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ASSIMILATION BY MARRIAGE

White Women and Native American Men at Hampton Institute, 1878–1923

by KATHERINE ELLINGHAUS*

SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG founded the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in 1868 to instruct newly freed African American children according to an ideology ruled by three principles: the gospel of work, the motivation for unselfish love, and the doctrine of Protestant Christianity.¹ Although Armstrong, a white humanitarian, had never intended the school to cater to any other group of people, a decade later Richard Henry Pratt, a U.S. Army officer with a burgeoning interest in Native American reform, convinced him to change his philosophy. Mostly because of Pratt's urging, in April 1878 Hampton Institute accepted seventeen Native American male students.² These young men were among the first of many thousands of Native American students educated in off-reservation boarding schools in the next three decades. During that time, Hampton pursued an active

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¹ Francis Greenwood Peabody, *Founder's Day at Hampton: An Address in Memory of Samuel Chapman Armstrong, January 30, 1898* (Cambridge, Boston, and New York, 1898), pp. 13–26. For a comprehensive exploration of Samuel Chapman Armstrong and his work, see Robert Francis Engs, *Educating the Disfranchised and Disinherited: Samuel Chapman Armstrong and Hampton Institute, 1839–1893* (Knoxville, 1999).

² These Cheyenne, Kiowa, and Arapaho men had been taken hostage by the U.S. Army after an uprising in Indian Territory. They were part of a larger group who had been imprisoned for three years in Fort Marion, Florida, under the command of Pratt, who, on his own initiative, had done more than simply keep them under lock and key. He had cut their hair, made them discard their traditional clothing in favor of military uniforms, taught them to read and write, introduced them to Christianity, and encouraged them to produce various hand-made items, which he sold to locals at a substantial profit. When the government released them, most captives returned home to their families, but a number agreed to continue the education they had begun. Pratt lobbied hard on their behalf, personally securing placement for some of them in eastern agricultural and labor schools, and convincing Armstrong to take the rest at Hampton. Later in 1878 Pratt recruited another forty-nine students, nine of whom were young women, from Dakota Territory. In 1879 Pratt broke his ties with Hampton to establish a school at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, the first eastern boarding school founded exclusively to educate Native American children. Pratt and Carlisle were trailblazers in the area of Native American education; reformers followed their example for decades. For more information about Pratt's career, see Richard Henry Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867–1904* (1964; Lincoln, Neb., 1987) and Elaine Goodale Eastman, *Pratt: The Red Man's Moses* (Norman, Okla., 1935).



Courtesy of Hampton University Archives

recruiting strategy, regularly sending representatives west to find potential students and receiving government subsidies for the tuition of each of them.

A number of historians have explored Hampton's leading role in the nineteenth-century practice of using boarding schools to assimilate Native Americans.³ Recently, scholars have examined in detail the crucial part these schools played in the coercive assimilationist program run by the United States government during this period. Studies have identified procedures such as haircutting; renaming; forbidding students to speak their languages or practice their religions; military-style discipline; instruction in reading and writing; and the teaching of white methods of farming and agriculture as tools with which reformers instructed Native Americans in the white way of life at institutions far removed from their homes and communities.⁴ One aspect of boarding school education, however, has not been explored: the importance white authorities placed on

³ For general surveys of the Native American students at Hampton and the implications of their presence at a predominantly African American institution, see Mary Lou Hultgren and Paulette Fairbanks Molin, *To Lead and To Serve: American Indian Education at Hampton Institute, 1878–1923* (Hampton, 1989); Donal F. Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute, 1877–1923*, (Urbana, Ill. and Chicago, 1995); and Joseph Tingey, "Indians and Blacks Together: An Experiment in Biracial Education at Hampton Institute, 1878–1923" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1978).

⁴ For a detailed discussion of the methods of assimilation practiced at boarding schools in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875–1928* (Lawrence, Kan., 1995), pp. 95–206.



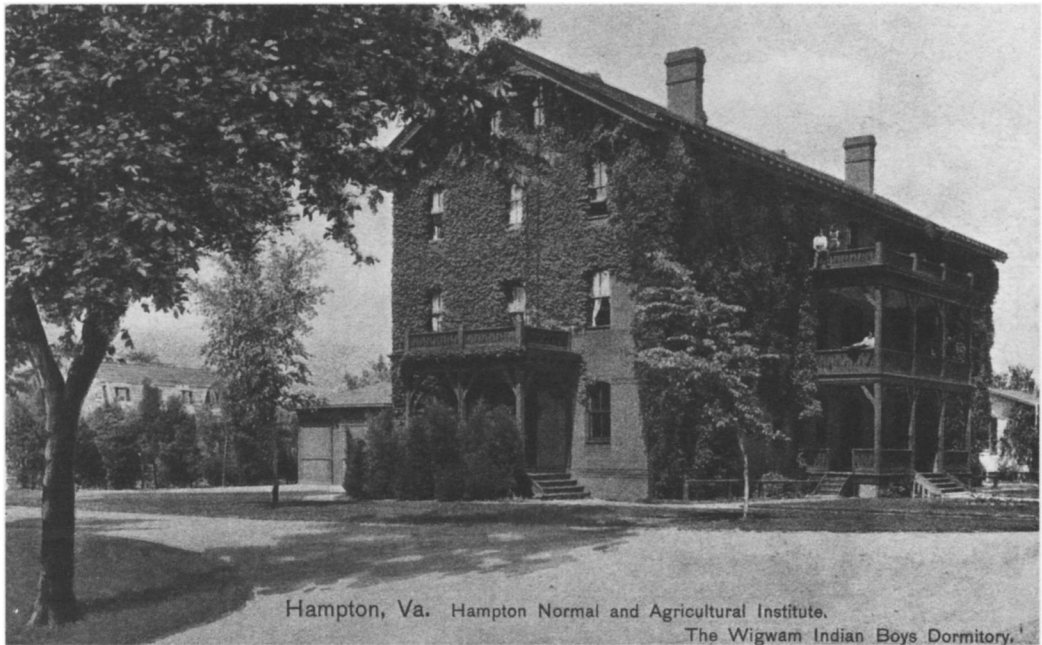
Courtesy of Hampton University Archives

This pair of photographs captures the essence of assimilation as practiced by institutions that educated Native Americans in the late nineteenth century. In the photo on the facing page some of the first Native Americans to arrive at Hampton Institute in 1878 pose for photographer William Larrabee. Above is a photo of most of the same students, taken in 1880. Gone are the traditional blankets and long hair, replaced by the suits and short hair of Victorian white America.

students' choice of spouse. Marriages between whites and people of color, and between Native Americans and African Americans, while infrequent, did occur. Hampton staff accepted the marriage of Hampton-educated Native Americans to white spouses, judging such unions to be an indication of the former's absorption of white culture.

