As a careful observer of Cherokees, a southeastern tribe, from 1805 to 1821, Anna Rosina Gambold recorded her almost daily experiences among the Cherokees in a diary, while serving with her husband John Gambold at Springplace Mission, a site in present day northwestern Georgia. Born in 1761 in Bethlehem, she entered the Single Sisters’ Choir at the appropriate age and experienced a strong sense of community. Each Sister took on the cares of their fellow Sisters and unbosomed their hearts to their female superintendent or Vorsteherin. In 1788, she joined the newly founded (1785) Moravian Female Seminary for Young Ladies at Bethlehem. As teacher, the first class she held was in one of the fine arts, where she was the first instructor of painting. Furthermore, her penchant for all the arts surfaced, particularly her poetic talent. As a poetess, she was in demand for lovefeasts and other celebrations. In addition, she had learned the newly minted Linnean classification system, studied and taught plant life, and became one of


the most well known herbalists of her time. Her experiences at Bethlehem prepared the way for her future commitment to Indian tribes. Historian of American Indian tribes Moravian Bishop George Loskiel invited her in fall 1803 to accompany his wife Maria Magdelena (m.n. Barlach) and him to Moravian missions in Ohio.

They made a foray into interior America through Pennsylvania then across the three rivers into Ohio to the Ohio and the Tuscarawas rivers; this sojourn primed her for her fall 1805 three hundred mile trip from Salem (Wachovia) to Springplace, Georgia. As Loskiel's diarist and secretary, she used his notes and her own observations to chronicle their fall 1803 journey. Carefully describing terrain and people, Anna Rosina disclosed her innermost feelings: Her desire to meet the “Red People,” once feared by her, became her all consuming goal. At the Goshen Mission, Indians and Moravians greeted one another with kisses; Indians prepared fine lodging and food. She described

---

4 In 1817 traveling New Englander and Congregationalist minister the Reverend Elias Cornelius recommended that she publish her botanical contributions; Yale professor Benjamin Silliman's scientific journal published her article entitled: "A list of plants found in the neighborhood of Connasarga River, (Cherokee Country) where Springplace is situated" for the American Journal of Science (New York: J. Eastburn and Co., 1818, 1819), 245-251. A few years earlier, Lutheran minister and well known herbal collector, the Reverend Gotthilf Heinrich (Henry) Ernst Mühlenberg of Lancaster, PA, had gathered a number of Anna Rosina's Cherokee seeds and had them labeled for his Mühlenberg Herbarium now housed in the Academy of Natural Science of the American Philosophical Society (APS).

5 The Reverend Vernon Nelson of Bethlehem delivered a paper at the spring 2007 Moravian conference illuminating a possibility of Anna Rosina's botanical connection with the seminary and natural history cabinet in Barby, Germany.

6 (The work is attributed to Loskiel).

7 George Heinrich Loskiel, Extempore on a Wagon; a metrical narrative of a journey from Bethlehem, Pa., to the Indian town of Goshen, Ohio, in the autumn of 1803 (Lancaster, Pa.: S. H. Zahm, 1887), iii, iv, 1; 41.
her complete joy among those “brown ones, whom she loved,” that such joy “could not be moved.”

Likewise, Moravian reputation for humility, non-violence, and tolerance was well known among Connecticut, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania Indians. Moravians had

8 Loskiel, *Extimpore on a Wagon*, 41. Goshen, founded in October of 1798 by Zeisberger and his followers from Fairfield, Canada was located about seven miles northeast from Gnadenhütten, on the west bank of the Tuscarawas River Goshen Township, Tuscarawas County, Ohio. In 1824, the Goshen Indians left to join the Indian congregation at New Fairfield, Canada (iii).

garnered Indian esteem setting them apart from other Americans and evangelical societies and thus winning entry into Indian communities.\textsuperscript{10} So when Moravian mission enterprises caught the attention of early nineteenth century United States policy makers, the Salem congregation placed their emphasis on the Cherokees, who lived some three hundred miles away, and it was the principal missionary Anna Rosina whom they chose in fall of 1805 to educate Cherokee youth.

