

*From Classroom to Battlefield: The Role of Students in the Closing of Carlisle
Indian Industrial School, 1918*

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Introduction

On March 22, 1918, *The Carlisle Arrow*, the weekly newspaper of Carlisle Indian Industrial School (CIIS) in Pennsylvania, published the following passage:

I was glad to hear that the old school is still running the old flag up with the same Carlisle spirit as of old, the news being obtained through the special Arrow for the Carlisle boys now serving in the Army or Navy. I was sure surprised to see such a large percentage in the service. It certainly shows what Carlisle is capable of doing towards her country. I was proud to know that I am one of the few in active service in France.¹

The author of the letter, dated February 3, 1918, was Corporal E J. Wilbur, of Company D, of the 28th Infantry, A.E.F. He was one of the “large percentage” of Native American students from Carlisle serving in the United States military during World War I and deployed either to France or England. Despite Wilbur’s pride in Carlisle, the first non-reservation boarding school in the United States, a few months after this letter was published, Carlisle closed its doors after thirty-nine years of existence.

When CIIS closed in 1918, many may have been upset but few could have been surprised. In the 1880s, the school was regarded as the best model to Indian education, but in its later years, Carlisle had been suffering from mismanagement and low student enrollment: students’ numbers decreased because more schools were opened in the West, as well as in the aftermath of the Congressional investigation of the school’s superintendent in 1914. Moreover, as the United States was entering the European War, many male students enlisted in the Army or Navy, further decreasing the students’ numbers. Several political and economic factors, then, led to the closing of Carlisle, and most historians have seen the closing of the school as a direct result of the U.S.

*Disclaimer: I will be using the terms ‘Native American’, ‘Indian’, and/or ‘American Indian’ interchangeably, as both the primary and secondary sources employ all the various terms. When the name of the tribe/nation of the student is known, I will also provide it.

¹ *The Carlisle Arrow and Red Man*, March 22, 1918, 23.

government's policies in the early years of the twentieth century.² Yet far from being passive to the school's authority and policymakers, the Indian students at Carlisle negotiated their situation. By selecting and incorporating certain assimilationist ideas, students chose to go to war, and contributed to the closing of their school.

By the late nineteenth century, Indian-white relations entered a new phase in American history. The United States government, through the Office of Indian Affairs, embarked upon a new project that aimed at assimilating Native Americans into mainstream (white Protestant) American society. "Total assimilation," as understood in the late nineteenth century, meant that Native Americans needed to forgo their communal habits, adopt Christianity, learn the English language, and embrace individualism, which in turn would prepare them to reach full American citizenship.³ The reformers of 1880s, who called themselves "Friends of the Indians" and dominated the Office of Indian Affairs, supported assimilation.⁴ According to the reformers, Native Americans' "inferior" status did not stem from their biological traits but from their cultural environment. The reformers believed that with the appropriate education, Native Americans would easily adopt Western culture, thus contributing to the progress of civilization.

Why did the U.S. government and the American public suddenly focus on Indian assimilation? In the middle and late 1870s, a number of Indians in western states and territories, including the Modocs, Nez Perce, Sioux, and Northern Cheyennes, fled their reservations to

² See for example, Margaret Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination, 1928-1973*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974); David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1925*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995).

³ I have borrowed the concept of "total assimilation" from Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984).

⁴ By 'reformers', I mean the various civil organizations formed to support Native Americans toward full citizenship. These organizations, such as the Boston Indian Citizenship Committee, the Women's National Indian Association, and the Indian Rights Association were located in the Northeast, far removed from the reservations. During the late nineteenth century, these organizations, as well as their leaders, significantly shaped and influenced the Office of Indian Affairs' policies. See for example, William T. Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association: The Herbert Welsh Years, 1882-1904*, (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1985).

return to their homelands. Reformers, turning their attention from post-Civil War southern Reconstruction, were incensed with the harsh military responses to these flights, and resolved to address and finally solve the “Indian question.”

Reformers’ evangelistic and ethnocentric attitudes informed their approach to the issue: Indians must be assimilated to Anglo-American cultural norms. Reformers argued that military supervision was not the answer. Instead, “Let the effort be made in good faith to promote their education, their industry, their morality. Invite the assistance of the philanthropic and Christian effort which has been so valuable an aid in the elevation of the freedmen, and render it possible for justice and good example to restore that confidence which has been lost by injustice and cruelty.”⁵ The Friends succeeded in convincing President Ulysses Grant in conceding what became known as the “peace policy,” whereby reformers would have more saying in the Office of Indian Affairs by choosing people among Quakers and other Christian denominations to manage the reservations. The Reformers also wanted to control Indian education.

As reformers theorized on assimilation and the best form of education, Captain Richard H. Pratt’s school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, offered the practical solution. Pratt shared many of the reformers’ ideas. Moreover, he believed that “[t]he small number of Indians in the United States, then given as 260,000, rendered their problem a very short one.”⁶ Thus the solution was to remove the Indian children from the reservations and introduce them into white civilization “until they are thoroughly soaked.”⁷ Carlisle was a co-educational school, where the ratio of boys to girls was usually two-thirds, and the students’ ages varied from four to twenty-one years old. The school’s educational program accounted for both academic courses such as English,

⁵ Memorial of the Friends cited in Henry E. Fritz, *The Movement for Indian Assimilation, 1860-1890*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963), 72.

⁶ Richard H. Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867-1904*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), 213.

⁷ Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 335.

Mathematics, History, and Geography, as well as vocational ones, such as farming, cooking, carpentry and other artisanal skills. The latter courses were intended not only to provide a quicker assimilation, but also to make the school more self-sufficient. Pratt also came up with an original idea known as ‘outing’, whereby students were placed in white families during a period of the year where they could further learn English and the habits of “civilized” people, and would earn an income for the work provided.⁸ The reformers enthusiastically embraced Pratt’s educational model, as by the turn of the twentieth century, twenty-four nonreservation boarding schools had opened throughout the country, mainly in the West. Despite serving as a model, Carlisle was also the first non-reservation boarding school to close.

