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THE MISSIONARY WORK OF THE REFORMED
(DUTCH) CHURCH IN AMERICA
IN OKLAHOMA¹

By Richard H. Harper

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Part I

For a long period fruitful Christian missionary work has been carried on among the Five Tribes of Indian Territory. Churches and mission schools had been established, and had flourished. All Christian efforts among the western Oklahoma tribes, known as "blanket Indians," is, however, of more recent date.

From the middle of the seventeenth century the Dutch Reformed Church had shown its interest in American Indian Missions; and had, in conjunction with Presbyterians and others, sent its missionaries to several tribes.² This denomination was a member of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, under which joint organization the Rev. Samuel Parker was sent to the great Northwest, in 1835, to ascertain the spiritual needs of the Indians.

As early as 1642 Johannes Megapolensis became the Reformed Church pastor at Rensselaerswyck, now Albany, New York State; and, added to his other duties, preached and did pastoral work among the Indians. The Gospel seed sown yielded a good harvest.

The United Missionary Society was organized in 1816, "composed of the Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed and Associated Reformed Churches, and all others who may choose to join with them." The purpose of the society was "To spread the Gospel among the Indians of North America," and other peoples throughout the world.³ "Thus," says the Rev. Henry N. Cobb, D. D., "was the Reformed Dutch Church, for the first time in this country, formally committed to the work of executing the high commission of her Lord and Head."

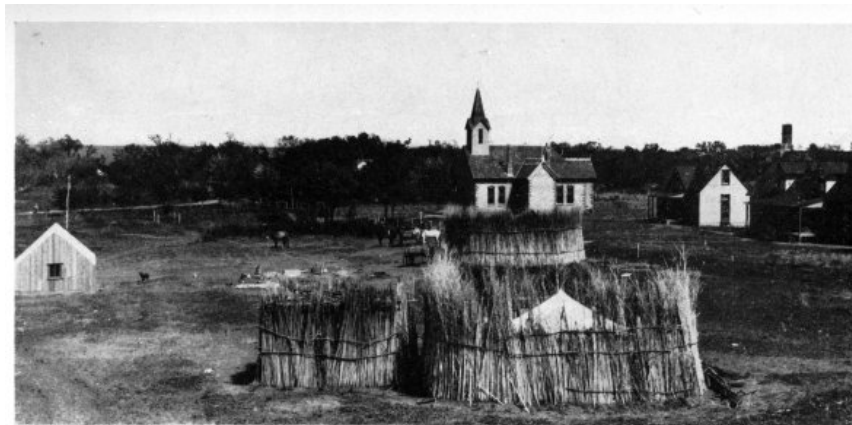
Under what was known as "General Grant's Quaker Policy," the Reformed Church accepted the invitation of this President of the United States to name Indian agents for western tribes, and assumed as their responsibility in this regard the Pima and Maricopa

¹This is the first of three articles on The Missionary Work of the Reformed (Dutch) Church in America in Oklahoma. I. The Cheyennes and Arapahoes; II. The Comanches and Apaches; III. Work With White People.

²Grateful acknowledgment is made of the kind assistance, in preparing this article, of Mrs. Mary W. Roe, Mrs. Elizabeth M. Page, Miss Muriel H. Wright, Miss Mary Jensen, Miss Helen Brokaw, Mr. R. Kincaide, Mr. Jed Seger, Rev. L. L. Legters, Rev. John H. Baxter, and a number of others.

³*A Century of Missions in the Reformed Church in America 1796-1896*, p. 3.

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THE COLONY CHURCH AND WINTER CAMP

Agency, with a population of 5,000 Indians, and the Colorado River Agency with 23,000 Indians. This work was continued for ten years, from 1870-1880.

Then came a period of more than a dozen years when, little if any Indian work was done by this denomination.