The history of Hampton Institute offers a unique vantage point from which to examine mainstream opinions toward interracial marriage during this period. Not only did members of three cultural groups mingle on the Hampton campus, but it was also the site of a number of interracial relationships formed between students, and, most remarkably, two marriages and an engagement that occurred between white female teachers and Native American men. These three extraordinary unions took place despite Virginia's long history of strong social and legal restrictions on racial commingling, especially between white women and African American men.⁵ The intriguing question is exactly which aspects of the environment

⁵ For histories of legal and social controls of interracial relationships in colonial Virginia, see



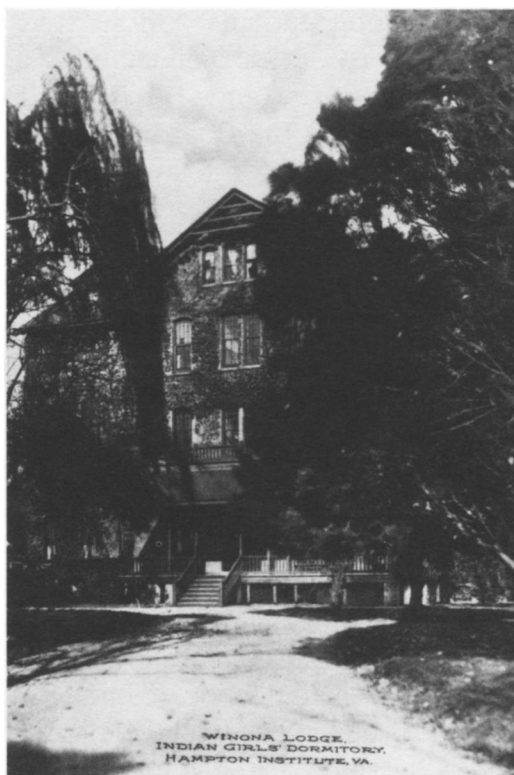
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This postcard shows the Native American men's dormitory at Hampton, known locally as "the Wigwam." Here, far from their homes, students were expected to learn the norms of so-called civilized society and return to the reservations to serve as examples of proper behavior.

at Hampton Institute allowed these interactions to take place. The answer lies far beyond the boundaries of the school in the assimilation policy vaunted by humanitarian reformers and the importance they placed on the spouse chosen by Native Americans who had been educated by white assimilationists. For once a student had graduated, the race of his or her

Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill and London, 1996), pp. 187–211; David D. Smits, "'Abominable Mixture': Toward the Repudiation of Anglo-Indian Intermarriage in Seventeenth Century Virginia," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* (hereafter cited as *VMHB*) 95 (1987): 157–92; and A. Leon Higginbotham and Barbara Kopytoff, "Racial Purity and Interracial Sex in the Law of Colonial and Antebellum Virginia," *Georgetown Law Journal* 77 (1989): 1967–2029. For a detailed discussion of legal and social attitudes towards miscegenation and the complex interrelations of Native Americans, African Americans, and whites in Virginia during the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see James Hugo Johnston, *Race Relations in Virginia & Miscegenation in the South, 1776–1860* (Amherst, Mass., 1970), pp. 165–314. For a complete history of Virginia's nineteenth-century anti-miscegenation statute, see Walter Wadlington, "The Loving Case: Virginia's Antimiscegenation Statute in Historical Perspective," *Virginia Law Review* 52 (1966): 1189–1223 and Peter Wallenstein, "Race, Marriage, and the Law of Freedom: Alabama and Virginia, 1860s–1960s," *Chicago-Kent Law Review* 70 (1994): 371–437. For a detailed analysis of the way in which the philosophy of racial equality at Hampton was received by the wider community in the earlier twentieth century, see Richard B. Sherman, "The 'Teachings at Hampton Institute': Social Equality, Racial Integrity, and the Virginia Public Assemblage Act of 1926," *VMHB* 95 (1987): 275–300.

Winona Lodge housed many of Hampton's female Native American students. Their admission to the school was designed to encourage what Victorian sensibilities considered proper deferential behavior among male Native American students. These women also helped create a pool of eligible spouses for male pupils, reflecting administration concerns that lessons learned at Hampton not be undone by former students choosing to marry "uncivilized" partners.



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spouse became far less important, in some reformers' minds, than that spouse's level of assimilation.

Interracial relationships were an enormous cause of concern to Hampton Institute's white administrators. Late-Victorian attitudes toward sexuality before marriage would have caused intense concern at any co-educational institution operating during this period, but at a school where different races boarded together the prospect of miscegenation was the cause of significant anxiety. Armstrong constantly had to defend his coeducational policy from attacks by various philanthropic groups and government organizations upset about the proximity of young men and women of different ethnicities at the school. He had been aware of the potential problems caused by mixing races and sexes from the beginning of the Indian program and advised Pratt not to "go in strong about girls" when he wrote about the proposed "Hampton scheme" to the Commission of Indian Affairs in 1878.⁶ In 1888 the school underwent an investigation by the Board of Indian Commissioners to examine allegations of cruelty, poor

⁶ Samuel Chapman Armstrong to Richard Henry Pratt, 18 August 1878, Richard Henry Pratt Papers, Folder 11, Box 1, Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven (hereafter Beinecke Library).

health among students, and negative consequences of having both African and Native Americans on campus.⁷ Hampton again faced criticism in 1899 over the last issue, and H. B. Frissell, the principal after Armstrong's death in 1893, begged the Board of Indian Commissioners for support.⁸

Despite Hampton Institute's efforts, Congress failed to include funding for Hampton students in the 1912 bill dividing up the government appropriation for Native American education.⁹ The *Southern Workman*, Hampton's school magazine, suggested that the close proximity of the races was "perhaps the chief reason" for the loss of the appropriation, calling it a "view [that] loses sight of the benefits which come to both races from mingling together upon terms that secure both a better mutual understanding and mutual regard."¹⁰ The school administration argued in vain that "so far as [is] known no interracial marriage has ever resulted from the bringing together of these races at Hampton, and an important demonstration has been made of the possibility of harmonious co-operation between them."¹¹ The loss of the appropriation meant that the numbers of Native American students declined slowly but significantly until the last graduated in 1923.

Although it is difficult to make assumptions about its prevalence, some interracial sexual activity among the students at Hampton apparently occurred, despite the school's frequent protestations to the contrary. In 1888, the same year that Hampton published its self-congratulatory *Ten Years' Work for Indians at Hampton Institute*, in which Armstrong claimed that there had not been "a single case of immorality, between the students of both races and of both sexes,"¹² the discipline books and faculty minutes recorded the dismissal or reprimand of three Native American women and three African American men for meeting late at night and writing each other letters. A faculty meeting held on 13 August 1888 ordered further

⁷ Report of E. Whittlesey and Albert K. Smiley, Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners, 1888, Appendix C, *Annual Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1888*, H.exdoc.1 (50-2) 2637, p. 741.

⁸ "Proceedings of the Board of Indian Commissioners at the Seventeenth Lake Mohonk Indian Conference," Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners, 1899, Appendix D, *Annual Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1899*, H.doc 5 (56-1) 3915, p. 311.

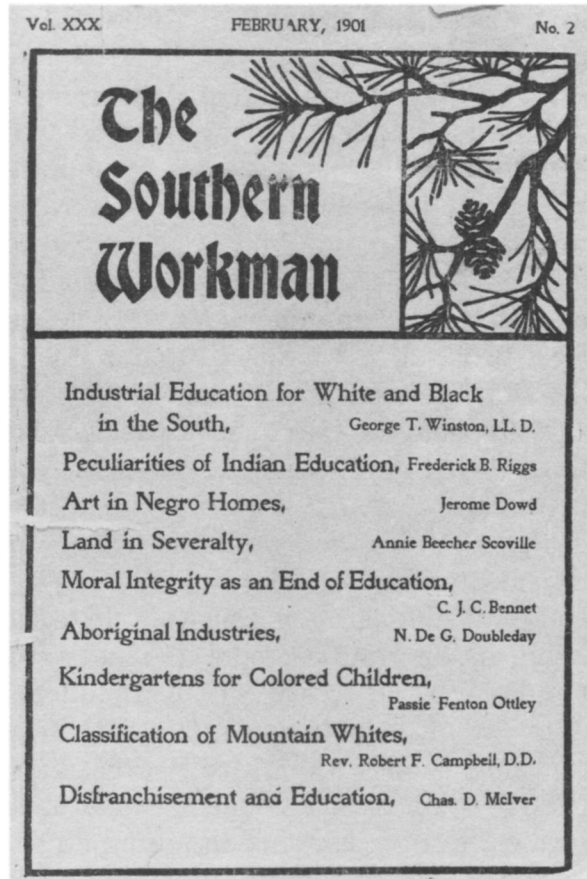
⁹ *Annual Report of the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, 1912* (hereafter cited as *ARHI*) Hampton University Archives, Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia, (hereafter ViHaU-A), p. 11. The government's contribution of \$167 for each student up to fifty only covered board, tuition, and some incidental costs. Scholarships from philanthropic individuals and the student's own labor made up the difference. See Hultgren and Molin, *To Lead and To Serve*, p. 18.

