

Effie S. Jackson,
Field Worker.

Rev. Thomas Ward Perryman.

(Verbatim copy of letter in the files of Arthur C. Perryman, 409 E. 14th Place-son of Rev. Thomas Perryman. This letter was written to Mr. Perryman's mother, Mrs. Thomas Perryman, at the time of the death of Rev. Thomas Perryman, by Mrs. W. S. Robertson (mother of Alice Robertson). This letter is in long-hand, well written and is in a good state of preservation).

Died of Pneumonia in Kansas City, Mo. Feb. 11,
(1888) Rev. Thos. Ward Perryman, age 63.

When my honored father, Rev. Samuel A. Worcester, D. D. reached the side of his dying interpreter, Elias Boudinot (murdered for signing the treaty for the removal of his people to the I. T.) he exclaimed in agony, "They have cut off my right hand!"

It is with new appreciation of the feeling that called for that exclamation that I write concerning the Rev. W. T. Perryman who had been my finishing helper in correcting my translations into Creek as long as Mr.

Boudinot had my father's interpreter. Both were ready to risk their lives for what they thought might be for the best good of their people. Mrs. Perryman, the sorely bereaved widow, tells me that during what is known as the "Esperhécher" war, when the excitement among the Creeks was intense, her husband was the only one the "constitutional party" was willing to send to consult with others as to terms of peace; and she tells of the

night of weeping through which she passed after his starting on the errand; so sure she was that he would be killed; instead of which he was welcomed by the excited ones, who gladly talked with him, concerning their grievences. He seemed a natural lover of peace, and when to this was added the peace which the Saviour gave to his disciples, it is no marvel that he was a prompter of peace.

And yet so far as I knew him, he was as much a promoter of truth, and justice, and could not be induced to consent to a sacrifice of those for the sake of peace.

But to turn back to his school boy days at the Tullashasee Indian school where I first knew him early in the fifties. I do not remember his ever needing reproof while there. Well I remember the sadness of heart with which I bade him Good-bye in the midst of a school year, fearing that his failing health would never be restored. How little could I then foresee that he would survive his teacher, Rev. W. S. Robertson, by more than twenty years, after having been his trusted interpreter and helper for more than ten years. Knowing his quiet and retiring disposition, still less would I have thought of his serving his tribe in their Council so long and

successfully, or how important would be his influence in their Committee of Education. Still less could I foresee his being twice sent as a delegate to Washington in times so momentous to his people. I hope his old school mate, Chief Porter, may sometime tell your readers something of his work as a delegate. Judge Thomas in speaking of Mr. Perryman gave in few words the secret of his influence in public life. He said with emphasis in the presence of others, "He was one of the best men I ever knew. His word was as good as his bond, and I never knew him to speak evil of any one."

Wattie Palmer, t o, who had served with him in public life as auditor of the Treasury, gives another phase of his character, which throws light on the same thing. He writes, "In my childhood days, when I was alone, he was one of ^{my} best friends. He was one of our best Indian citizens."

Rev. F. W. Hawley, Synodical Supt. of Home Missions, wrote to his son Arthur, "He was a fine and very useful man. He lived a life of influence for good."

Rev. C. L. Thomson, D. D. Secretary of the Presbyterian Board Home Missions under whom Mr. Perryman worked, wrote to Mrs. P. "What he had done among his people, the Creeks, can never be fully known in this world. We are glad however, to feel that his work has not failed of

appreciation nor fruitfulness." But I think the most important of all his work for his people was the help he gave in giving them the New Testament, Genesis and Psalms, and some other portions of the Word of God in their own language. I have mentioned my relying on him as my final helper in correcting my translations. For this he had a very important natural fitness in being a very careful thinker. Another important requisite for the work was a good knowledge of the Creek language. He had acquired English in our school, but before our Civil war was over he married a handsome interesting young woman of his tribe, who knew no English. This threw him into a more constant use of the Creek, and a greater familiarity with the use of the language among the "fullbloods"; (guided by him, his wife, became a lovely Christian, and united with him in membership in the Presbyterian church. Both in her life and in her death she honored her Saviour.