At the end of 1893 the Women's Executive Committee, an auxiliary to the Board of Domestic Missions of the Reformed Church,⁴ had \$4,000 for Indian missionary work in America. The urgent needs of the American Indians had been borne in upon their minds and hearts. Then arose questions as to how this money might be made to do its best for the red men, and what tribes to begin with. Another question of highest import was where to find the right man to be a missionary. Success depended largely upon this selection. Not every minister had the qualifications for this difficult service. The good women prayed for the guidance of God.

God works in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform.

The prayers were answered. The Lord had been getting a man ready.

On New Year's day, 1860, a bright-eyed baby boy was born into an Indian home, in the Choctaw Nation, a son of⁵ Reverend Allen Wright and Harriet (Mitchell) Wright. The former was a member of the Choctaw Nation, while the latter had been appointed as a missionary teacher to the Choctaws, by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, in 1855. Allen Wright, whose Choctaw name was Kiliahote, was educated at Spencer Academy, in the Choctaw Nation, completing his work in 1848; taking his college course at Union College, Schenectady, New York, whence he was graduated in 1852. Entering Union Seminary, New York, he completed his theological studies in 1855, and returned the same year to his own tribe as a missionary. On February 11, 1857, he was married to the white missionary teacher Harriet Newell Mitchell.

From this marital union Frank Hall Wright was born, at Old Boggy Depot, Oklahoma. After receiving private instruction in his studies, he followed in the footsteps of his father, attending Spencer Academy, then Union College and Union Theological Seminary, graduating from the latter in 1885.⁶ Soon he married Miss Addie Lilienthal, of Saratoga, New York, and the young couple traveled to the Choctaw Nation, to take up Christian work among Mr. Wright's own Indian people.

⁴The Women's Executive Committee of the Board of Domestic Missions of the R. C. A. was organized in 1882. It became the Women's Board of Domestic Missions in 1910.

⁵Allen Wright was head chief of the Choctaw tribe from 1866-1870.

⁶Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri, conferred upon the Rev. Frank Hall Wright the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1917.

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After a few years he and his wife returned to New York City, where he engaged in evangelistic work among white people. A year and a half of this, in various eastern cities, resulted in an attack of pulmonary tuberculosis which almost cost the young Indian minister his life.

It was at this juncture that God guided to his bedside the President of the Women's Executive Committee of the Reformed Church, and the official head of the work which was to be undertaken for the "blanket Indians" of western Oklahoma.

From a human point of view there was little or no reason to think that this frail man, whose body was wasted by the inroads of tuberculosis, could do the work which the two Church representatives were now laying upon his heart. Both their faith and his, were being tested to the utmost. Faith conquered. Frank Hall Wright accepted the challenge given. He had learned that the God who commands also enables, and he dared to trust Him.

To the great southwest he went, far beyond the bounds of his own Choctaw Nation, to find some way of reaching the minds and consciences of the blanket tribes with the simple, saving message of the Gospel of Christ. To the Comanches, Fort Sill Apaches, Arapahoes, and Cheyennes he travelled, over countless miles of prairies, through the long hot summer days. With a team of horses, and a hack, a tent, cooking utensils, and a man-of-all-work to help in the arduous physical tasks,—thus he journeyed. New strength came to his weakened body, and his cough began to lose its hold.

The Indians, at this time of the year, were often on the move. The missionary could contact them only by adopting a nomadic manner of life. When they went, he followed. Pitching his tent near them at night gave him an

opportunity to talk with them around their camp fires. They listened to him first, perhaps, because he was one of their own race, but also because he brought to these people whose life was hard and often discouraging, and harassed by pagan beliefs, news of a better Way, made possible by One who was the Son of the Father in Heaven,—a Way in which they might find forgiveness of sins, peace of mind, and release from the chains with which superstition had bound them.

Mr. Wright's genial personality, his winsome smile, his sweet singing, his mild manner of speaking,—all these helped to make the red men listen to his message, if and when they did give attention. But there was little response as far as change of life was concerned. Sometimes they avoided him, and he found an approach difficult.