¹⁰ *Southern Workman* 41 (1912): 546.

¹¹ *ARHI* (1912), pp. 11-12. Early in the life of the school, anxieties were not so intense, as is evidenced by the lighthearted treatment of interracial sexual relationships in the school newspaper. In 1879 the *Southern Workman* recorded that "the Indian boys are looking favorably upon the colored girls of the school . . . When asked if he would take an educated squaw or one of the Indian women at home to wife, [one boy] replied, 'No; I marry a colored girl; she will teach me good Englis.'" Another boy reportedly planned to ask his father for six horses to trade for an African American wife. (*Southern Workman* 8 [1879]: 77).

¹² *Ten Years' Work for Indians at the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute at Hampton, Virginia, 1878-1888* (Hampton, 1888), p. 4.

Dedicated to “the interests of the undeveloped races,” the Hampton-sponsored *Southern Workman* reflected the school’s philosophy of uplift through labor and Christian morality. This February 1901 issue included articles on a number of topics that highlighted the institute’s emphases on Native American education, industrial education, and “moral integrity.”



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investigation into allegations that a Native American woman had left her dormitory at night in the company of an African American man. An extensive, two-day examination revealed that the “midnight strolls” involved three couples. All received either a reprimand or expulsion.¹³

Historian Joseph Tingey has described one instance in which the school wrote to an African American male student in 1911 suggesting that he not return to the school after the administration discovered his relationship with a female Native American student. Tingey also details a number of other relationships recounted by alumni many years later in interviews.¹⁴ In 1919 Caroline Andrus, the white staff member who helped maintain the comprehensive records of past Native American students at Hampton and

¹³ Faculty Records, 13, 15, and 16 August 1888 and Discipline Books 1887–88, pp. 214 and 310, ViHaU-A. See also Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*, pp. 156 and 168–69 and Tingey, “Indians and Blacks Together,” pp. 181–83.

¹⁴ For example, the Reverend David Owl, a Cherokee former student who attended Hampton between 1910 and 1915 and whose brother married a white former teacher, recalled that “all school functions—assemblies, social gatherings, religious meetings—were open to both races, uniting the students into one family in spite of differences” (Tingey, “Indians and Blacks Together,” pp. 181–82).

who was herself engaged to a Native American graduate until his premature death, reported that the declining number of Native American students was due in part to “knowledge of the . . . flirtations, and three marriages between the two races, [which] has spread far and wide, preventing some parents from sending their children here.”¹⁵ In 1923 she hinted in a letter that part of her motivation for leaving the school was the possibility of relationships occurring between Native American women and African American men, and mentioned gossip caused by three interracial marriages of Hampton students.¹⁶ Files on former students record that at least two Native American women married African American men after they left the school.¹⁷

Although Hampton staff certainly did not encourage relationships between students of different races, they did not discourage relationships between students of the *same* racial background. One of the main concerns of the administration was that Native American students who returned to the reservation would resume their traditional lifestyles. The staff at Hampton felt this was especially likely to occur when students returned home and married partners who had not been similarly educated. In 1878, the year the first Native American students arrived at Hampton, Armstrong argued that the “co-education of the sexes . . . is indispensable to . . . true civilizing work.”¹⁸ Cora Mae Folsom, who organized the records pertaining to Native American students, wrote in 1893 that the “first, and generally the severest test of character the returned student has to meet is in regard to marriage and the public sentiment of the less advanced Indians in regard to it.”¹⁹ Armstrong put it more strongly, highlighting the school’s need to recruit more young women “to offset the young men, for relapse was inevitable whilst they return home to mate themselves with savages.”²⁰ An equally difficult problem, according to the annual report of 1884, was the former female student “[b]urdened with a savage and cruel husband, [causing the] further development of the educated Indian girl in Christian and civilized ways . . . [to] be painfully slow, if not impossible.”²¹ In one of Armstrong’s many defenses of his coeducational policy he argued that, for his African American students: “Mingling in recitations, at meals, in social intercourse, always under reasonable direction and restraint is good for

¹⁵ Caroline Andrus, “Report of Indian Records 1919,” Caroline Andrus Collection, ViHaU-A.

¹⁶ Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*, p. 261.

¹⁷ Student Files of Elsie Greene Doxtater and Maude Abbie Goodwin, ViHaU-A. The marriages were reported in December 1917 and January 1914 respectively. It is not known whether they occurred before Hampton’s denial in 1912 that interracial marriages took place.

¹⁸ *ARHI* (1878), p. 11.

¹⁹ *Twenty-Two Years’ Work of the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute at Hampton, Virginia. Records of Negro and Indian Graduates and ex-Students* (Hampton, 1893), p. 318.

²⁰ *ARHI* (1879), p. 16.

²¹ *Ibid.*, (1884), p. 71.

both [sexes] . . . the freedom we have allowed . . . has resulted in many well and wisely mated pairs.”²² Hampton evinced its founder’s feelings that the family was the most important “unit of Christian civilization” by instituting a special program for married couples in 1882. Two years later, Richard Pratt, who had left Hampton to establish his own school for Native Americans in 1879, told the annual Lake Mohonk gathering of white reformers interested in the plight of Native Americans that the program had been begun because “[t]he eternal ‘go-back’ is the calamity . . . If a boy want to marry he must take a savage girl, or an educated girl has to mate with a savage boy.”²³ Small numbers of specially selected married couples received cottages on Hampton’s campus, where they combined family life, academic classes, and manual training. After both husband and wife had been “advanced,” the couple were meant to return to the reservation to become role models. Hampton ran the scheme on a small scale, but reformers widely discussed it. The experiment ended in 1894 when Congress prohibited Native Americans over eighteen years of age from attending eastern schools.²⁴

Government officials and reformers shared concerns about the marriage partners of educated and at least partially assimilated students. In 1886 the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John D. C. Atkins, recommended that Congress offer financial incentives to boarding school graduates who married one another.²⁵ In the same year, Byron M. Cutcheon, a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, wrote to Pratt to suggest that “[m]arriage between the educated Indians . . . should be encouraged, but they should be grouped into little communities where they could help each other.”²⁶ In 1885, the well-known reformer and president of the Lake Mohonk conference, Dr. Lyman Abbott, used the problem to argue against the reservation system: “You educate an Indian boy and send him back to the Indian Territory. He must not find a wife here, because that would be ‘intermingling’ with the American population. He looks for a wife there, and they look with as natural disgust upon a beaver hat as he would upon a squaw’s blanket.”²⁷ Even the conservative Indian Rights Association argued in its Annual Report of 1888 that “much of the work which the

²² *Southern Workman* 9 (1880): 63.

