	1
Omaha	124
Oneida	502
Onondaga	136
Oregon	2
Osage	156
Otoe	4
Ottowa	139
Paiute	23
Pamunkey	2
Papago	16
Passamaquody	9
Pawnee	85
Pendoreille	1
Penobscot	44
Peoria	12
Pima	71
Pitt River	5
Pokanot	12
Pomo	6
Ponca	46
Porto Rican	60
Pottawatomi	71
Pueblo	352
Puyallup	16
Quapaw	14
Sac and Fox	70
Samseau	1
Sanpoil	6
Seminole	11
Seneca	628
Serrano	3
Shinnecock	10
Shoshone	102
Siletz	5
Sioux	1,126
Skagit	1
Skokomish	4
Spokane	11
Squamish	1
Stockbridge	68
Tewan	1
Tlingit	11
Tsimshean	2
Tuscarora	103
Uintah	2
Ukiah	3
Umatilla	10
Umpqua	4
Ute	15
Walla Walla	11
Wampanoag	11
Washoe	15
Wichita	35
Winnebago	164



Wishoshkan/Wiyot	3
Wyandotte	42
Wylack	1

Yakima	3
Yuckicreek	1
Yuma	13

Unknown	1,856
Total	10,600

<b>Daily Schedule at Carlisle</b>	
<b>A.M.</b>	
Rising Bells and Reveille	6:00
Assembly Call	6:15
Mess Call and Breakfast Bell	First 6:25; Second 6:30
Work Whistle	First 7:25; Second 7:30
School Bell	First 8:30; Second 8:35
Recall Bell from School	First 11:30; Second 11:35
Recall Whistle from Work	11:30
Assembly Call	11:45
Mess Call and Dinner Bell	First 11:55; Second 12:00
<b>P.M.</b>	
Work Whistle	First 12:55; Second 1:00
School Bell	First 1:10; Second 1:15
Recall Bell from School	First 4:00; Second 4:05
Flag Salute	Spring and Summer 5:45; Fall and Winter 5:25
Supper	Spring and Summer 6:00; Fall and Winter 5:30
Evening Hour	Spring and Summer 7:30-8:30; Fall and Winter 7:00 to 8:00
Roll Call and Prayer	First Call 8:45; Assembly 9:00
Taps and Inspection of Rooms	9:30
<b>From the Annual School Calendar, U.S. Indian School, Carlisle PA, Session of 1908-09. Carlisle Indian Press, July 1908.</b>	

**Figure 3.3: Daily schedule at Carlisle Indian Industrial School.**

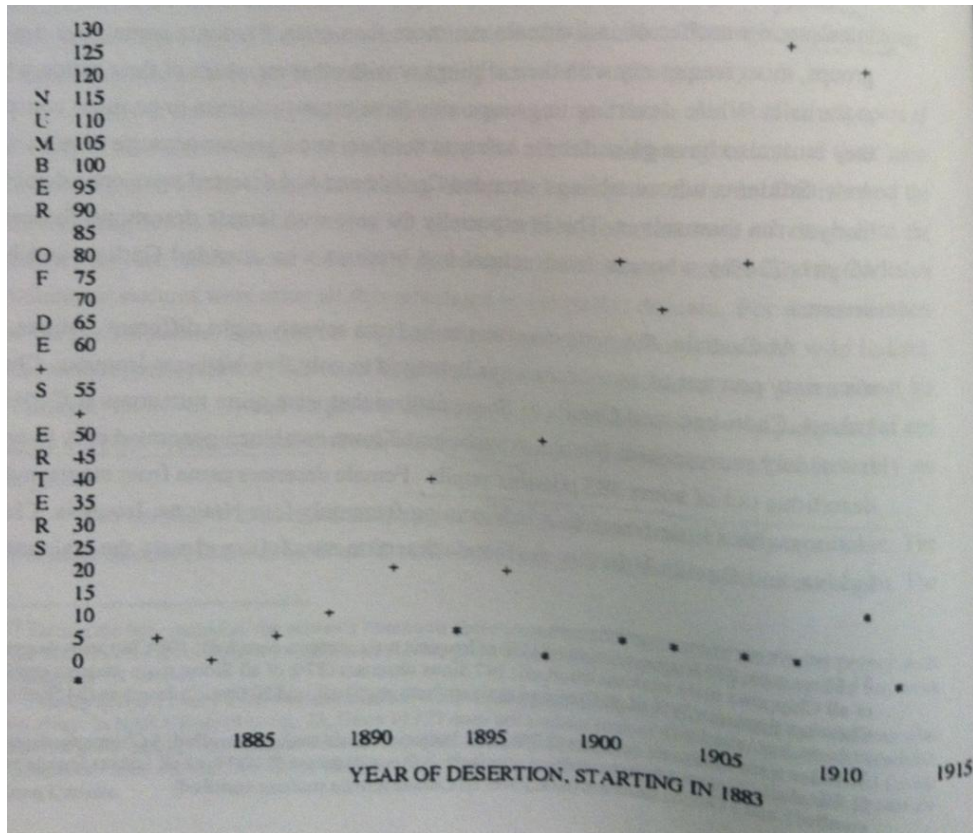


Figure 3.4: Run-away Rates.

Students Expelled				
Superintendent	Male	Female	Total	Average/Year
Richard Henry Pratt (1879-6/30/1904)	85	23	107	4.6
William Mercer (7/1/1904-3/31/1908)	19	11	30	7.5
Moses Friedman (4/1/1908-4/30/1914)	26	37	63	7
Oscar Lipps (5/1/1914-5/31/1917)	48	8	57	19
John Francis Jr. (6/1/1917-5/31/1918)	5	1	6	6

Figure 3.5: Total Number of Students Expelled from Carlisle.

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