All works that address Native American education and assimilation in the late nineteenth century mention the founding of Carlisle and how it affected federal policies toward Native Americans. Very few works, however, discuss the factors that led to its closing, and those that do usually conclude that Carlisle’s existence had become anachronistic, and do not deem it significant to analyze how and why the school closed. Most of the works that focus on the students document their diverse ambivalent experiences. Although the authors maintain that students’ experiences were as diverse as the students themselves, overall, they argue that the boarding school experiences were devastating to the students and their communities. While much of the impact on Native American students was negative, students did not meekly submit to the Office and school’s policies. Instead they made independent choices and exercised some control over their own future. Moreover, a close analysis of the last year of the school’s existence

⁸ For more on ‘outing’ see Robert A. Trennert, “From Carlisle to Phoenix: The Rise and Fall of the Indian Outing System, 1878-1930,” *Historical Review* 52, (1983): 267-291. doi 3639003. Even Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Francis Leupp (1904-1909), who disagreed often with Pratt, called it “the great monument of his life work.” Francis E. Leupp, *The Indian and His Problem*, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1910), 121-122.

reveals that students chose to participate in the war, thus choosing another form of assimilation, which ironically contributed to the school's closing.

Most historians agree that by the turn of the century, reformers were changing their opinion on Indians' capabilities of adopting Western culture, but disagreed on the immediate effects of the shift in assimilationist policies.⁹ In one way or another, historians attribute the closing of Carlisle to reformers' decisions. Focusing on this interaction between reformers and students, however, shows that the students played a larger role in the demise of the school than historians have previously acknowledged.

This essay will focus on the students' acts and experiences by analyzing mainly the school's records and the Congressional hearings. The first part will situate Carlisle within the shifting assimilationist discussion of the early twentieth century, and address how students acquired tools and ideas to negotiate with Carlisle's administration, by focusing primarily on sports and Native arts. The second part will analyze the Congressional hearings of 1914 and present the students' testimonies. The third part will address why the students chose to enlist in the army and get involved in the war instead of continuing their education. The conclusion synthesizes the arguments on the shift in assimilation policies, the First World War, and the students' role, all of which led to the closing of Carlisle.

⁹ For the first group, see for example Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*; Robert A. Trennert, "Corporal Punishment and the Politics of Indian Reform," *History of Education Quarterly* 29, no.4 (1989): 595-617. doi. 369065; Michael Coleman, *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930*, (Jackson: University of Mississippi, 1993); Adams, *Education for Extinction*; K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994). These historians see the major shift in reformers' educational policies after the Meriam Report 1928, and particularly the Indian New Deal 1933, under Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier. Historians like Wilbert H. Ahern, "An Experiment Aborted: Returned Indian Students in the Indian School Service, 1881-1908," *Ethnohistory* 44, no. 2 (1997): 263-304. doi. 483370; and Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, argue that assimilation policies changed after 1900, merely two decades after the initial policies.

Chapter 1: Talks of Closing, of Art and of Football

Carlisle has attracted many scholars' attention, and rightly so. The school had set a precedent for the off-reservation schools, and at the turn of the twentieth century, Carlisle could boast that about a thousand Native American students attended any given year.¹⁰ Scholars of various disciplines, such as historians, educators, anthropologists, and even Pratt, have written about the origins of the school and the initial impact it had on federal policy, as well as on students and their communities.¹¹ This part will focus on later years, from 1900-1914, and the changes that the school underwent during those years. This period saw the introduction of Native art and the success of Carlisle's football team, which led to national prominence, as well as to students' empowerment.¹² Early in the twentieth century, Carlisle continuously attracted reformers' attention.

As early as 1901, reformers had changed their views and expectations on Indian education. The new Superintendent of Indian Schools, Estelle Reel, marked this change with a school curriculum that emphasized vocational over academic training. Reel reminded teachers of Indian schools "that the cultivation of good habits, self-control, application, and responsiveness are recognized as being on a higher educational plane than a knowledge of definitions and unimportant dates."¹³ However, Reel acknowledged that students needed to learn the history "of their tribe and then of their race." Moreover, the teachers should "arouse in the pupils an interest

¹⁰ Genevieve Bell, *Telling Stories Out of School: Remembering the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, 1879-1918*, (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1998), 45. In 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, and 1904, the numbers of students attending CIIS were 981, 970, 1023, 963, 1025, respectively. In the coming years, the numbers changed slightly.

¹¹ See for example Adams, *Education for Extinction*; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*; Bell, *Telling Stories Out of School*; Sally Jenkins, *The Real All Americans: The Team that Changed a Game, a People, a Nation*, (New York: Doubleday, 2007).

¹² The term "empowerment" should be taken lightly. Although I argue that students were not passive subjects to the government and school authorities, there still existed an imbalance of power between them.

¹³ Estelle Reel, *Course of Study for the Indian Schools of the United States: Industrial and Literary*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), 6. For more on Estelle Reel's work as Superintendent and her links to land reform see K. Tsianina Lomawaima, "Estelle Reel, Superintendent of Indian Schools, 1898-1910: Politics, Curriculum, and Land," *Journal of American Indian Education* 35, (1996): 5-31, Education Full text, Wilson Web.

in the upward struggles of their people in the past and a determination to do their part toward the progress of their race in the future.” And when talking about Native American-white relations, Reel suggested focusing on those things “which have showed nobility of character on the part of either race in their dealings with the other.”¹⁴ The change reflected a shift from ethnocentrism to cultural relativism marked by racist overtones. Reformers now embraced the idea of differences among cultures and rejected the idea that Indians could become “white.” This shift in education policy went against Pratt’s vision of the school and his project of “civilizing” Indians. The idea of cultural difference led reformers to argue against the very idea of an Indian school in the East, and to emphasize Indian crafts and Indian history in Carlisle’s curriculum.

In the case of Carlisle, two other factors played into the assimilationist discussions. The first was Pratt’s disagreements with the Office of Indian Affairs, which led to his firing in 1904, and second, was the school’s location. Carlisle was known as the “school in the East,”¹⁵ and as such became subject to harsh criticism by reformers and congressmen. In February 1902, in a debate in the House, a delegate from Arizona proposed to repeal the appropriation for Carlisle, as it was distant from the reservations; instead, he argued, “the Indian should be educated in the environment in which he must live.” He called Carlisle “the outgrowth of an ignorant sentimentalism.” He went so far as to state that “the best education possessed by one of the Indians on the San Carlos Reservation had been obtained by serving four years in the penitentiary. He had been taught discipline.”¹⁶ Other representatives from Illinois, Iowa, and even New York and Pennsylvania, favored dispossessing Carlisle of government funds;

¹⁴ Reel, *Course of Study*, 143.