The new missionary's heart was burdened for the Chiricahua Indian prisoners of war,— "Fort Sill Apaches" they were often called. He made an attempt to gain entrance to the Fort Sill Mili-

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tary Reservation for work with them. Military authorities refused him permission.

As autumn approached he decided to go northward, to try another field, in which dwelt the Cheyennes and Arapahoes. On a Saturday he arrived at the Segar Indian Agency and school, on Cobb Creek, about fourteen miles southeast of ⁷the present town of Weatherford. Mr. John H. Seger, the Government Agent in charge, welcomed him, and gave him an opportunity to speak to the Indian children in the Government school.

In talking with the missionary Mr. Seger found that he represented a body of Christian people who were ready to invest money in a permanent mission establishment. This kind-hearted official gave assurance that he would do all in his power to get a tract of land set aside for the use of the mission. Our enthusiastic Indian missionary felt that he was really making progress, and that here at the Seger agency and school was an opportunity for permanent service with the Cheyenne and Arapaho adults and children.

A council of Indian leaders was called to meet in the agency office to consider the advisability of going forward with the plans which Mr. Wright had in mind. After a careful statement by the missionary, the Indians decided

that, though the message of the Bible would not be good for them, holding as they did, to pagan beliefs and following pagan practices, yet it would be good for their children.

October and November were spent in visiting the Indians in their tepees, some near Colony, others many miles away, between Sundays. Week ends found Mr. Wright with the boys and girls at the Government Indian School. The children, as well as older hearers, enjoyed the vivacious addresses and sweet singing of this Indian evangelist.

Winter came, and the new friend of the Indians had to leave the field, to protect himself from the dangers to health which exposure in camp life would bring.

In his winter preaching Mr. Wright met the Rev. Walter C. Roe, pastor of a Presbyterian Church in Dallas, Texas, and his wife, and interested them in the great needs of the Indians on the plains. Visiting Mrs. Roe was Mrs. Alfred R. Page, her sister, a member of

⁷John H. Seger, who had been employed at the Darlington Indian Agency in what is now Oklahoma, was appointed by the U. S. Government to establish a new agency at the place on Cobb Creek which took the names of Seger Colony. To this place he came in March 1886, bringing with him a band of renegade Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians, settling them on Cobb Creek and the Washita River. He was their agent, farmer and school superintendent. Under his instruction they made progress in farming. Those who came with Mr. Seger, increased by other bands later, totaled about 500.

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the Women's Executive Committee of the Reformed Church, under whose auspices Mr. Wright had come to the Indians of western Oklahoma.

CHEYENNES AND ARAPAHOES

In May 1896, Mr. Wright returned to his new field, where he had left both Indian and white friends the preceding autumn,—friends whom his compelling methods and personality had drawn to him. He received a warm welcome.

During this summer the stone church of the Columbian Memorial Mission was erected; and, by November, was ready for dedication. Mr. Wright invited the Rev. and Mrs. Roe to be present, and to assist in its dedication. This marked the beginning of many years of helpful services to Indians, and to the white people of the community. For four evenings services were held in the church, and three services on the Lord's Day. This seed-sowing brought an immediate harvest, and a church was organized with twenty-two members. Thus manifestly God gave His seal of approval to the establishing of this Indian mission!

Mr. Wright had allowed no grass to grow under his feet, since meeting the Roes, and had convinced the Board that the work on the Oklahoma field would be greatly strengthened by the addition of these valuable Christian workers to the personnel at Colony. The great need of the red men constituted a Macedonian call,— "Come over and help us."

Dr. Roe's health had become so impaired by tuberculosis that his only promise of continued service was through life in the open. April, 1897, found Mr. Wright's wish granted, with Dr. and Mrs. Roe added to the missionary force among the Indians of the Seger district.⁸

For many months there was no house for the missionaries. They lived in a tent, and learned many lessons which would be of value to them later.