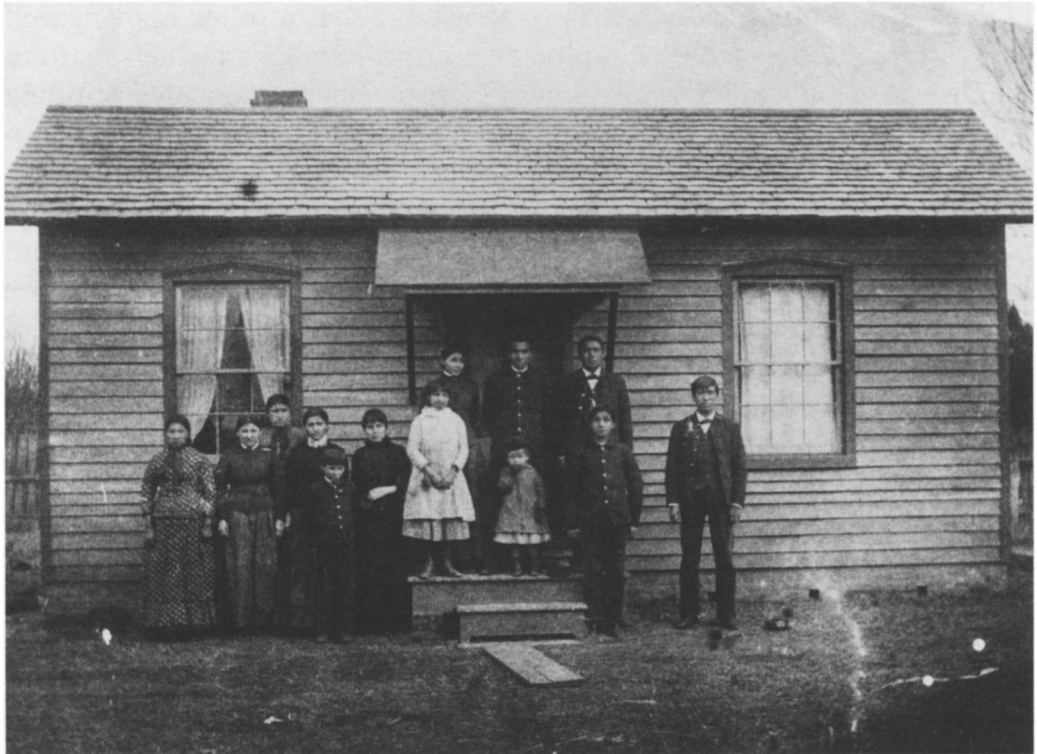
²³ *Proceedings of the Second Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference, 1884* (Philadelphia, 1885), p. 27.

²⁴ Hultgren and Molin, *To Lead and To Serve*, pp. 37–39.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Byron M. Cutcheon to Richard Henry Pratt, 1 April 1886, Richard Henry Pratt Papers, Box 3, Folder 64, Beinecke Library.

²⁷ *Proceedings of the Third Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference, 1885* (Philadelphia, 1886), p. 52.



Courtesy of Hampton University Archives

This scene makes clear Hampton's efforts to promote the virtues of marriage among its students. After 1882 it provided a limited number of three-room cottages for married students like the one shown above that was occupied by Noah and Lucy La Flesche. The school hoped that by offering such accommodations it would demonstrate its belief that the family was the most important unit of Christian civilization.

Government is doing educating the boys will be necessarily undone by their subsequent marriages with wild, untrained Indian girls."²⁸

So while Hampton was defending itself from accusations about immoral episodes caused by the mixing of the races and the sexes on its campus, it was also concerned with encouraging its students to mingle and marry, albeit within guidelines. Alice M. Bacon, a teacher at Hampton, described the surprise many visitors felt when observing the "easy way" that male and female students ate, recited, studied, and socialized together. This behavior, she said, was not restrained or discouraged. Bacon's account, however, published in one of the many reports designed to justify and advertise the school, should be read with a certain amount of skepticism.²⁹ For example, the reports of the six students who were punished for their interracial

²⁸ *Sixth Annual Report of the Executive Committee of the Indian Rights Association, 1888* (Philadelphia, 1889), p. 49.

²⁹ *ARHI* (1886–87), p. 49.

relationships mention a guard patrolling the women's dormitory throughout the night.³⁰ It seems, however, that social evenings and various other opportunities permitted men and women of the same racial background to become acquainted.

According to historian Donal F. Lindsey, Armstrong, in his own words had been "forced to the conclusion . . . that only by encouraging, if not arranging [Indian marriages] can we save our work for that race." Lindsey has argued that Hampton faculty and staff actively promoted marriages that occurred among the Native American students.³¹ The Annual Report in 1888 described "a tradition at Hampton that the first thing a new boy buys is an umbrella; not because the climate is particularly damp, but because on rainy days the boys have the privilege of escorting their especial friends to and from school."³² The Native American student newspaper, *Talks and Thoughts*, was also not shy about hinting at the romantic life of students. The March 1887 issue gossiped that "[o]ur violinist who is lonesome is learning to play, 'The Girl I Left Behind Me,'" while the July 1887 edition reported that "[t]he girls write pleasant letters telling of the good people they are with, long descriptions of their rooms, of a new apron that looks 'too pretty for anything,' of some of the boys coming to see them."³³ In August 1888 the paper described summer evenings when men and women were allowed to walk and talk together on the green usually reserved for female students in front of Virginia Hall.³⁴

These social occasions were, as was nearly every school-sponsored activity, part of the program of assimilation. To the Victorian mind, a racial group's relative level of civilization could be measured by its treatment of women. This belief was largely responsible for Hampton's decision to enroll female students, as school administrators felt that the presence of women in the student body would cultivate proper behavior among male Native American pupils. Armstrong wrote in 1881 that the Native American students came to Hampton with "the traditional ideas of the inferiority and insignificance of women, but they grow to a spirit of courtesy and chivalry

³⁰ Faculty Records, 15 August 1888, ViHaU-A.

³¹ Armstrong quoted in the *Southern Workman* 14 (1885): 216 and Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*, pp. 197–98. Pratt claimed in a letter to Arthur C. Parker, a Seneca anthropologist and leading member of the Society of American Indians, that Armstrong "was in favor of amalgamating the negroes and Indians and letting the Indians of this country be lost in the negro race" (Richard Henry Pratt to Arthur C. Parker, 11 December 1912, Richard Henry Pratt Papers, Box 10, Folder 356, Beinecke Library). If Armstrong did indeed hold such contentious views, he certainly would not have expressed them publically. According to Robert Engs, however, the relationship between Pratt and Armstrong was affected by personal incompatibility. See Engs, *Samuel Chapman Armstrong*, p. 118. Perhaps this tension motivated Pratt to spread what might have been rumors or even malicious gossip.

³² *ARHI* (1888), p. 42.

³³ *Talks and Thoughts of the Hampton Indian Students*, March 1887, p. 4 (first quotation) and July 1887, p. 2 (second quotation).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, August 1888, p. 3.



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These two engravings from an 1873 issue of *Harper's* show the “Girls’ Industrial Room” and the male students’ “Reading-Room” at Hampton. Although the school maintained certain separate facilities for the sexes, it also provided many opportunities for male and female students to intermingle, creating fertile ground in which romantic relationships could sprout.

towards their teachers, and to some extent towards the girls of their own race.”³⁵ In 1892, under a heading of “moral and religious work,” the annual report explained that, “[w]hen the Indians first came to us, in order to give the boys that respect for the girls in which they were somewhat deficient, upon their arrival . . . the girls were allowed to ride to the School while the boys walked, a reversal of their former experiences. Thus the first lesson was given them in the respect due to the weaker sex.”³⁶ While Native American female students learned the domestic tasks of late-Victorian womanhood, and Native American male students received instruction in the patronizing attitude shown to women by late-Victorian men, both sexes underwent a subtle indoctrination in white gender roles and courtship rituals.³⁷

Hampton Institute’s interest in influencing the romantic relationships of its students helps provide the context in which three white women staff members took the unusual step of agreeing to marry Native American men. The school created an environment that emphasized the importance of marriage to a student’s later “success” in living up to white people’s expectations. These three cases represent a logical if surprising progression of such thinking whereby the marriage of a Native American to a white

³⁵ *ARHI* (1881), p. 13.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, (1892), p. 86.