¹⁵ Zitkala Ša, *American Indian Stories*, (Washington: Hayworth Publishing House, 1921). Zitkala Ša (*Dakota Sioux*), born Gertrude Simmons, later Bonnin, was a teacher at Carlisle, a writer, musician, and political activist. Although she opposed Pratt’s method of education, she later became friends with him in their mutual opposition to the policies of the Office of Indian Affairs. See Jessica Enoch, “Resisting the Script of Indian Education: Zitkala Ša and the Carlisle Indian School,” *College English* 65, (2002): 117-141. doi 3250759.

¹⁶ Marcus A. Smith cited in “Carlisle School Opposed,” *New York Times*, February 21, 1902, 3.

however, they lost their cause as others talked in favor of the school.

Talks of closing Carlisle did not stop there. A few years later, in 1907, Congress again discussed eliminating the appropriation for the school. Opponents of the school provided the same reason of distance and added, “that not many Indians have benefited by the higher education.”¹⁷ Nonetheless, the House passed a bill of \$169,000 for the support of the school for the year. Within two years Carlisle once more became the subject of discussion. This time the complaint was not about Carlisle’s location. Rather, a graduate of CIIS, James R. Wheelock, had charged that students suffered abuse in the institution. The Office of Indian Affairs sent Inspector E. P. Holcomb to investigate. Instead of talking to the students, Holcomb “interviewed business men and others who had any knowledge of the school’s affairs, and also examined a cab driver, who had been mentioned in the charges. Most of those interviewed gave testimony favorable to the school.”¹⁸ This favorable and flimsy report suppressed talks of closing, but this would not be the last time that students initiated an investigation of the school.¹⁹ For the moment, though, the students continued their education at Carlisle, which now offered Native art courses, the opportunity to compete in various sports with (white) colleges, and other extracurricular activities, such as debating societies and theater.

In 1906, the Francis Leupp Art Studio opened in Carlisle. Within the context of a more gradual assimilation policy, the new Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Francis E. Leupp introduced a program on Native Arts, whereby students would focus on the production of decorative work by employing “Indian combinations of line and color.”²⁰ Moreover, the emphasis on Native art stemmed also from growing public attention toward Native American

¹⁷ “To Close Carlisle School,” *New York Times*, January 10, 1907, 1.

¹⁸ “Investigates Indian School,” *New York Times*, July 10, 1909, 2.

¹⁹ This topic will be discussed later in the essay.

²⁰ Francis E. Leupp cited in Linda Waggoner, *Firelight: The Life of Angel De Cora, Winnebago Artist*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 133.

arts and crafts. As such, Leupp could claim, “to channel the “natural” artistic abilities of Indian school students,” while also selling the artworks to finance the schools.²¹ Leupp invited Angel De Cora, a Winnebago artist, to direct the new art studio in Carlisle.

Upon her arrival at Carlisle, De Cora, although enthusiastic about her appointment, seemed to have “experienced a discouraging sensation” as she felt that she “was addressing members of an alien race.”²² Students had been introduced to art classes in the earlier years, but the focus had been on Victorian art, and as such they had become alienated from their own cultural backgrounds. Nonetheless, De Cora was not discouraged for long, because when she started teaching students, she soon found the “decorative instinct” in them. She started organizing weekly exhibits. De Cora allowed students to experiment and initially decided not to “burden their minds with any principles of designing or color.”²³ Although news of Native art did not appear that often in the school’s print, once in a while, a comment on what the students were working on would appear in *The Carlisle Arrow*. For example in September 1912, the student Minnie Rice was “making a beautiful bead necklace of Sioux design,” which would be placed on exhibition at the Cumberland County Fair.²⁴ Contrary to De Cora’s initial sentiments, the Native art courses awakened in students a sense of cultural pride.

A later article, “The Art of the Red Man,” weighed Native art’s influence in character formation, as well as in mainstream American art. According to the author, whose name does not appear in print, “The character of the Indian shines forth in his art. It is grave, restrained, simple, and yet bold.”²⁵ Moreover, the author exalted the influence of Native art in mainstream American art, while commenting on race relations: “The beauty of the Navajo blankets is known

²¹ Waggoner, *Firelight*, 133.

²² Waggoner, *Firelight*, 134.

²³ Waggoner, *Firelight*, 135.

²⁴ “Making Indian Art Exhibit,” *The Carlisle Arrow*, September 27, 1912.

²⁵ “The Art of the Red Man,” *The Carlisle Arrow*, October 27, 1916, 7.

everywhere, and it is a great credit to a tribe unfamiliar with white civilization to have produced a form of art work that white men have set themselves to imitate. Such imitation is a kind of apology to the original artists for having called them barbarians or savages.”²⁶ This bold expression of race relations would have been unthinkable during Pratt’s superintendence. Pratt warned of not feeding “America to the Indian, which is a tribalizing and not an Americanizing process, but feed the Indian to America, and America will do the assimilating and annihilate the problem.”²⁷ However, Pratt no longer had a saying in educational policy, and students could express their cultural ideas freely.

Art was not the only platform where students could find pride for their cultural achievements, and “settle scores” with whites. Football and other sports provided a sense of empowerment for the students and launched Carlisle further onto the national stage. In fact, it was during Pratt’s era that students started playing collegiate football.²⁸ Pratt acknowledged that sports were “a great motive force in the school life.”²⁹ However, when during one of the earlier games, a student, Stacy Matlock (Pawnee), badly broke his leg, Pratt decided to prohibit the students from playing with other schools. About a year after the prohibition, a group of forty students “headed by the champion orator of the school,” appeared at Pratt’s office, and “gave practically all the arguments in favor of contending in outside football.”³⁰ Pratt accepted the students’ request, on two conditions: first, they should always behave in the field no matter how

²⁶ “The Art of the Red Man,” 7.

²⁷ Pratt, *The Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Its Origins, Purposes, Progress and the Difficulties Surmounted*, (Carlisle: Cumberland County Historical Society Publications, 1979), 57.

²⁸ Although Carlisle was not a college, and Pratt never intended and wanted it to become as such, the school was allowed to play within the collegiate football league, as a substantial number of male students were over 18 years old.

²⁹ Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 317.

³⁰ Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 317.

the other players treated them, and second, in three to four years they should “whip the biggest football team in the country.”³¹ Both Pratt and the students kept their promises.

