

**CLARA
W.
EDDY
?-1884**



**PIONEER
TEACHER
AT BOGGY
DEPOT**

Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians founded the town of Boggy Depot in 1837 after the Choctaws were removed from Mississippi and the Chickasaws from Alabama and relocated to Indian Territory. While the tribes lived together at first, the Chickasaws later emigrated to the western portions of Indian Territory and formed their own separate nation on land transferred to them by the Choctaws.

Boggy Depot, Choctaw Nation, included portions of today's Atoka, Coal, Hughes and Pittsburg counties. Reverend Cyrus Kingsbury, known as the "father of the missions" in Indian Territory, established the church in Boggy Depot in 1840. The church was the temporary capitol of the Choctaw Nation in 1859. During the Civil War, Boggy Depot became a major supply depot for the Confederates.

After the war, with Boggy Depot in the Choctaw Nation, many of the original Chickasaw settlers abandoned it. A small community formed two miles south was called New Boggy Depot with the former post office moved to the new location in March 1872. It was renamed Boggy Depot in December 1883.

Among the teachers who taught the day school at Old Boggy were Reverend Hamilton Balentine, J. L. Caldwell, Miss Sylvester and Miss Clara Eddy. Eddy, a graduate of the Emma Willard School in Troy, New York, was described as a "handsome woman with a brilliant mind". Originally from Illinois, she came to Tullahassee Mission, Creek Nation in 1852 under the auspices of the Presbyterian Board.

In 1854, she moved to the newly-established Wapanucka Academy, Chickasaw Nation, just north of Tishomingo. She taught the beginners and small girls in a log cabin room separate from the main building. Aside from regular classroom studies, she taught sewing, singing, and knitting. The school closed during the Civil War as the Confederates used it as a hospital and prison.

Miss Eddy transferred to Chuahla Seminary at Pine Ridge, Choctaw Nation, where Reverend Cyrus Kingsbury was superintendent. He had established the Pine Ridge Mission in 1836. The Choctaw Council established a school for girls, Chuahla Female Seminary, at the mission in 1842. When it closed at the start of the Civil War, Miss Eddy went to Little Rock, Arkansas, where she remained until 1866.

She returned to Boggy Depot to teach the children of Principal Chief Allen Wright and his wife Harriet, in whose home she lived. They named their daughter Clara Eddy Wright. Their son was privately tutored by Miss Eddy before he attended Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, Spencer Academy near Doaksville, and Union College in Schenectady, New York.

After the public schools in the Choctaw Nation re-opened in 1867, Miss Eddy taught for many terms at Boggy Depot, and later at Caddo for several terms. Miss Eddy, who never married, was a woman of "fine personality and great strength of character", exerting an influence for good and upright living that was never forgotten by her students. Her purpose as a teacher was to give a thorough understanding as far as the subject was pursued, stressing always Christian life and principles.

A beloved pioneer teacher at Boggy Depot, Miss Eddy had been a resident of Indian Territory for 32 years when she died on April 27, 1884. All that remains of Boggy Depot is the residence of Allen Wright, which is still preserved, and the old cemetery, where Miss Eddy is buried in the Wright family burial plot. This historic site also included the graves of Cyrus Kingsbury and Allen and Harriet Wright, and many others who worked for the advancement of Oklahoma.