³⁷ For further discussion of rituals promoting white gender roles undertaken at Native American boarding schools, see Adams, *Education for Extinction*, pp. 173–81.

person indicated advanced assimilation. Apparently, once converted to Christianity and educated in white culture, Native American men were not unthinkable marriage partners for white women, and those charged with their education at least could see such marriages as indications of successful assimilation into white culture. In addition, despite a constant search for female Native American students, Hampton always had more male Native American students, usually at a rate of about three men for every two women.³⁸ For this reason, Native American male students would have found it more difficult to find "suitable" marriage partners of their own ethnicity (according to the expectations of their alma mater). Hampton's staff possibly viewed white women as a viable option; better, certainly, than the prospect of former students marrying Native American women who had not been suitably instructed in the ways of white society.

Hampton painstakingly kept student records that, mainly for publicity purposes, noted in detail the successes or failures of former Native American students. Two staff members, Cora Mae Folsom and Caroline Andrus, collected information about former students by mail and during western trips taken by themselves and by members of the faculty. Folsom even developed a five-point scale by which former students could be graded from "bad" to "excellent." The latter, Folsom wrote in 1888, were those "whose influence [was] by nature and circumstances very strongly for good." Those determined to be "good" lived "civilized Christian lives," while those rated "fair" meant "to do well but . . . [did] not at all times exert a good influence." Those recorded as "poor" were "shiftless" and "fickle," and those designated "bad" were either sexually promiscuous or criminal.³⁹ Hampton used Folsom's statistics extensively in its annual reports to Congress to contradict those who argued that students of eastern boarding schools "returned to the blanket" at the end of their educations. In their reports, Folsom and Andrus carefully recorded whether the spouse of a former Hampton student had also been a student of Hampton or Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, whether he or she was white, or perhaps simply whether the person was, for example, an "excellent young man."⁴⁰

Twenty-Two Years' Work of the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, a booklet published in 1893 and designed to publicize the school by describing the successes of former students, recorded a number of interracial marriages. Along with the marriages of at least eight female Native American former students to white men, it documented six marriages of male Native American former students to white women. They

³⁸ Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*, p. 196.

³⁹ *Ten Years' Work*, pp. 42-43.

⁴⁰ *Twenty-Two Years' Work*, p. 393.

TALKS and THOUGHTS
OF THE
Hampton Indian Students.

"Tahenan upi ga ounkiya biye.—Come over and help us."

VOL. II. No. 5 HAMPTON, VA., JULY, 1887. 25cts. Per Year.

The Brotherhood of Christian Unity.
The following is from a returned Hampton student; although he did not graduate he has learned enough to have an influence over his companions for their good.

Lower Brule, D. T. June 10th, 1887.

My Dear Friend :

To-day I think about very often times. You did not expect that I am living yet but I am yet living. Neither I did not forget you all my east friends at all day and night. But still I cannot write to you very often, because I had a hard time to live. I live very far off the agency about 15 miles so I did not go to the agency all the times, except twice in a month for hold of Association which we call "The Brotherhood of Christian Unity." All the Christians are joining, not all of them but most of them. Now at the present the officers of Brotherhood of C. U. Samuel Medicine Bull, President; Elijah Quilt, Vice President; Benj. Brave, Secretary; Charles De Shenquette, Treasurer; Martin-Leeds, Visitation of the Sick; Amos Boy Elk, Visitation of the Sick.

We work against the evil and help the good thing. We have 13 Rules over our Brotherhood, that we will try to help, and look for anything will happen at Agency or Reservation. We are trying to right among our people who are now in negligences and ignorances of our mighty God. We hope that we do more good works among our poor savage race. I am very sorry for them sometimes, because they do not [know] what is best for them to do in our future life. Sometimes some of my old [friends] ask me to give it up the whites way. We all Hampton boys here are do better than the any other Agency. We Brule boys none go back to our old life again except two of them E—L— and L—E—and others I am sure done well.

Now I am living well with my wife [a Hampton girl] and baby first rate. We have a little beautiful baby whom we both love very dearly. She is prettiest than any other here at Fort Hale. Miss F.—I have not much to say at present but will try say more sometime. I send my best love to you which my dear join me to send

BENJ BRAVE (*Ohitika*)

On the morning of the Fourth of July five Indian boys ascended to the roof of Virginia Hall and raised the "Stars and Stripes", This was the first time that on a Fourth of July the Indians could celebrate the day in its full meaning. Five pair of willing hands quickly raised the flag and five voices gave a shout which was answered by a large group of Indian boys who were watching the flag being raised.

The boys who raised the flag were Chas. Doxson, Onandago Tribe, New York, Hyson Powlis, Oneida Tribe, Wisconsin, Thos Sloan, Omaha Tribe, Nebraska, Henry Lyman, Sioux Tribe, Dakota Ter., Daniel Chilson, Potowatomie Tribe, Indian Territory.

In the evening a celebration took place with speeches and singing, an account of which will be given more fully in our next.

Hiram Chase of the Omaha Tribe of Indians who moved into the town of Decatur adjoining the Reservation, voted at the town election, and was appointed Town Clerk.

The Omahas coming into citizenship under the "Indian Severalty Bill" need such young men and we hope they will be found.

The last one who has left us is Hyson Powless, bound for Massachusetts to spend the summer.

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Talks and Thoughts was a publication entirely produced by Hampton's Native American students, and included news of events at the school, student literary works, and reports on the lives of former students. In the July 1887 edition reproduced above, a letter appears from Benjamin Brave, a former student living in the Dakota Territory. Brave describes his membership in a group of Native Americans committed to doing "good works among our poor savage race." No doubt further delighting school administrators, Brave also writes that he is married to "a Hampton girl" and has a baby daughter.

included 1889 valedictorian Thomas Sloan, who declined admission to Yale Law School in order to return west to read law with Native American lawyer Hiram Chase. Just before being admitted to the bar, he married "a

young white woman from St. Louis.”⁴¹ Sloan was an active member of the Society of American Indians and pursued a successful legal career. George Bushotter became engaged to a white woman while employed by the Bureau of Ethnology to assist a white ethnologist with a study of a dialect of the Dakota language. Lesser-known students who married white women included Alexander Peters, Thomas Miles (of whom Caroline Andrus reported that “both he and his wife, particularly the latter, have tremendous color prejudice, and seem to regret his Hampton education [because of interaction with African Americans]”), Wesley Huntsman (whose wife was reportedly “a great hustler, a foreigner”), and Frank Gautier. The booklet touted all these men as Hampton “success stories” with “pleasant” homes and acceptable professions and expressed no shock or disapproval of their choices of marriage partners.⁴²

The three instances in which white female faculty and staff married or became engaged to Native American men offer a far more dramatic indication of the toleration at Hampton for this form of marriage. In keeping with the idea that assimilated Native American men had, in a sense, earned white partners, the three women selected men who had outwardly proven themselves not only to have absorbed white culture, but to have become successful within it. The majority of the white female staff at Hampton was single and missionary-oriented, believing in the inherent equality of all peoples under God, characteristics that must surely have been fundamental to a decision to marry a Native American man. Their spouses also had important traits in common. Elaine Goodale, who taught at Hampton between 1883 and 1886, married Charles Eastman, a Native American employed at Pine Ridge, South Dakota as an agency physician. Eastman had not been a student at Hampton, but studied at missionary schools in the West, then at Dartmouth College and Boston University.⁴³ Rebecca Pond, who taught in the academic department during

⁴¹ Hultgren and Molin, *To Lead and To Serve*, p. 33 and *Twenty-Two Years' Work*, pp. 451–52 (quotation).

⁴² *Twenty-Two Years' Work*, pp. 340–41; Hultgren and Molin, *To Lead and To Serve*, pp. 22 and 33; Student File of George Bushotter, ViHaU-A; *Twenty-Two Years' Work*, pp. 349 and 387–88; Student File of Thomas C. Miles, ViHaU-A (first quotation); *Twenty-Two Years' Work*, p. 435; Student File of Wesley Huntsman, ViHaU-A (second quotation); and *Twenty-Two Years' Work*, p. 456. Cora M. Folsom wrote in her introduction to *Twenty-Two Years' Work* that “When I speak in my records of a ‘good home,’ I refer more to the home life than to the building that shelters it” (*Twenty-Two Years' Work*, p. 320).