Football was “more than just a game” for Carlisle students.³² Students, slowly but steadily, began to win games against prominent opponents. Moreover, Carlisle captured the interest of the public every time it played against white college football teams. In its early years, the media portrayed the fight between Indians and whites as a continuation of centuries-long battles between the two peoples. In its coverage of Carlisle, the national newspaper the *New York Times*, overwhelmingly reported on the school’s football games and the players. The greatest attention came during the seasons from 1911-1913, when, James Thorpe (Sac and Fox) joined Carlisle and became its most famous player. In 1911, when Carlisle beat Harvard, Thorpe remembered the moment: “When the gun was fired and we knew that we had beaten [sic] Harvard, the champions of the East, a feeling of pride that none of us has ever lost came over all of us, from [Carlisle coach Pop] Warner to the water-boy.”³³ Indeed, many students shared Thorpe’s sense of pride for their school and for their race. Football offered students various opportunities, such as “testing their athletic ability, attaining status, seeing the country, advancing the cause of Indian reform, acquiring further education, working out issues of personal and cultural identity, and finally, for metaphorically settling old scores.”³⁴

Of all the athletic achievements of Carlisle students, the Olympic games of 1912, held in Sweden, could be considered as the high point of Carlisle’s national and international prominence. Students Jim Thorpe and Lewis Tewanima (Hopi), guided by Carlisle’s coach

³¹ Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 318.

³² David Wallace Adams, “More than a Game: The Carlisle Indians Take to the Gridiron, 1893-1917,” *The Western Historical Quarterly* 32, (2001): 25-53. doi 3650836. For more on Carlisle football and other sports in boarding schools see Sally Jenkins, *The Real All Americans*; John Bloom, *To Show What an Indian Can do: Sports at Native American Boarding Schools*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

³³ Jim Thorpe cited in Adams, “More than a Game,” 43.

³⁴ Adams, “More than a Game,” 53.

Glenn “Pop” Warner, joined the United States’ Olympic team, whereby Thorpe won the gold medal for the pentathlon and decathlon and Tewanima won the silver medal for the 10,000-meter run. Carlisle took pride in the victory of its students. The festivities held in town in honor of the athletes were grandiose with “spectacular parades of military and civic organizations.”³⁵ In the official ceremony, Superintendent Friedman read letters from President William H. Taft, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and other officials, all of whom congratulated Thorpe.³⁶ Among the festivities, the nightshirt parade stood out as the students’ own unique celebration:

At 8:00 o’clock in the evening, headed by the Eighth Regiment Band, a large number of Indian students wearing nightshirts and white caps marched into town from the school, and to Elk’s Clubhouse, where Thorpe, Tewanima, and Warner were given a swell dinner. In a parade carriage drawn by several of the boys the three victors were hauled over the principal streets, and as the boys paraded they gave snake dances amid the glare of “red and yellow” light, creating a scene somewhat beautiful, and slightly weird, but surely noisy. The redskins let out some pretty blood-curling yells, and at once proved that their ability was inherited. It was a “bang up” feature, however, and thousands lined the streets to see it.³⁷

This comment in the school’s newspaper *The Carlisle Arrow* not only gives a vivid picture of the students’ festivities, but also hints at the racial discourse that had become commonplace within the Indian Affairs’ policies, that Native Americans had “inherited” abilities which could not make them “white” but that they had a different and “useful” place within American society. Despite this apparent acceptance of assimilationist discourse, there existed major dissatisfaction among the students toward the school’s authorities.

³⁵ *The Carlisle Arrow*, September 13, 1912.

³⁶ For more on Jim Thorpe, his life and the controversy on the revocation of his medals see Robert W. Wheeler, *Jim Thorpe, World’s Greatest Athlete*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979); Kate Buford, *Native American Son: The Life and Sporting Legend Jim Thorpe*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010); Bill Crawford, *All American: The Rise and fall of Jim Thorpe*, (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2005). Unfortunately, there is no biography of Lewis Tewanima, who won the silver medal in the 10,000 meters run. However, *The Carlisle Arrow*, January 17, 1913, posted an article on Tewanima’s calm and “stoic” character.

³⁷ “The Nightshirt Parade,” *The Carlisle Arrow*, September 13, 1912.

During the early 1910s, Carlisle had become equated with football.³⁸ And although in print everything seemed to be perfect, as students won the majority of the games, major discontent had grown between the players and coach Warner, who regularly mistreated students, not only verbally, but also physically at times. Carlisle's reputation as a leader in sports was further diminished in early 1913, when allegations emerged that Thorpe had played two seasons of semi-professional baseball before competing in the Stockholm Olympics. By the end of the year, the International Olympic Committee had determined that Thorpe had not been an amateur at the time of the Olympics and withdrew his medals. Moreover, allegations started circulating that Carlisle's athletic funds had been mishandled. Thus students decided to sign a petition and send it to the governmental authorities. This time the inspector assigned to investigate took the time to talk to the students and found that "The athletic funds ... is the bone of contention, and has caused more to disrupt, to disorganize, said school and create a bad feeling and a feeling of unrest and injustice among the student body than all else combined. Everything about said school has been subservient to football and athletics."³⁹ This major dissatisfaction coupled with more long-lasting problems in school led to the Congressional hearings in 1914.

Chapter 2: The Congressional Hearings, 1914

Despite major achievements in football and athletics, the introduction of Native arts, and expansion of the school's buildings, students were not satisfied with conditions at school. They did not like Superintendent Friedman, because he was not as fatherly as Pratt and he seemed to care more about the buildings than the students. They found his managerial skills cruel and unfair. Thus, they acted against him by signing a petition, which led to the Congressional

³⁸ Jenkins, *The Real All Americans*, 185.

³⁹ *Carlisle Indian School: Hearings Before the Joint Commission of the Congress of the United States*, 63rd Cong. 1336 (1914), (hereafter cited as *Hearings*).

hearings in 1914. Students, together with some of the school's staff, were able to bring their grievances in front of the committee investigating Indian Affairs. As a result of the hearings, Friedman lost his position and the students could hope for a better education. The Congressional hearings provided a genuine platform for the students' grievances against the school's authorities.