A stone parsonage was built, west of the church, and into it the Roes moved in the winter of 1897-8. What a haven the new home was! Especially was it appreciated in view of the fact that, the previous summer, Dr. Roe had suffered from a serious attack of typhoid fever, followed by relapses. Mrs. Roe was his faithful nurse.

Once in two weeks the Indians of the district came to Colony for the small amount of rations of beef, flour, baking-powder, coffee, and sugar, supplied by the United States Government. Their com

⁸The Rev. Walter C. Roe was graduated from Williams College, and received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from his alma mater.

ing gave great opportunities for service by the missionaries, in visiting the sick, helping the needy, preaching the Gospel; and this faithful man and woman of God were true to the charge committed to them.

The difficulties arising from dealing with people who talk another language are not small; and here were two tribes, each speaking a language of its own, and comparatively few of them either speaking or understanding the language of the other tribe, or of the white man.

It was not always easy to get reliable interpreters; and, in such a case, one must obtain the best available. When the Roes undertook to learn Cheyenne, the Arapahoes were offended; and, when they began to work on the Arapahoe, a similar effect was noticeable with the other tribe. So, the best thing to do was to depend on interpreters and this they did.

The Reformed Church in America is a small denomination; and the Women's Board of Domestic Missions, knowing that the amount of money at their disposal would not be large, decided that, in carrying on their Indian missionary work, they would establish only such missions as could be supported adequately, providing each with facilities for giving the best service. It was planned that each missionary should have a parsonage, a team of horses and a hack, and an interpreter. Later, autos were supplied.

As far as possible, each Indian mission was to be established near a Government Indian school; for religious work with the children is basic in reaching the homes; and through them a whole tribe. The maintenance of a mission school necessitates a large outlay of money; therefore it was thought that school work should be done by the Government. The only exception to this plan, in Reformed Church missions in Oklahoma, was in the case of the small school carried on for the children of the Apache prisoners of war, at Fort Sill.

Government rules and regulations for religious instruction of Indian children in Government Indian schools were such that a missionary might see the children of his parish in the institution at frequent intervals. In many schools the finest cooperation was given by teachers, matrons, and others.

As soon as possible each mission was provided with a "lodge", or parish house. To these the Indians might come for sewing, reading, and simple games. When necessary, Indians were supplied with free lodging. In the case

of the Colony lodge, sick people were received and cared for by a competent missionary nurse. Many Indian babies first saw the light here. After many years, sufficient equipment of this kind was supplied by the Government, at the Colony Agency, and the mission ceased to maintain a hospital department.

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Each mission was given a field worker, early in its history. Her duties were to call on the families in the tepees, to bring them advice, and material aid when needed. She was also lodge matron, and supervised the activities there. Hundreds of Indian men, women, and children came to each one of the lodges in a year. At regular intervals social gatherings were held in these homes ("lodge" means an Indian home). At the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons they were hubs of activity, a part of which was the supplying of a generous dinner to the Indians of the parish. Often the Indians shared in the expense of this.

The general plan of missionary service for the Indians was the same in all our missions Preaching of the Gospel, Sunday School work, Christian Endeavor activities, visitation of the homes, and every kind of help for the needy.

The Reformed Church Indian Missions have tried to make of their parishioners the following five-fold kind of citizens of our beloved country: intelligent, able-bodied, self-supporting, patriotic, Christian. This is a program which would challenge any group of Christian workers, with any people, in America or other lands.

More than this, our missionaries believed that it was a part of their task to deal with the Government officials on the fields and in Washington, on matters pertaining to land, financial affairs, and any other thing which vitally affected the Indians. Many a trip did Dr. Roe and others make to Washington, to confer with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, senators, and congressmen. Such visits were fruitful of material good to the Indians. Hundreds of letters were written for the same purpose.