⁴³ The Eastmans' courtship and marriage took place after Goodale had left Hampton to set up her own day school in the West, eventually becoming the supervisor of education in North and South Dakota and Nebraska. Nevertheless, Hampton and its ideology greatly influenced Goodale's philosophies and later career. See Katherine Ellinghaus, “Reading the Personal as Political: The Assimilationist Views of a White Woman Married to a Native American Man, 1880s-1940s,” *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 18 (1999): 3–42. For more information about the Eastmans, see Kay Graber, ed., *Sister to the Sioux: The Memoirs of Elaine Goodale Eastman, 1885–91* (Lincoln, Neb., 1978); Charles Eastman [Ohiyesa], *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: Chapters in the Autobiography of an Indian* (Boston, 1916); Julie Dobrow, “White Sister of the Sioux,” *Masterkey* 56

the First World War, married George Owl in 1919, a Cherokee (Eastern Band) student who fought overseas in the U.S. Army.⁴⁴ Finally, Caroline Andrus, who held the position of "Indian Correspondent" in the records office from 1895 until her resignation in 1922, was engaged to William Jones until his untimely death in 1909. Jones, a Sac and Fox student, earned a Ph.D. in anthropology under Franz Boas at Columbia University.⁴⁵

In all probability, George Owl's status as a war veteran, Charles Eastman's work as a physician, and William Jones's doctorate were qualifications that made them acceptable marriage partners for white women. Interestingly, marriages with whites were seen as evidence that Native Americans had successfully assimilated, rather than, as would perhaps be expected, that the whites in question had somehow slipped away from acceptable white society.⁴⁶ On the other hand, while marriage to a white person could be seen as contributing to the ultimate object of the absorption of the Native American people into the white population, sexual relationships between Native Americans and African Americans could only result in the creation of more non-white people, and, furthermore, non-white people who would not fit neatly into nineteenth-century racial categories. This goes some way toward explaining why white anxieties at Hampton appear to have centered more on sexual relationships between African Americans and Native Americans than on those between whites and other races.

Eastman's and Jones's accomplishments lay within the wider context of a particular style of Native American educational policy that briefly existed

(1982): 103–6; Ruth Ann Alexander, "Elaine Goodale Eastman and the Failure of the Feminist Protestant Ethic," *Great Plains Quarterly* 8 (1988): 89–101; and Ruth Ann Alexander, "Finding Oneself through a Cause: Elaine Goodale Eastman and Indian Reform in the 1880s," *South Dakota History* 22 (1992): 1–32.

⁴⁴ See Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*, p. 165; Tingey, "Indians and Blacks Together," esp. pp. 222–48; and *Southern Workman* 47 (1918): 535–40; 48 (1919): 255 and 623; and 49 (1920): 431.

⁴⁵ See Henry M. Rideout, *William Jones, Indian, Cowboy, American Scholar, and Anthropologist in the Field* (New York, 1912); *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Executive Committee of the Indian Rights Association, 1901* (Philadelphia, 1902), 34–35; Henry Owl, "Some Successful Indians," *Southern Workman* 47 (1918), pp. 535–40; Tingey, "Blacks and Indians Together," pp. 216–20; and *Southern Workman* 51 (1922): 532.

⁴⁶ Needless to say, there was no corresponding ideology of acceptance about relationships between whites and the African American students. According to historian Donal Lindsey, no marriages occurred between white female teachers and African American students (Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*, p. 165). Many historians of the South have documented the unacceptability of relationships between whites and African Americans during this period, especially those involving black men and white women. See, for example, Martha Elizabeth Hodes, *White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the Nineteenth-Century South* (New Haven, 1997); Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896–1920* (Chapel Hill, 1996); and Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, *Revolt Against Chivalry: Jessie Daniel Ames and the Women's Campaign Against Lynching* (New York, 1975). The different degree of acceptance of relationships between whites and African Americans compared to those of whites and Native Americans is reflected in the numerous miscegenation laws operational between 1661 and 1967, the majority of which targeted African Americans but rarely included Native Americans. See Peggy Pascoe, "Race, Gender, and Intercultural Relations: The Case of Interracial Marriage," *Frontiers* 22 (1991): 5.



Courtesy of Hampton University Archives

Caroline Andrus, shown here second from left with a group of Native American students, worked in Hampton's Indian Records Office from 1895 until 1922. Andrus, who was white, was engaged to be married to a Native American graduate of the school, William Jones, until his death in 1909. The relationship between Andrus and Jones illustrates that, at least at Hampton, it became acceptable for the most educated and, by white standards, highest achieving Native American men to find white marriage partners.

in the United States in the second half of the nineteenth century. Unlike many schools that came afterward, Hampton was an instrument of a policy that gave some Native American men the opportunity to reach high levels of education. It was the perception that this education was a civilizing influence that played an important part in assisting them to "win" the hand of an educated white woman and made their marriages more acceptable to the Hampton community and society at large.

Before 1880 the United States government had constructed its Native American policy on the basis of two conflicting beliefs. First, some policies, notably those that "removed" Native Americans to ever-decreasing portions of land distant from white settlement, derived in part from the convenient belief that the Native Americans were unable to be "civilized" and that because of their inability to cope with contact with Europeans they

were doomed to extinction. A second set of policies, which encouraged the work of missionaries and reformers such as those who gathered at the Lake Mohonk conference, developed from the idea that Native American people would be able to learn the ways of white culture and become assimilated members of mainstream American society.⁴⁷ Hampton Institute was a passionate advocate of the latter ideology. The 1884 annual report declared, “[t]he question is no longer, can the Indian be civilized? but, what becomes of the civilized Indian?”⁴⁸ At a meeting of the American Missionary Association in 1881, Armstrong was more blunt. “The Indian question is this,” he argued “education . . . or extermination. But at least one white man must fall for every Indian who is shot, and it takes as much money to kill one red man as it would to train a hundred of their children in civilized ways. To educate is at least economy.”⁴⁹

The Native American program at Hampton, which two Christian reformers originally conceived as a humanitarian initiative, reached its heyday during a period of increasing government support for Native American education. As annual Congressional appropriations rose from \$75,000 in 1880 to nearly \$3 million in 1900, Hampton received \$167 for each of up to fifty Native American students, funds that covered traveling expenses to and from their homes, board, clothing, and a few other incidentals.⁵⁰ The platform of the second Lake Mohonk conference in 1884 displayed quite modest aims for the education of Native American peoples, stating that the “Indian must have a knowledge of the English language, that he may associate with his white neighbors and transact business as they do. He must have practical industrial training to fit him to compete with others in the struggle for life. He must have a Christian education to enable him to perform [the] duties of the family, the State, and the Church.”⁵¹ Reformers believed that an education similar to that received by white children would enable Native American children to assimilate easily into white society. But this simple goal could be taken further. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas J. Morgan made it clear that education could create more than competent farmers, telling the Lake Mohonk Conference in

⁴⁷ For information about the way in which boarding schools were used as instruments of the federal government’s assimilation policy, and for histories of the policy itself, see Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* (Lincoln, Neb., and London, 1984), vol. 2; David Wallace Adams, “Fundamental Considerations: The Deep Meaning of Native American Schooling, 1880–1900,” *Harvard Educational Review* 58 (1988): 1–28; Adams, *Education for Extinction*, pp. 3–94; Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880–1920* (Cambridge, New York, and Melbourne, 1995), pp. 41–82 and 189–210; and Spring, *Deculturalization and the Struggle for Equality*, pp. 1–27.