The students had shown their dissatisfaction much earlier. On May 15, 1913, an article appeared in the *New York Times* stating that "Antoine De Nomio, an Indian from the Bad River Reservation in Wisconsin, told the committee [Senate Committee on Indian affairs] that letters to him from his fourteen-year-old daughter, attending the school, describe conditions there as very bad."⁴⁰ A couple of days later, the national newspaper reported that Congress intended to pursue an inquiry. However, nothing came of it. By the end of the year, the students mobilized and made sure that Congress heard their voices and respond to their demands.

By late fall in 1913, the students resolved to sign a petition. According to Inspector E. B. Linnen's report, which he presented to the joint commission, the students handed over the petition, signed by 276 members, to Congressman Arthur R. Rupley, whose home was in Carlisle.⁴¹ Apparently, another petition, delivered by Montreville Yuda, a former graduate from the Class of 1912, reached the Secretary of Interior in Washington. Shortly after, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells received a letter from the Secretary of the Indian Rights Association, based in Philadelphia, warning that "rumors afloat reflecting seriously upon the moral atmosphere of the school, and unless something is done to 'clear the air,' so to speak, it may be difficult to properly maintain the institution."⁴² After all the commotion, a joint

⁴⁰ "Impugn Carlisle Morals," *New York Times*, May 15, 1913, pg. 1.

⁴¹ *Hearings*, 1335.

⁴² Mathew K. Sniffer cited in Bell, *Telling Stories Out of School*, 94.

commission of six Congressional representatives came unannounced to Carlisle and initiated the hearings.

Students, teachers, school staff, and the superintendent, all had the chance to bring forth their grievances and their own versions of what was wrong at Carlisle. The hearings started on February 6, 1914, and continued for two days, then resumed on March 25, 1914 for an additional day. The joint commission met at 4:30 pm in the Y.M.C.A. hall at Carlisle. The first person to testify was Rosa B. La Flesche, manager of the outing department and a graduate from the Class of 1890. When asked her opinion of the superintendent, she stated that Friedman was not “fatherly” and students “feel hurt because he does not come closer to them.” Moreover, when the chairman asked what could solve the school’s problems, La Flesche strongly suggested, “The only remedy now is to remove the superintendent. It has gone too far.” Although La Flesche clarified that she was on friendly terms with Friedman, she did hold him responsible for the situation in the school.⁴³ La Flesche’s testimony set the stage for the current students’ testimony.

The student body had held a meeting prior to the hearings to select who would represent and testify on their behalf. They chose eight male students, who would address specific concerns. The students focused on six matters: “laxity of discipline, unjust expulsion of students without reason and the withholding of some that should be expelled, misrepresentation of the school to the public and to the authorities in Washington, insanitary conditions in the school, insufficient quantity and quality of food, and unjust punishment.”⁴⁴ Despite the grouping of their grievances, all the students testifying expressed a general view of Friedman, and some other school staff. They all agreed that Friedman had lost control of the school. He was unable or unwilling to provide decent meals and health conditions for the students; he had knowledge of corporal

⁴³ *Hearings* 965-977, (statement of Rosa B. La Flesche).

⁴⁴ *Hearings*, 977, (statement of Hiram Chase, Student).

punishments and was unwilling to stop it, and that his disinterest had created a lack of discipline among the students. They no longer respected him, and even challenged his authority.

One particular case showed how students defied Friedman. As student Hiram Chase (Omaha) testified, “One night he made an inspection of the large boys' quarters. . . . He came through, and he said he wanted to see how the conditions were in the large boys' quarters, and consequently somebody turned off the lights, and they threw shoes at him, and one thing and another, and that is the way it will be until something changes.”⁴⁵ After Chase described this unruly event, the Chairman felt compelled to state that the purpose of the investigation was “for the good of this institution, for the benefit of the pupils, and for the school in general.” He warned the students “not to get the idea that Congress, or this commission of Congress, regards them as wholly blameless for this widespread insubordination.”⁴⁶ Thus the commission’s main goal was to learn what was happening in the school and how to fix it. The students testifying next simply reinforced Chase’s opinion of Friedman.

When one of the students, Edward Bracklin, complained about health conditions, he stated that he held Friedman responsible to keep the school clean. He illustrated his point by saying that around the gymnasium pipes there was “nothing but tobacco spit and dirt.”⁴⁷ Senator Harry Lane quickly reverted the attention to the students’ responsibility and lack of discipline by chewing tobacco in school, and asked whether the students could not regulate their conduct themselves. In a witty way, Bracklin responded, “The way we look at it that would be stepping over Mr. Friedman's head, taking the authority into our own hands.”⁴⁸ Bracklin’s statement implied that

⁴⁵ *Hearings*, 985, (statement of Hiram Chase, Student).

⁴⁶ *Hearings*, 986, (statement of Joe T. Robinson, Chairman).

⁴⁷ *Hearings*, 1004, (statement of Edward Bracklin, Student).

⁴⁸ *Hearings*, 1005, (statement of Edward Bracklin, Student).

students' relation with the superintendent had strained badly, and that they had lost hope on his ability to manage Carlisle.

The students seemed to agree that the only remedy to the school's problems was to fire Friedman. Another student, Zephaniah Simons reinforced the general sentiment among the student body when Representative John H. Stephens asked whether he believed that the superintendent could "restore order in the school and build it up?" Simons replied that Friedman "could not have any influence at all on the student body if he were to stay here. I think if he were to stay here it would be worse."⁴⁹ The students were convinced that Friedman had become intolerable and unresponsive to their needs. What was even worse, he allowed certain staff members to physically abuse the students for minor incidents of insubordination.

One example of such abuse, the case of Julia Hardin, attracted the attention of the commission, which spent a considerable time to learn the actual story. Hardin, an eighteen-year-old student, testified before the commission that in May of 1913, Miss Hannah Ridenour, the girls' quarter's matron, ordered her to go on a school outing. Hardin refused because she did not feel ready and did not have enough money to buy a trunk for her clothing. Ridenour reluctantly accepted her justification, but a month later she ordered Hardin once again. The girl still refused to go; after all, it was not mandatory, and although sometimes students benefitted from the outing experience, not everyone was eager to work, oftentimes, as a servant to white families in the townships or farms near Carlisle. This time, Ridenour did not want to accept Hardin's refusal. She called for the help of the school's band master Claude M. Stauffer. As the argument between Hardin and Ridenour escalated, Stauffer intervened by brutally beating Hardin, while the matron tried to keep her arms behind her back. John Whitwell, the principal teacher, came to

⁴⁹ *Hearings*, 1013, (statement of Zephaniah Simons, Student).