Misses Mary Jensen, Johanna Meengs, Marie De Keyser, and Mrs. Van Brakle served as lodge matrons, or field workers, or both, at different periods. Miss Meengs was a trained nurse. Miss Berkenpas, who was a

helper in the parsonage and a worker in the camps, took a special short course in nursing in Chicago. Miss De Keyser was a trained school teacher. Miss Jensen, who came to the mission in 1900, served at the same time with most or all of the others named, and never grew weary of her camp work, going in and out among the tepees, ministering to sick and other needy ones. She is still living at Colony, retired, but retaining a deep interest in her Indian wards, many of whom she has seen grow to manhood and womanhood.

There were other experiences of a different sort, which, however, gave an opportunity for service. On a night which Dr. Roe spent in a western Oklahoma town, he shared his room with a stranger, — a common occurrence in those days. The two men went to bed, but the other occupant of the room was restless and could not sleep. Some time during the night hours he awoke Dr. Roe, telling him

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that he wished to unburden his mind; then surprised him by saying: "Parson, I have killed a man." No record is left us of what passed in that room before morning; but all who knew this devoted missionary are confident that good advice was given the murderer, and he was pointed to the Saviour. With Dr. Roe's high regard for observance of law, one may well believe that he urged the killer to make matters right with state authorities.

It was the custom of the Indians, during these years, to give Indians names to their missionaries. Dr. Roe was known as "Iron Eyes"; Mrs. Roe was "Happy Woman"; Mrs. Page, Mrs. Roe's sister, and Field Secretary of the Women's Board of Domestic Missions, "Our New Sister"; Miss Jensen, "Fast Walker"; Mr. Kincaide, "Comb Up," — that is, pompadour; my own name, "Black Beard"; Mrs. Harper's name, "Walking Around," given her by one of the Cheyenne elders, because of her visits to the Indian Camps.

One of the most valuable methods of work has been the Indian Camp Meeting, — still in use at the Comanche Indian Mission, near Lawton, Oklahoma. To describe one such gathering is sufficient; for they were much alike, no matter whether among Cheyennes and Arapahoes, or Comanches and Apaches.

Here they come! Over the hill, into the large Government pasture southeast of Colony, on Cobb Creek; Indians in wagons, in hacks, or buggies, (today, some in autos,) boys on horseback,—they follow each other through the gate, and put up their tepees and tents. "What's doing?" someone asks. "Camp Meeting" is the reply.

Soon the tents are pitched and the horses are turned loose to, graze.

What an attractive sight! A short distance from the creek stands the large Camp Meeting tent, which holds hundreds of people. Near the trees are the tents of the missionaries. Not far from creek and meeting tent are the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and visiting Comanches, Apaches, and Kiowas. The camp is in a quiet spot, far enough removed from the main road to avoid traffic noises. From Wednesday night through the following Sunday the meetings are held. Not only Indians, but many whites and negroes come, especially on the last day.

Each morning begins with a prayer meeting, before breakfast. At about ten o'clock a second service is held, with Rev. Frank Hall Wright preaching one of his earnest, appealing sermons. At half past two a testimony meeting is held, when the Indians have opportunity to tell what the Saviour has done for them. There is not time enough for all who are eager to tell their story. At dark comes the last service of the day when Mr. Wright preaches again.

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Will you sit on the front seat, please; and, along with the ministers and church officers,—most of the latter being Indians,—face the audience. The congregation is distinctively Indian. The shawls worn by the women and girls are attractive,—bright with red and pink. The men, you notice, wear citizens' clothing. Some of the older men wear the customary Indian sheet over their suits. Here and there will be seen a pair of prettily beaded moccasins, the handwork of one of the many industrious women. The decorated cradles, made to be carried on the backs of the mothers, catch your attention. The bright eyes looking out from them win you. During the meeting the cradles are held in the mothers' arms, or stood upon the ground, leaning against their knees.