⁴⁸ *ARHI* (1884), p. 9.

⁴⁹ *Southern Workman* 10 (1881): 120.

⁵⁰ Adams, “Fundamental Considerations,” p. 3 and Caroline W. Andrus, “‘Education of Indians at Hampton,’ A Survey of Hampton Institute in 1921,” Typescript, p. 3, ViHaU-A.

⁵¹ *Proceedings of the Second Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference, 1884* (Philadelphia, 1885), p. 14.

1889 that it was to be the medium through which Native Americans would gain many of the trappings of a middle-class lifestyle. Educated Native Americans would enjoy “the sweets of refined homes, the delight of social intercourse, the emoluments of commerce . . . the advantages of travel, the pleasures that come from literature, science and philosophy, and the solace and stimulus afforded by a true religion.”⁵²

During this period, humanitarians pushed to create Native American “leaders” who would act as examples of assimilation to their people. A few already existed. American colleges had never excluded Native American students in the blatant way that they did African Americans. Some colleges, like Dartmouth and Harvard, even mentioned Native American students in their charters. Although only very small numbers of Native American students attended college in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many reformers, including both Armstrong and Pratt, were enthusiastic supporters of this ideal.⁵³ In the late 1880s Armstrong told the Lake Mohonk Conference “that provision should be made by the government for the special education of some of these Indians—about one in fifty—so that they can be doctors for the people.”⁵⁴ Two years later Thomas Morgan advocated a scheme that would help Native Americans who were “endowed with a special capacity” to undertake higher education. “There is an imperative necessity for this if the Indians are to be assimilated,” Morgan argued, “[t]here is an urgent need among them for a class of leaders of thought—lawyers, physicians, preachers, teachers, editors, statesmen, and men of letters.”⁵⁵

In 1892 the Board of Indian Commissioners reported to the commissioner of Indian Affairs that the Mohonk Conference had decided, at the suggestion of Alice Robertson, to establish the “Mohonk Fund” to provide more help to “bright and promising Indian scholars in the pursuit of a higher education than is now given in the Government and contract schools.”⁵⁶ Armstrong’s policies at Hampton supported the idea of higher education for Native American students. The institute’s original objective had been to prepare African American teachers, but the curriculum consisted of both vocational and academic subjects, reflecting the school’s emphasis on physical labor as “the foundation of all welfare.” Hampton aimed to “arouse and develop in its students an appreciation of the dignity and practical value of intelligently performed manual labor . . . to cultivate

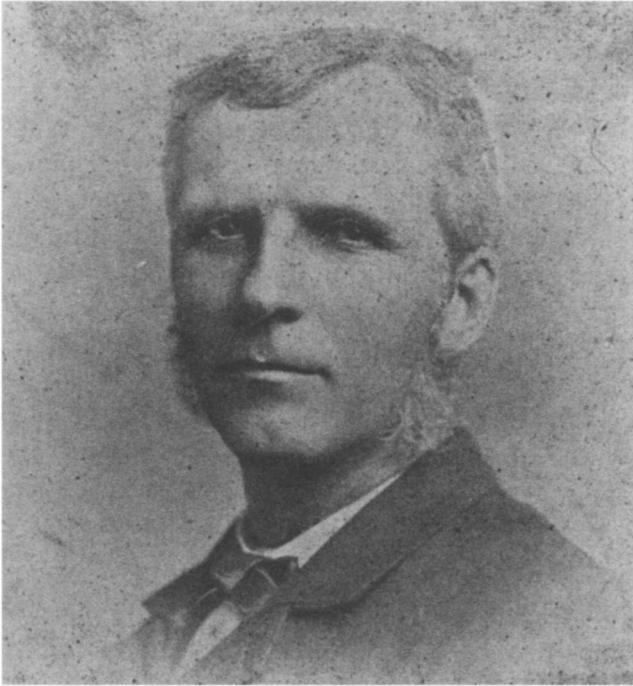
⁵² *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference, 1889* (Philadelphia, 1890), p. 17.

⁵³ Meyer Weinberg, *A Chance to Learn: The History of Race and Education in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass. and New York, 1977), pp. 337–40.

⁵⁴ *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference, 1887* (Philadelphia, 1888), p. 57.

⁵⁵ *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference*, pp. 18–22.

⁵⁶ *Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners, 1892*, H.exdoc. 1 (52–2) 3088, p. 1271.



Samuel Chapman Armstrong, who led black troops during the Civil War, founded Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in 1868 and served as its first principal until his death in 1893.

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in them through work and study the self-respect that is the natural concomitant of trained ability to be useful in a skilled vocation.”⁵⁷ Students could take either the academic courses or enroll in classes designed to teach them to be skilled tradesmen, such as blacksmiths, carpenters, printers, and farmers. This policy worked in unison with Hampton’s unique plan whereby students worked at the school during the day in return for room and board and took night classes in academic subjects. Initiated to give African American students from poor rural backgrounds access to an education, the program was of great financial benefit to the school as student labor built and maintained campus facilities, produced food, and made goods for sale.⁵⁸

Although the emphasis on work was one of Hampton’s most-lauded features, the school also offered “normal” courses that gave students the opportunity to train as teachers. The purpose of this policy was more than the creation of trained teachers willing to serve children living on isolated, poverty-stricken reservations in the West: it was a means through which civilized, assimilated role models would return to those reservations to act as exemplars of proper behavior. As H. B. Frissell, Armstrong’s successor, wrote in the principal’s report for 1894: “The solution of the Indian

⁵⁷ “A Survey of Hampton Institute in 1921,” p. 10.

⁵⁸ Hultgren and Molin, *To Lead and To Serve*, pp. 24–27.

problem, as of the Negro problem, lies in sending out competent leaders of their own race, who shall, both by precept and example, show them how to live.”⁵⁹ Hampton’s policy decreed that as soon as Native American students were judged academically competent, they could begin Hampton’s teacher-training course, attending classes with black students and taking courses similar to those taught to white grammar school students.⁶⁰

Although Hampton’s belief in the nineteenth-century idea of a scale of civilization was both racist and patronizing, there is no doubt that the school at least demonstrated unwavering faith in the idea that both black and Native American students were capable of attaining a level of education that approached that offered to white students. The school believed that these students of color did not lack innate ability but merely lacked the advantage given to white children by their cultural background. For example, Armstrong wrote in the Annual Report for 1881 that:

It is to be regretted that the terms usually applied to such people have needless reproach or sting, as the words, “despised,” “degraded.” It would be better if the idea of being *behind*, implying lack of opportunities, rather than *below*, implying a fall could be conveyed in our description phrases; this would not wound their self respect. The Negro and the Indian are low but not degraded.⁶¹

Hampton’s educational policies put this theory into practice. In 1894, for example, the academic (or Normal) course consisted of mathematics, science, reading, language (the study of English), geography, history (which included the study of “news items . . . [to make] it possible for [students] to think and talk intelligently of the economic and political subjects of the day,” despite the fact that the vast majority were not and would not be enfranchised), civil government and economics (in which students were taught “how our own government is carried on and what are the politics of the different political parties”), drawing, singing, woodwork, gymnastics, mental science, agriculture, and “practice teaching” (students were required to take part in a year’s teaching experience between their middle and senior years).⁶² In 1894 nineteen Native American women and twenty-nine Native American men were enrolled in the normal school classes along with 109 African American women and 137 African American men.⁶³ Students who graduated from this course were prepared to continue their education at mainstream colleges and universities, and some of them did so. Hampton’s Native American students went on to work in many professions and skilled trades. The annual report in 1892 recorded that their occupations