Hardin's help. He reproached both Stauffer and Ridenour, while at the same time urging Hardin that it would be in her best interest to go to the outing, which the girl eventually accepted.⁵⁰

Both Ridenour's and Stauffer's testimonies contradicted Hardin's account. They tried to show that Hardin had been an unruly student for some time, and that she refused to go to the outing partly because she had become infatuated with one of the boys. The commission did not seem to believe their version of the event. In fact, the chairman seemed to show anger at Stauffer for beating a young girl. Moreover, based on Linnen's report to the commission, Stauffer had obstructed the investigation, which confirmed Linnen's belief that he was indeed guilty.⁵¹

Although the chairman did not believe part of Stauffer's and Ridenour's accounts, he still asked their opinion on how to solve the school's problems. Ridenour claimed that there was a sort of conspiracy among the students and some of the staff, as she stated, "I feel positive that there is somebody influencing the children, both against me and Mr. Friedman. If you cannot find that out and remove it I do not think there is any remedy. That is what I feel."⁵² She did not question her methods but rather blamed the students. Moreover, she did not believe the students capable of initiating the protests against the superintendent, but rather needed an outsider's help.

The students were not the only ones to testify. Other staff members also testified, whereby they either supported or blamed Friedman for the conditions of the school. The art teacher, Angel De Cora-Dietz, although she acknowledged that she did not have any personal disputes with Friedman, stated, "A good many students complain of the treatment, and it hardly seems just to me sometimes."⁵³ Another teacher, Miss Hattie McDowell, expressed her discontent with Friedman, saying, "It seems to me we need a strong, upright, honest man for superintendent.

⁵⁰ *Hearings*, 1100-1106, (statement of Julia Hardin, Student).

⁵¹ *Hearings*, 1325.

⁵² *Hearings*, 1201, (statement of Hannah H. Ridenour, Matron).

⁵³ *Hearings*, 1108, (statement of Angel De Cora-Dietz, Teacher).

His greatest is in himself. At least it seems so to me; that every motive seems to be, ‘How will it affect the superintendent?’ and thus benefit the superintendent rather than the general welfare of the school.”⁵⁴ Those supporting Friedman, like the coach, the disciplinarian, the matron, and the school’s band director, either blamed the students or stated that he had been no worse than previous superintendents, if not, he had made a major positive impact on the school in general.

Friedman, himself, portrayed his work in the school as one of commitments and positive results. He argued that at the time of his arrival at Carlisle in 1908, he was “told to build up the school, which was in a rather run-down condition.”⁵⁵ Moreover, when he tried to institute further discipline and create an evening study hour, some teachers and students were displeased.

Friedman charged that John Whitwell “inspired the students with agitation.”⁵⁶ And as self-defense, Friedman stated:

If I had been unpopular with the students it would have been manifested the first year. If there had been such trouble or laxity of discipline it would have been manifested the first year, because one of the complaints against the former administration was laxity of discipline. But here was a condition that was fomented by employees on the campus, one of whom is assistant superintendent.⁵⁷

Despite Friedman’s early endeavors to build up the school, and ensure its academic and athletic success, he later focused on generating more revenue to publicize the school, rather than spending on the students’ well being. The students could have found support in some of the school’s staff, but they were the ones to initiate the hearings.

In light of students’ testimonies during the hearings, the commission acknowledged that conditions at the school were dreadful, but they were not willing to close Carlisle yet. Although in the 1910s, reformers had shifted their assimilation policies, and preferred public schools to

⁵⁴ *Hearings*, 1185, (statement of Hattie M. McDowell, Teacher).

⁵⁵ *Hearings*, 1247, (statement of Moses Friedman, Superintendent).

⁵⁶ *Hearings*, 1248, (statement of Moses Friedman, Superintendent).

⁵⁷ *Hearings*, 1249, (statement of Moses Friedman, Superintendent).

non-reservation boarding schools, the Office of Indian Affairs could not or did not want to close down Carlisle. In his 1914 report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells proudly stated that the number of Indian students in public schools had increased and surpassed the number of students in “all the Indian schools under the control of the Government.”⁵⁸ Despite this fact, Carlisle still figured as a prominent institution of Native American education.

Chapter 3: From Classroom to Battlefield

Some changes took place after the hearings. Both Friedman and Warner were dismissed.⁵⁹ Oscar H. Lipps replaced the former superintendent, and Albert Exendine, a Carlisle student, replaced the coach. Lipps reinstated more discipline and improved students' menus. Moreover, the school started publishing students' earnings in the outing to provide for more transparency. Sports games continued, but Lipps intended to keep football “subordinated to the educational features of the school.”⁶⁰ In fact, there was even talk of banning intercollegiate games, but not much came of it. In the meantime, extracurricular activities, like theater, literary debate societies, and religious groupings took a more prominent place in the school's newspaper. From these activities, we learn that students were very much aware of the war waging in Europe and found ways to contribute to relief efforts.

Students showed their support in various ways, either through moral or physical contributions. In November of 1916, students from the Standard and Invincible Literary societies organized a benefit entertainment for the Armenian people “who are in such dire need of help at this time.” The students raised \$54.80, and would send the money to the relief committee. As

⁵⁸ Cato Sells, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of Interior*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1914), 5.

⁵⁹ In an article of *The New York Times*, June 18, 1915, a year after the hearings, we learn that Moses Friedman was acquitted of embezzlement charges. Glenn Warner went to Pittsburgh University, and ended his coaching career in the 1930s at Temple University.

⁶⁰ “Football Ban at Carlisle,” *The New York Times*, December 4, 1915, 13.

pointed out in the article, this was not the only instance, as a year earlier students had held a benefit entertainment for the Belgian people. Carlisle students showed “a continued interest in the unfortunate people living in the smaller and weaker countries of Europe.”⁶¹ A few months later, in February 1917, a letter of a Carlisle graduate, who was fighting in an English regiment in Europe, appeared in the *Carlisle Arrow*. Lieutenant Sylvester C. Long-Lance expressed his impression of the war in poetry: “I’ve just come out of the trenches,/ Where we made the Germans dance,/ And I `m sending this greeting to let you know/ That he is still alive, Yours Truly, Lieutenant Long-Lance.”⁶² His letter would be one of the first to appear in the school’s paper, as more and more students enlisted in the war effort.