How captivating are the faces of the listeners! They reveal happy hearts of many who, for months, have been looking forward to the Camp Meeting.

Some faces are solemn, showing a consciousness of sins committed. Others are sad, as thoughts pass through their minds of friends who have attended previous gatherings of this kind, but who now have gone out on the "long trail." Some faces are defiant, for Satan is here, and is helping his followers to wage a strong fight against Christ and His Gospel.

The hymns are inspiring. "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder" is started. While the Indians sing it in the Cheyenne tongue, we who speak English join them in our language. The Indian hymn is a translation of that of the same title in our hymn books, and is sung to the same tune. Indians and whites sing together, and the words of praise echo through the trees and rise toward Heaven. Men and women, boys and girls, all help. The strong voices of the men, with the sweet tones of the women, make a melody long to be remembered.

The work of the interpreters is interesting and important. Each tribe represented must have its own interpreter. From the lips of the preacher, sentence by sentence, or thought by thought, each of these faithful men takes the message of the Lord and passes it on to his own tribal group. All the interpreters talk at once, and none seems to interfere with the speech of the others. Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Comanches, Apaches, Kiowas sit, each in the tribal group to which he belongs. Every Indian listener catches the words of his own interpreter, apparently being able, by concentration of mind, to eliminate from his hearing the voices of the other speakers.

At the close of the sermon the preacher gives an invitation for those desiring to become Christians to come forward, and to shake hands with the ministers and the church officers; also inviting Christians who wish to reconsecrate themselves to more earnest Christian living to do the same. An Indian hymn is sung, and those who wish to respond to the invitation given come forward, some-

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times many, sometimes few. A prayer is offered; the meeting closes; those who have come forward are now talked with; and then all go to tents and teepees for meals, or for a night's rest.

On the last Sunday of the Camp Meeting the new converts, after careful examination and instruction, are received into the Church. The results of such meetings cannot easily be overestimated.

Each year the Sunday nearest Christmas is used to emphasize giving. Those who so desire bring their children for baptism. An opportunity is afforded to any desiring to become Christians to give themselves to the Saviour; and all are urged to share; as they may be able, of their money, to help in sending the Gospel to other Indians. At an appropriate time of the year they bring gifts for foreign missionary work.

There were times when some of the Christians had no money to give. On one such Giving Sunday Frank Hamilton, the mission interpreter, and his wife, Enosta, came forward, in the church service, at the time of the offering. They brought their little boy to the missionary, saying that they would "put him into the basket," as a gift to the Lord. They asked that Dr. Roe would look after his education, and would see that the little son should be so trained that his life would be lived for Jesus Christ. There was deep sincerity in this gift. It meant far more than money.

It would be interesting to tell of the general Christmas activities in the missions, but lack of space forbids.

A most heartening plan at Colony was the calling in of all Reformed Church missionary workers for a few days of conference, in the summer. Some outstanding minister of the denomination from the east was invited to address the group, and an inspiring occasion was the result.

From Colony went forth an effort to reach all the Chinese men in Oklahoma and Indian Territories. The Women's Board voted one hundred dollars for the purpose of purchasing testaments in the Canton dialect. These were sent out by one of the missionaries, by mail, to ministers of various denominations in towns where there were Chinese men, employed in laundries, or otherwise. These ministers, who had been previously contacted, distributed the books. We expect to see, in the Glory Land, Chinese men redeemed through this small missionary effort.

A language, requiring no words, has been in common use among the plains Indians for an unknown length of time. They travelled hundreds or thousands of miles over the prairies, meeting people of other tribes whose

languages were entirely different from their own. They must find some way to converse. As a result of this

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necessity there grew up among them what is known as "the Indian sign language." By means of this, Indians of one tribe can converse with those of other tribes, upon any subject with which the two are familiar,— Government, war, hunting, the family, and many other topics. In this language a sign represents an idea rather than merely a word, though in many instances there is a definite sign for a word as, horse, man, tree, soldiers, water, fire, enemy, friend. The Cheyennes and Arapahoes at Colony, being plains Indians, were expert sign talkers. It does not take a white person long to learn enough of this manner of conveying ideas to get along comfortably with an Indian who cannot speak English, and whose language the white man does not know.