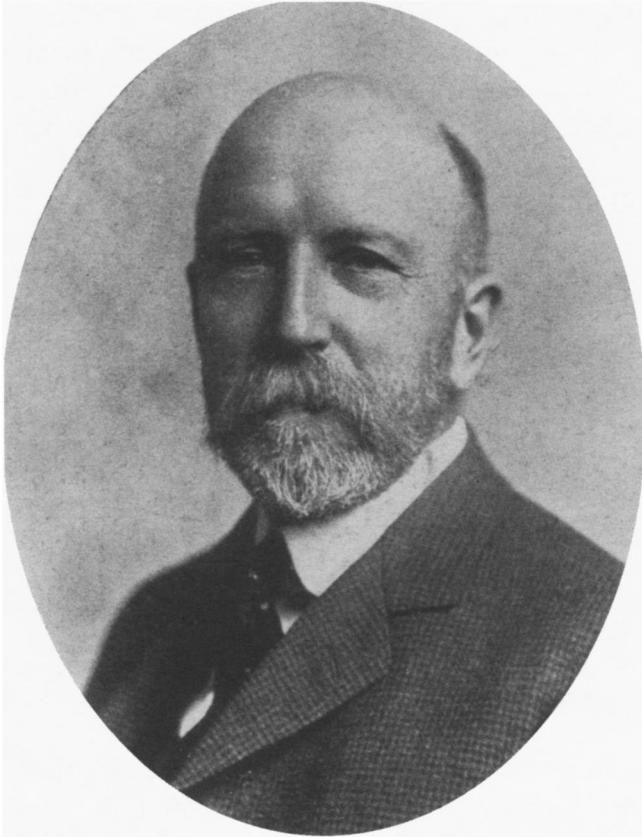
⁵⁹ *ARHI* (1894), p. 9.

⁶⁰ Hultgren and Molin, *To Lead and To Serve*, p. 22.

⁶¹ *ARHI* (1881), p. 6.

⁶² *Ibid.*, (1894), pp. 14–17.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.



In 1893 Dr. Hollis Burke Frissell became Hampton's second principal. He wholeheartedly believed that the institute had a mission to make leaders of its Native American students to serve as examples to others of their race.

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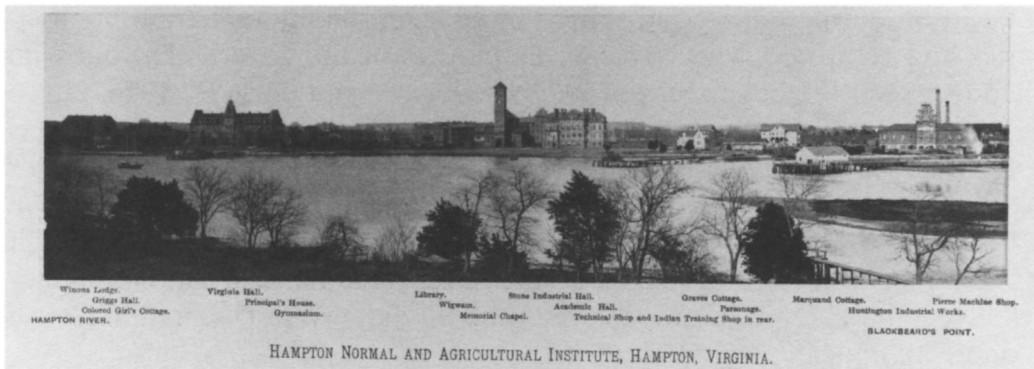
included teachers, a physician, police officers, engineers, surveyors, and lawyers, as well as missionaries, soldiers, postmasters, farmers, wheelwrights, blacksmiths, merchants, and clerks.⁶⁴ Most of Hampton's students, however, returned to the reservations to take up farming.⁶⁵

The social climate that gave Native American students the opportunity to pursue higher education was not to last, however. After 1900 the government at first attempted to integrate Native American children into white schools, and then, when this failed, constructed segregated Indian schools in which the curriculum concentrated solely on practical mechanical or agricultural subjects.⁶⁶ As historian Frederick Hoxie has detailed, the first obstacle to an equal education was the reluctance of all-white

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, (1892), p. 77.

⁶⁵ Hultgren and Molin, *To Lead and To Serve*, p. 28.

⁶⁶ Hoxie, *Final Promise*, pp. 190–201.



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This panoramic photograph displays the campus of Hampton Institute from across the Hampton River. It depicts buildings that play a prominent role in this essay, including Winona Lodge, Virginia Hall, and “the Wigwam.”

secondary schools to accept Native American children. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas J. Morgan had begun an integration scheme in 1891 to encourage white schools to accept Native American pupils through government contracts. In 1895 forty-five school districts participated in the scheme; in 1903 only four school districts were still taking part. Combined with budgetary concerns, doubts about the efficacy of boarding schools, and a growing disillusionment with the idea that education was all that was required to assimilate the Native American population, the Bureau of Indian Affairs began advocating segregated, and therefore by definition inferior, schools in Native American communities. In 1901 the superintendent of education in the bureau, Estelle Reel, announced a new curriculum to govern Native American schools. The new course of study abandoned academic training entirely in favor of unrelentingly manual and vocational education.⁶⁷

The commissioner of Indian Affairs at the time, Francis Leupp, believed that most Native Americans would become farmers; those that did not would “enter the general labor market as lumbermen, ditchers, miners, railroad hands or what not.” Leupp went on to argue that it was an error for educators of Native Americans to attempt to “make [them] over into something else. . . . Looking among our own companions in life, whom do we more sincerely respect—the person who has made the most of what nature gave him or the person who is always trying to be something other than he is?”⁶⁸ Leupp’s vision for the future was a long way from the ideals expressed at Hampton that had helped men such as Thomas Sloan and William Jones become lawyers and academics. Control of Native American

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 190–96.

⁶⁸ *Annual Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1905*, H.doc. 5 (59–1) 4959, pp. 3 and 7–8.

education during this period shifted away from the humanitarian missionaries and reformers who were not employees of the government but who had overseen the beginnings of federal educational policy. By 1916, Hoxie has argued, "bureaucracy had acquired a life of its own. . . . The architects of the new program were employees of the Indian office."⁶⁹ It was in this context that the federal government withdrew Hampton's appropriation in 1912. It is testimony to the institute's uniqueness that the government funding continued as long as it did after national educational policy changed and Hampton came to symbolize all that was not wanted in Native American education.

As an uncompromising agent of assimilationist ideology, Hampton provided a context in which marriages between white women and Native American men were possible despite the prejudices of the day. The school was perhaps one of the few locations in the country where white women and Native American men might meet regularly in a setting conducive to sympathy between the races. Within its confines, Hampton provided the raw material to form interracial romantic relationships. It attracted white women who were educated and of a humanitarian bent and gave Native American men the opportunity to reach high levels of education, in some cases far beyond what most white American men could expect. Administrators' concerns for the welfare of their former charges, and, no less importantly, for the school's reputation, were so great that they encouraged marriages among Native American students that they believed would reinforce the lessons learned at Hampton. Among Native Americans, at least, the level of assimilation of a potential spouse was seen as more important than his or her ethnicity, especially in a context in which many believed the "Indian problem" would be solved by absorption into the mainstream white population. It was an atmosphere in which the choice of marriage partner was deeply connected to the ideology of assimilation and all the cultural shifts that occurred during this period of American history. The doctrine of assimilation did not just influence the public life of every Native American student who attended Hampton. It also had implications for all aspects of their private lives, especially their choice of a partner with whom to build their future.

⁶⁹ Hoxie, *Final Promise*, pp. 205–6.



Courtesy of Hampton University Archives

As part of Hampton's normal curriculum, prospective teachers studied geography, as shown here in this Frances Johnston photograph, and other academic subjects. This photo includes both black and Native American students in the same classroom. After 1901, however, such scenes would grow rare. In that year the Bureau of Indian Affairs announced a new curriculum for Native Americans that abandoned academic work in favor of strictly vocational education.