It was not until the April 20th issue of the *Carlisle Arrow* that the school explicitly emphasized the war efforts, and called for full emancipation for the American Indian.⁶³ The newspaper proudly posted pictures of students enlisted in the military. It also posted statements of President Woodrow Wilson calling on the nation, “The supreme test of the nation has come. We must all speak, act, and serve together.”⁶⁴ The paper continuously reminded its readers of Indians’ patriotism, which could only be compensated by granting full citizenship. Nonetheless, the students continued their activities in support for the war efforts.

After United States’ entry into the war, students spent a lot of time discussing the war. The debates during one of the last weeks of the term concentrated around questions such as “That the United States should wage aggressive war against Germany,” or “That the United States should adopt universal military service,” and “That during the war the Government should have charge

⁶¹ “Armenian-Syrian Benefit Entertainment,” *The Carlisle Arrow*, November 24, 1916, 4.

⁶² “Carlisle Graduate now an English Officer,” *The Carlisle Arrow*, February 9, 1917, 3.

⁶³ “An Emancipation Proclamation for the American Indian,” *The Carlisle Arrow*, April 20, 1917, 4.

⁶⁴ *The Carlisle Arrow*, April 20, 1917, 3.

of the food distribution.”⁶⁵ All of the debates ended in favor of the affirmatives. The school encouraged a patriotic mindset in the students, which the school’s newspaper reinforced.

The female students, for their part, kept raising funds for the Red Cross. On April 23, 1917, the finance committee of the Woman’s section of the Navy League of Carlisle school held a food sale on campus. The proceeds would “be used toward the purchase of materials for the use of the Red Cross in caring for the wounded soldiers and sailors.”⁶⁶ Moreover, as the girls prepared to leave for the summer, they would spent their last days making “table napkins, tray covers, and handkerchiefs,” which would be sent to the Red Cross for hospital use. Some others made “comfort bags” for the soldiers.⁶⁷ Their own classmates would probably use those bags, for on the same page the paper posted the names of twenty-seven students who had enlisted in the Army and Navy, and four of them had left before the end of the school year.⁶⁸

When students returned in the fall of 1917, the *Arrow* continued to post information about students’ enlistments. However, the growing numbers of students leaving for military service caused some anxiety not only in Carlisle, but also in schools around the country. In an October 1917 issue, the *Carlisle Arrow and Red Man* posted an article, whereby government officials, military leaders, and college presidents expressed their opinions on what American boys should do. To those asking questions of “Should I go back to school this fall? Shouldn’t I be doing something for my country in the war?” the officials replied: “Do both—go back to school; that will be a service to your country, the greatest you can give.”⁶⁹ The article, then, enumerated the reasons why the country needed skilled and educated people, for not only the way the war was fought demanded “mathematicians, skilled mechanics, electricians, aeronauts, seamen, chemists,

⁶⁵ *The Carlisle Arrow*, May 11, 1917, 6.

⁶⁶ “Indian School Branch of Navy League Raises Funds,” *The Carlisle Arrow*, April 27, 1917, 3.

⁶⁷ “Employees and Students Enthusiastic in Navy League Work,” *The Carlisle Arrow*, June 15, 1917, 5.

⁶⁸ “Carlisle Boys in the Army and Navy,” *The Carlisle Arrow*, June 15, 1917, 5.

⁶⁹ “The War Duty of Boys is to Return to School,” *The Carlisle Arrow and Red Man*, October 5, 1917, 9.

sanitation, experts, surgeons, business men,” but also once the war ended, those same people would be needed to rebuilt the country. The advice given to students was to not drop out of school. Nonetheless, the *Arrow* continued to publish letters of students “somewhere in France” or other military bases.

The war attracted some of Carlisle’s best students, both those who had graduated and those who were still enrolled. Gustavus Welch (Chippewa) had been one of Carlisle’s first honor students. He had played quarterback alongside Thorpe, had later graduated from Conway Hall, Dickinson Law School, and was accepted to a special program at Harvard University “to receive training from the French officers stationed there.”⁷⁰ He would later go to France under the 808th Pioneers regiment, and would remain there for several more months after the end of the war.⁷¹ By October, the first letter from France arrived at Carlisle. George Francis, “first class private Company C, 16th Engineers Ry., American Expedition Force,” assured the teachers and student body that, although he could not provide much information about his whereabouts, they should “take it for granted that [he was] well and still alive ‘somewhere in France’.”⁷² He also mentioned how he was able to play football with college students of his regiment, and that for the moment he was reading *Othello*, and taking classes in French. These letters, though, instead of keeping students in school, further idealized the war by suggesting that soldiers had an easy time in Europe.

Support for the war only increased from there. By November 1917, most of the students and employees had become members of the Red Cross branch of Carlisle, and news and photographs of students in the military covered many pages of the *Carlisle Arrow*. The statement that “Last year at this time it would have been impossible to imagine that in the short space of 12 months so

⁷⁰ “Lieut. Gustavus Welch,” *The Carlisle Arrow and Red Man*, October 5, 1917, 23.

⁷¹ Jenkins, *The Real All Americans*, 298.

⁷² “First Letter From France,” *The Carlisle Arrow and Red Man*, October 26, 1917, 2.

many of our boys would be scattered to the four ends of the world, in military service for Uncle Sam,” accompanied pictures of Isaac Willis, in the U.S. Kentucky, and of Andrew Conner, serving in the U.S. Cavalry, Fort Riley, Kansas.⁷³ A female graduate, Cora Elm also joined her classmates in Europe, as a nurse from the Episcopal Hospital of Philadelphia. In the newspaper announcement, the author expressed the “hope that while ‘over there’ Cora may, perhaps, learn something of ... Lieutenant Sylvester Long Lance,” whose latest news indicated that he had been ill in a London hospital.⁷⁴ The school continued to keep a close record of its students, even if they were somewhere in Europe.

Numerous students’ names and snippets of some of their letters appeared in the *Arrow*. Benedict Cloud wrote: “Hereafter you can have the pleasure of addressing me as Lieutenant Benedict Cloud. Have worked hard for my commission and feel pretty good about it now that I have it.” Louis Coons liked the army life because it reminded him of the school life. However, he felt lucky for unlike in Carlisle he did not have to drill in the army, as he was playing in the band. Herbert A. Pappin, on the other hand, was thankful that he had been a student at Carlisle for he had “learned how to drill with a gun and many other things that [were] helpful to one in the Army.” Peter Tarbell, writing from France, was happy to receive the *Arrow* issue for seniors.⁷⁵ Throughout 1918, similar letters kept arriving at Carlisle, most of them expressing the desire to come back and visit the school. But no one knew that Carlisle would soon expire.