Though seemingly isolated in the lower reaches of the Appalachian Mountains, this particular Cherokee land faced unabated encroachment on their ancestral domains. Disquiet led Cherokee leaders to invite Moravian missionaries to dwell among them. As a bilingual, dissident religious group stemming from German heritage, Moravians agreed to instruct Cherokee young people English, not German. Expediency was central to Cherokee elders because they knew that their children faced a world far more

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure.png}
\caption{Figure Caption.}
\end{figure}

\begin{thebibliography}{10}
\bibitem{10} Rachel Wheeler, "Women and Christian Practice in a Mahican Village," in \textit{Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation} (Volume 13, no. 1): 30. Wheeler notes that even converted and friendly Indians lived at eighteenth century mission sites, but that was not the case at Springplace Mission, where all Cherokees, whether converted or not, did not live on the mission premises.

\textit{For discussions on the historical background of non-combatantcy, see Peter de Beauvoir Brock, The Political and Social Doctrine of the Unity of Czech Brethren in the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries} (The Hague: Moulton and Co., 1957), 46-81, 98, and 191; and Brock, \textit{Pacifism in Europe to 1914} (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), 36-41. During the German War of Liberation, many Moravians became imbued with nationalism and congregations in Saxony and Prussia officially abandoned their position on non-combat. In 1815, Prussia, now controlling all Saxon congregations, withdrew the grant of exemption and the Brethren registered no objection to the state. In 1818, the Pennsylvania Moravian stand on armed participation ended when that synod “officially withdrew the ban on members performing military service.” Whether to bear arms or take a conscientious objector’s position was left up to the individual. Somewhat later, the more conservative North Carolina Brethren adopted the position that allowed their young men to bear arms, Independence Day, July 4, 1831.

\end{thebibliography}
complicated and complex—a world filled with land hungry settlers poised ready to dislodge Indians from their hereditary territories.

Unlike most other settlers, Anna Rosina built trust among the Cherokees. Friendship with another culture translated into exchange and trade. Springplace Mission became a site of sharing foodstuffs, household wares, and cloth. Located about two hundred miles from the nearest port, Charlestown (South Carolina), the mission had to be fortified with enough food and practical commodities for numerous Cherokee visitors, Cherokee students who roomed and boarded, and for the missionaries themselves. Challenges abounded. Yet she won the hearts of Cherokees in making Springplace a successful pioneering community. In addition, Anna Rosina’s highly cultivated vegetable and herbal gardens, fields of hay and wheat, and peach and apple orchards attracted numerous Cherokee visitors, who sought herbs for healing purposes, herbal items used to bring success in Indian games as players passed by the mission frequently, forage for their horses and cattle, and vegetable products for indigents. Her herbal knowledge attracted national attention in the *American Journal of Science and Arts*.  

Between 1805 and 1821, she educated eighty five Cherokee students, sharing her extensive botanical knowledge, geographical skills, English, and Christianity. Her pupils represented highly profiled families such as the Hickses, Vanns, Ridges, Rattlinggoards, Shoreys, and Waties. Some of these pupils were related to the Ross family, whose legacy

---


is well known for the role John Ross played as Principal Chief from 1828 to 1866. He led his people through the tragic forced 1838-39 removal to Indian Territory.

Yet Cherokees persevered as a people and Anna Rosina's abiding faith in them as a people and Nation was one of her major contribution to their welfare; she was unswerving in her attitude toward preserving the Cherokee Nation. To early nineteenth century Moravians, land was not a commodity to be bought and sold; its intrinsic value transcended the secular world. Moreover, Anna Rosina was aghast at the ways the United States government allowed policy makers threatened and coerced Cherokees to vacate their ancestral lands: “The government of the United States is certainly disposed in a fatherly way to this poor nation, but has appointed, presumably in ignorance of them, men for this treaty [1818] as well as for its implementation whose hearts are not warm with love for their poor neighbors.”

Without these careful observations we would not have the insights that we have today about Cherokee worldview. Now as Anna Rosina as the spokesperson, we have her eyewitness accounts to usher in the historical voice of the once voiceless.

Anthropologist of Indian cultures Paul A.W. Wallace wrote about John Gottlieb Ernestus Heckewelder and exclaimed that here was a person, a missionary, whose reports are from a man who was there. Likewise, Anna Rosina was there among and for the Cherokees. Dissimilar cultures did come together at Springplace and they both extended

---


human relationships far beyond political parameters at a time when the wider society of the Early Republic was becoming less tolerant of diversity.

Submitted by:
Rowena McClinton, Professor, Department of Historical Studies,
Southern Illinois University
Edwardsville, Illinois