No statement of the activities and interests of Dr. and Mrs. Roe would be adequate without a mention of their broad and deep interest in all the Indians in the south lands,—Mexico, Central America, and South America,—and a desire to integrate missionary work here with similar work for the millions of red men there. Since Dr. Roe took up his work in a higher sphere, Mrs. Roe has made one trip to South America and three trips to Mexico and Central America, in behalf of Indian missionary work.

The writer has taken time and space to write thus fully of the conditions and plans of work among the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, because they represent fairly those of Reformed Church activities on other Oklahoma Indian fields. Necessarily, as the years pass, some new methods are introduced.

The ordained Indian missionaries who served at Colony were: Frank Hall Wright, 1895-7; Walter C. Roe, 1897-1913; Arthur Brokaw, 1904-5; L. L. Legters, 1905-6; Richard H. Harper, 1907-9; **W. C. Wauchope, 1909-10;** John H. Baxter, 1910-13; Henry A. Vruwink, 1913-17; **J. Leighton Read, 1917-23;** John H. Baxter, 1923-6 (second term); Richard H. Harper, 1927-9 (second term); Peter Van Es, Jr., 1930-2.

Mr. Arthur Brokaw, a consecrated young minister from New Jersey, gave up his life at Colony, while a worker there. He had been ordained in his father's church, in Freehold, New Jersey, in June, 1904, and came to Colony a few

weeks after, to give his life to Gospel work for Indians. He gave promise of great usefulness. But, in the providence of God, he was called to higher service in 1905, dying of typhoid fever and spinal meningitis about a year after coming to the field.

The Arthur Brokaw Memorial Chapel, built in the memory, near the Washita River west of Colony, on a piece of land given by Dr. and Mrs. Roe, was erected in 1908 and dedicated in the autumn of that year.

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Prominent among the Indian church officers, interpreters and workers, at Colony, were Watan, Washee, Hartley Ridgebear, Joel Little Bird, Kendall Sore Thumb;—Arapahoes; and Frank Hamilton, Paul Goodbear, Wolf Chief, William Fletcher, Stacy Riggs, and others,—Cheyennes. Thunder Bull, a Sioux, married to a Cheyenne woman, was a helpful man in the church, and chief of Indian police; as also James Downs, of an eastern Oklahoma tribe, married to a Sioux woman who was widow of Joel Little Bird. Many earnest Christian women also might be named.

Dr. Walter C. Roe was called to join the many Indians who had preceded him to the Home above where there is no sin, nor sickness, where no wintry blasts nor stinging sand storms come. He went home to God from Nassau, Bahama Islands,—whither he had gone in an attempt to recuperate,—on March 12, 1913.

Dr. Frank Hall Wright passed to his reward at Muskoka Lakes, Ontario, Canada, on July 16, 1922. Others have taken his place, in the service of the Lord, but there was only one Frank Hall Wright, and only one Walter C. Roe. They have no duplicates; nor do they need to have. Often God uses different kinds of men and women to take up the tasks of those who have been promoted to service above.

Supplementary to and working in finest harmony with the Colony Mission, has been the Mohonk Lodge, whose manager, almost from its inception, has been Mr. Reese Kincaide, a former business man of Fort Worth, Texas. Mrs. Kincaide was a sister of Dr. Roe. Through the urgent request of the Roes, the Kincaides came, and threw all their help in work and influence into the industrial and spiritual tasks for the uplift of these Indian people. Mr. Kincaide has been, and now is, the very efficient superintendent of the

Sunday School, and has rendered loving and herculean service for the whole community.