During those last six months, the students in school read their former classmates’ letters, while continuing their own schoolwork and showing support for the soldiers. The students continued their debates in literary societies, as well as the football games. But students’ numbers had decreased substantially. The war even attracted Carlisle’s superintendent at the time, John

⁷³ “Carlisle Boys Respond to Country’s Call,” *The Carlisle Arrow and Red Man*, November 2, 1917, 3.

⁷⁴ “A Red Cross Nurse,” *The Carlisle Arrow and Red Man*, December 21, 1917, 2.

⁷⁵ “Carlisle’s Roll of Honor,” *The Carlisle Arrow and Red Man*, December 21, 1917, 6-10.

Francis Jr, who left in June 1918.⁷⁶ One month later, on July 9, Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker sent a letter to Secretary of Interior, Franklin K. Lane, stating, “We are greatly in need of hospital facilities at the present time. My attention has been drawn to the Carlisle Indian School, which, because of its far eastern location and remoteness from the centers of Indian population, might be available for this purpose.”⁷⁷ Lane agreed to the request.

In his annual report of June 30, 1918, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells wrote,

The United States Indian School at Carlisle, Pa., will not continue as an institution for the academic and vocational training of Indian boys and girls. ... The educational system of the Indian department will not suffer because of the abolishment of the Carlisle School, as the student body has been considerably depleted by enlistments in the Army and Navy.⁷⁸

Sells assured the public that the remaining students, about 200 of them, would be accommodated in other Indian or public schools, and that it should be considered as another sacrifice in the name of the war efforts. Thus ended Carlisle Indian Industrial School. The late nineteenth century wars between Indians and whites had provided the justification for its creation, taking Indians away from the battlefield and turning them into American citizens, through forced education. World War I had taken students from the classroom and sent them to battlefield to fight alongside the white men in the name of democracy and patriotism.

The main purpose of this form of education rested on the principle of turning Native Americans into full citizens. The Great War had seen the largest percentage of Native Americans, both from reservations and boarding schools, fighting in the war.⁷⁹ As a result, the US government finally enacted the Indian Citizenship Act in 1924, granting citizenship to all

⁷⁶ Bell, *Telling Stories Out of School*, 103.

⁷⁷ Newton Baker cited in *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 37.

⁷⁸ Cato Sells, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 36.

⁷⁹ For Native American's involvement in WWI see Thomas A. Britten, *American Indians in World War I: At Home and at War*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997); Susan A. Krouse, *North American Indians in the Great War*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

Native Americans, without any further conditions. Thus when news of the school's closing reached Pratt, he was not upset. In fact, he had stated earlier, "the whole purpose of the Carlisle school from the beginning was to make its pupils equal as individual parts of our civilization. This has always seemed to me the one great duty of the government towards them. Indian schools, as I have always contended, should be temporary."⁸⁰ Indeed, Carlisle was temporary, and Native Americans got their citizenship, however, the fight for a truly American Indian education system had just begun.

Conclusion

Despite its early seemingly success, Carlisle was the first non-reservation boarding school to close. Although Carlisle's closing did not provide a radical shift in overall Indian educational reform, it certainly marked the beginning of later major reforms that would lead to an increased "road to self-determination" and Indian self-regulation of the educational system.⁸¹ The first major shift occurred in the aftermath of the Meriam Report of 1928, whereby other non-reservation boarding schools closed, on the premise that assimilation policies had failed.⁸² The other major shift came in the late 1960s and early 1970s, whereby Native Americans took control of and directed their own education.⁸³ Nonetheless, talks of failure started much earlier for Carlisle. Although several factors led to the school's demise, such as its location in the East, reformer's shifting assimilationist attitudes, and finally, students' decision to join the military in

⁸⁰ Pratt, *The Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Its Origins, Purposes, Progress and the Difficulties Surmounted*, (Carlisle: Cumberland County Historical Society Publications, 1979), 55.

⁸¹ Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*.

⁸² See chapter three, "W. Carson Ryan: From the Meriam Report to the Indian New Deal," in Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*.

⁸³ See Jon Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004); K. Tsianina Lomawaima and Teresa L. McCarty, *To Remain an Indian: Lessons in Democracy from a Century of Native American Education*, (New York: Teachers College Press, 2006).

WWI, its closing, on the one hand, can be regarded as the informal acceptance of reformers' wrong policies; and on the other, Native Americans' own decision-making of their future.

Historians have likened Carlisle's founding to a continuation of the battle between Indians and the federal government. Pratt's own memoir of his service in the military and in the educational system made the link in the title of his work *Battlefield and Classroom*. The male students had to dress in military uniforms, and both boys and girls were subjected to military drills as part of their physical education. The students responsible for their classroom or boardroom received the title of officer. The concept of battle between Indians and whites extended to the football field as well, whereby both the students and the press at times saw the games as a battle between the races. Even a former teacher at Carlisle, Gertrude Bonnin (Zitkala Ša) referred to Carlisle's teachers as the "large army of white teachers," when talking about her own experience in the school.⁸⁴ Moreover, except for Friedman, all other superintendents of the school had been in the military. There certainly existed a very close link between the idea of battlefield and the classroom.

Battlefield could take different meanings for all the different actors. For Pratt, the battle lay in the Indians' efforts to assimilate and "Americanize" by suppressing their cultural environment. There was no other solution for him, who despite his aggressive methods, was highly respected among Native American leaders of the time. For the U.S. government and Office of Indian Affairs officials, the battle consisted of turning the Indians into docile subjects, who would pose no more threat to land reforms. For Native American students the battle was much more complex. Indeed, many students embraced the opportunities provided in school, others completely abhorred the place. Yet Carlisle had an impact on all their lives, whether for better or worse. They in turn, had an impact on Carlisle's life. Throughout the early twentieth

⁸⁴ Zitkala Ša, *American Indian Stories*, 95.

century, reformers had questioned Carlisle's existence several times; however, it was the students, who by choosing to join the military, gave the final blow to the school.

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