Rev. Thomas Ward Ferryman, son of Lewis F. was born in the year 1837. He received his early education at the Tallahassee Indian School and was a diligent pupil there for several years, until feeble health demanded a change; and the war soon after suspended the

school. Before the war was over he married a woman of his tribe who afterwards died.

Before being ordained as a Presbyterian minister he had taught for some time, was a district attorney and served in the church as an elder. He has been for several years a member of the Creek Council, giving extra service as Chaplain and member of the Education Committee.

For his second wife he married Ella, daughter of Robert Brown, Kittanning, Penn. and both taught in the Nuyaka Mission School.

He has spent more time on revision of my translation with me than any other person except N. B. Sullivan; his work having been chiefly on the final revision of the New Testament. I will turn back to the return of his teacher Rev. W. S. Robertson, to the Tullahassee Mission at the close of the war, when Mr. Thomas Perryman and his brother, Hon. Sanford W. (another fine interpreter) were living at Choska. They took the horseback from there every Sabbath to interpret for him and help him in his work in the Sabbath and during this time of waiting for arrangements to be made for reopening the school they were his translators in revising the Gospel of Matthew, and translating epistles of John, and

about two-thirds of his gospel. Later, after the death of his first wife he came to the school and divided his time between study for the ministry under Mr. R's care in helping him in the school work and as his interpreter. Here among the teachers, he found ^{his} second wife, who has been his devoted helper, through all these years and lives to mourn her great loss in his death.

After Mr. P's being ordained as a Presbyterian minister in 1876, he built up a thriving school at Broken Arrow, but meanwhile Mr. R was growing more and more concerned about the people of Nuyaka and adjoining "towns", in their being destitute of school and gospel privilege, and he urged Mr. P. preaching to them. Although there was there much of the same prejudice that followed the late chief "Esparhecher" through life, they gladly welcomed him to preach among them. Meanwhile the Tullahassee school had been broken up by the accidental burning of the buildings. Mr. R's oldest daughter, now Mrs. E. B. Moore, made the offer to the Creek Council to teach a school among the "fullbloods" if they would appropriate for it. This they did, and with the help of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions, Nuyaka school of eighty pupils was planted, and Mr. P's work as minister and interpreter,

and his wife as matron in one of the girls colleges gave very important help in laying the foundation of the Nuyaka Mission, which seems justly accounted one of the best boarding schools the Creeks have ever had. I went to him there for his help in assisting my last translations in the New Testament, as I had gone to him in Broken Arrow. The first complete Creek Testament was printed and issued by the American Bible Society in 1887.

After five years of labor in the new Nuyaka Mission, they returned to their Broken Arrow home, and later returned to Tulsa for school privileges.

Since my coming to Muskogee in 1888 he has helped me here on the books of Genesis and Psalms (the first translations of which were made by Rev. J. R. Ramsey of the Seminole Mission, and on the 1, 3, and 8 chapters of Daniel, and the 53 and 55 chapters of Isaiah. His last work of the kind was done at home, after his health had begun failing. I having sent questions with the translation for written answers, and he writing down any change he thought needed.

He was a very kindly man, so that although he was decided in his opposition to the old heathen customs among his people, I never heard of his having an enemy among them.

A number of orphans at different times found a pleasant home with him, whether of his own kindred or without such ties; both wives being full of kindness.

During my four years stay in Okmulgee his excellence as a translator was shown in two quite different ways. One was that while a member of the Council he would bring in a few of the "fullblood" members at a time to listen to my reading of the translation that ^{we} were correcting, so that he might see if they could clearly understand it, and if not, how we could improve it.

I was always in the habit of consulting Creek interpreters about Creek words or expressions as to which I was in doubt, so the gatherings at Okmulgee were helpful times to my work. But several of those I tried said, "Get Sam Rice. Why don't you get Sam Rice? He can tell you." (Sam'l Rice had become quite well known to his people as a student in the Asbury Mission School at Eufaula, and later identified with the Baptist Church, but failing health cut into his work and in 1888 it was ended by death). So one day the opportunity came when he was at Okmulgee. I got him to come to my house, and kept him busy with me several hours on my translation. I was delighted to find that his ideas entirely coincided with Mr. P's, and so I had an indirect and very strong endorsement of Mr. R's work.

Letters from the Files of Arthur C. Perryman.