Miss Minnie Van Zoeren has been a faithful and efficient helper in the Mohonk Lodge industrial work for a long period, and is still at her post.

The Mohonk Lodge publishes a small catalog, from which the following excerpt, written by Mr. Kincaide, tells the history and aims of this institution:

THE MOHONK LODGE is a philanthropic institution established at Colony, Oklahoma, by Dr. and Mrs. Walter C. Roe, missionaries of the Reformed Church in America, for work among the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians. THE LODGE is, however, independent of church control and has been built up and conducted along strictly undenominational lines; its funds from the start have been contributed by people of all classes and shades of belief.

At the Lake Mohonk Indian Conference in 1898 Mrs. Roe outlined a plan which she thought would reach the Indians socially and industrially,

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and immediately sufficient funds were contributed to erect a large, simple building and equip it with sewing machines, cook stove, utensils, cot beds, etc. At the very first, many of the Indian women came for instruction in sewing, cooking, caring for the sick and the various branches of home making, and the undertaking has been a success from that time and many of the Indians have received the instruction and help so much needed. Soon, however, another need arose. The Government discontinued issuing rations excepting to the old and those not able to work. It was soon evident that some way must be provided for earning money on which to live until crops could be made and gathered. As these Indians are among the best beadworkers in the world, the plan suggested itself of stimulating this art, for ART it is. Some materials were secured and a few women set to work. A ready market was found for all articles they could make, and soon other women were applying for work, and larger markets had to be secured, and so from this small beginning, the business has grown until we are able to give work to every woman of the two tribes who apply for it. And not only this, but we are giving work to our Geronimo Apaches of Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, and

also to those of this band who chose to go to the Mescalero, New Mexico Indian Reservation, and also to the Mescalero Apache Indian women. We are also sending work to the Rocky Boy Band of Crees and Chippewas. For quite a few years now our efforts have been to stimulate the making of articles of Indian conception. The social and home departments have been taken over by other strictly religious missionary workers. But the ideals held by Dr. and Mrs. Roe have been kept as ours, and we are still carrying on. For several years we have had slight surpluses over operating expenses, and this has been used to some extent for helping young men of the tribes with which we work to gain more educational training than they would otherwise get.

Mrs. Kincaide, after long, faithful service for her Master among the Cheyennes and Arapahoes at Colony, left for the better home in February of 1939.

"Change" is a word written largely on almost every kind of endeavor for and with the American Indian. The Women's Board of Domestic Missions has tried to keep up with the movements and developments which make new plans necessary.

In the Colony district many of the Indians have moved away, leaving but a few families where formerly was a much larger population. It ceased to be necessary, to keep workers at this station mainly for Indians. A "community" work must be done. The Colony Mission had always reached out to the white population within a radius of a few miles. Now, a more intensive work was needed for these people, and the few remaining Indians must be cared for still. A plan was consummated by which the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., purchased the property of the Reformed Church in America at this point. Inasmuch as the Reformed Church belongs to the great Presbyterian family of churches, the change from the one to the other was natural and easy, after the former denomination had ministered to the field for thirty-seven years.

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The Church records at Colony contain the following interesting statement: "On December 13, 1932, the El Reno-Hobart Presbytery met in special session at Colony, Oklahoma, for the purpose of receiving and accepting the members of the Columbian Memorial Church of the Reformed Church in America. The long and faithful history of the Church under the Women's Board of Domestic Missions came to an end; but to continue in a broader

ministry to the entire community, Indian and white, under the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.

(Signed) G. Watermulder, Acting Pastor."⁹

⁹Rev. G. Watermulder is a veteran Indian missionary of the R. C. A. in Winnebago, Nebraska, and also Special Representative of the Women's Board of Domestic Missions for Indian work; Dr. Richard H. Harper is a retired missionary of the Women's Board of Domestic Missions, R. C. A. For many years he served among the Indians in Oklahoma and New Mexico.
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