The following letters written by Legus, later chief of the Cherokees, and Sanford Perryman to their teachers, Mr. and Mrs. ^{W. S.} Robertson, were originally in the files of Alice Robertson. Before her passing she gave them to Arthur C. Perryman, son of Rev. Thomas Perryman. They are copied verbatim.

The handwriting in the Sanford P. letter is very fine, letters beautifully formed-especially captials, in keeping with the style of that day. The letter from the pen of Legus is rather strong, bold handwriting; the only flourish was in writing his signature which I have attempted to copy.

These letters are in good state of preservation.

Camp John Ross Feb 11th 1863

Mr. Robertson

Dear Sir.. We left the Creek Nation last November and went up to Leroy in Kansas. We boys joined the army there so we left the family the first part of Dec. Mr. Winslett is dead & his family are at the old home by Tullahassee. e had a little girl but she is dead and gone to Glory. I have not given up religion yet but all my brothers seem to have drop it. Do pray for us. We all expect to get back to our homes next spring. I wish you would get Mr. Ramsey & come back to Tullahassee and start the Mission when all get back. If I live I will be ready for all your help. I have been sick for about three weeks and I am to weak to write much. Joe Perryman we left with the rebels and is likely he is there yet. Thomas Perryman & R. Fields are strong Union men. It seems all the missionary labors among the Creeks is lost but I hope the Lord will bring the fruits of it into light again. I listen to a sermon at the Creek Agency last spring and that is all except a roman Catholic sermon at the Osage Mission. please send me all the directions of my missionary friends so that I can write to them. We have left everything we used to call ours so if we live we will have co mance it anew. The Lord may spare us so that we might see each other again if

not the Lords will be done. I hope we will all meet in that better world never more to part which is my prayer.

Friends always remember me at the throne of grace. Do write to me as soon as possible. Nothing more but I remain

your sick friend most sincerely
Sandford W. Perryman,
1st Sargt Company D.
1st Regt. J. H. G.

Ft. Gibson

Mrs. A. E. W. Robertson

I take my pen this fine evening to write you a few lines. We have a dry weather here and it is very warm, I hav'nt wrote any for so long a time, I have got out of practice, so that I hope you will excuse me for bad writing. The rebel forces are over the Arkansas river. We have been going over to the Agency first time we came here but we cannot go over now as the rebels are more numerous than our forces at the present time, but I think we will be able to go over soon. Mrs. Winslett was at the agency when I was there last time doing very well, but Lewis went off last winter and she said that he went toward north and never heard of him since he went off. We heard from our folks and they were all well. We are doing well in the army so far. We have had two fights since we been here. The first fight was on Bio about four miles from here. The rebels run up on the prairie(?) here about three weeks ago and got into the herd of mules and horses and killed about fifteen herd-ers and drove off about two hundred mules and we attack the main body of them at the edge of the wood, and had a very good fight. About ten rebels were killed there; among whom was Geo. West. The rebels then retreated back

across the river and we pursued after them and slew a great many. And about two weeks after that the rebels attack the train from Ft. Scott over the river near Aldridge's place on the Verdigris(?) and destroyed some few things from the sutler's wagon and we slew about thirty men of rebels and lost about two of our side. Among the dead rebels we found one we knew by the name of Walter Mellon, 1st Lieut. in Gen'l Miller's Company. There was one white man killed putting on a new pair of boots which he broke the box open from the sutler's wagon. We have a fortification around the stone building on the hill down to the river but it is not quite finished yet. All the stores are filled up so that it looks like as it did a long time ago.

I feel lonesome times when I think of old times. I been to the Mission since I been down here and it is very much tore up.

I am now assisting a recruiting party. They are making new soldiers of those that come in from the other side. Since I been in the army I never let know what kind of a scholar I was and when they found out that I can write they was very much astonished for all the Creek Indians that come on this side were fullblood party and not one of them had been to school. I translated Col. Phillip's letter to the rebel Indians and was promoted

here and sent off.

From your friend

Legis

P. S. I send my best respects to Mr. Robertson and
hope there will be a time of peace. If God be for
us who can be against us.

L. G. P.

(Copy of closing words - letter of
Legus Perryman).

Adm. Juro

Edward
Legus

(From your friend - Legus)
according to interpretation
of Mrs. Arthur Perryman).

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