Indian chief. Correspondence (1879–1897); annual messages (1879–1882); speeches (1879–1887); an autobiography (1880); proclamations (1879–1885); and other papers (1879–1922) relating to political matters in which Bushyhead was involved as principal chief of the Cherokee Nation, 1879–1887, and as a representative to the Dawes Commission; and papers relating to the controversies growing out of the Cherokee Strip Livestock Association’s operations.

Biography:
For the Cherokee people the period during which Dennis Wolfe Bushyhead served as their Principal Chief was indeed ominous. The population of non-Indian intruders on Indian soil had burgeoned in the 1880's and their demands for land were unceasing. Poised on the borders of the Cherokee Outlet stood the "Boomers," who were eagerly awaiting the day when Cherokee lands would be opened. In the United States Congress a new movement to divide up the reservation among its people was gaining wide support. Not since the removal period did Cherokees face greater demands for them to relinquish title to their lands.

Bushyhead was born in Tennessee March 18, 1826. His father, the Rev. Jesse Bushyhead, was one of the earliest Baptist missionaries among the Cherokee people. His mother, Eliza Wilkinson, was a Cherokee woman from Georgia. Bushyhead attended mission schools in Tennessee and North Carolina. In 1838 he and his family followed the "nunadat-sunyi" -- trail where they cried -- to the Indian Territory.

Bushyhead's education, although broken, was thoroughly imbued with Protestant ideals. He finished his secondary schooling under missionaries at Park Hill, near Tahlequah. In 1840 he was sent to college in New Jersey.

After completing his education in 1844, Bushyhead returned to the Cherokee Nation and established a mercantile business. A short time later he began to dabble in politics. In 1848 he was elected clerk of the Cherokee National Committee. His political ambitions were cut short the very next year, for the lust for California gold had overcome his ardent Cherokee nationalism.

He spent the next 18 years in California, returning to the Cherokee Nation in 1868. Bushyhead renewed both his mercantile business and his political aspirations. In 1871 he was elected treasurer of the Cherokee Nation. He held that position for eight years. Bushyhead was elected Principal Chief in fall of 1879.
For the next eight years Bushyhead served as Chief. He was accredited with freeing the Nation from debt and bringing its currency to par with that of the United States. His eloquence before Congress and his writing abilities were said to have been a great factor in the exemption of the Five Civilized Tribes from the General Allotment Act of 1887.

After his two terms were completed Bushyhead continued to serve the Nation. He served as one of the three commissioners who negotiated the sale of the Cherokee Strip. Later he served as the chairman of the commission that carried on negotiations with Dawes Commission. His committee was abolished in late 1897. On February 4 of the next year he died, at the time of his death, one of the Nation's most respected elder statesmen.

Bushyhead's papers, in the Western History Collections at the University of Oklahoma, consist primarily of documents written while he served as Principal Chief. Although not definitive in a single area, the papers provide a view of the Chief's relations with the National Council. His ideas were in tune with the "Progressive" era in the United States. During his tenure in office he recommended gun control laws, medical practice standards, control of drugs and strict prohibition. In addition to his executive correspondence and speeches, there are a number of editorials clipped from contemporary newspapers. These contain information concerning the Chief's allies and opposition.

**Box 1 Correspondence**


27. Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Suggestion that commission be set up to meet with J. G. McCoy, November 29, 1880.


35. Bushyhead to Council. Request to act on appropriation for public schools, December 9, 1880.

36. Bushyhead to Senate. Request for action on accounts for individuals accrued during "Creek difficulty.", December 9, 1880.

37. Bushyhead to Senate. Transmission of communication from the Board of Education concerning claim of Ellie Morgan, December 10, 1880.


40. Bushyhead to Senate. Nomination of O. P. Brewer and George O. Sanders as Commissioner to the North Carolina Cherokees.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>Bushyhead, Porter et. al. to Congress of the United States. Protesting the granting of right of way to railroad through Indian Territory. (From <em>Cherokee Advocate</em>, February 9, 1881).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>Bushyhead to Congress of the United States. Concerning payment for lands west of the Arkansas River, February 1, 1881.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>H. C. Reed to John T. Drew, forwarded to Bushyhead. Concerning criminal trial at Council Ground Hill, May 23, 1881.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>Bushyhead to Senate. Recommending action on account of G.H. Benge, November 30, 1881.</td>
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<tr>
<td>52.</td>
<td>Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Concerning a petition from citizens of the saline District for relief, December 3, 1881.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
56. Bushyhead to National Council. Calling extra session in order to act on certain appropriations, December 12, 1881.


61. Bushyhead to Senate. Concerning accounts of Samuel Sixkiller and Mrs. J. D. Doser, December 16, 1881.


64. Bushyhead to all District Sheriffs. Orders concerning liquor violations. (*Cherokee Advocate*, September 15, 1882), September 1882.

65. Ignatius Caleb and Joseph McCoones, Munsee & Chippewa Indian delegates from Kansas to Bushyhead. Concerning emigration into the Cherokee Nation.


76. Bushyhead to Council. Presentation of a bill to prevent the monopoly of the public domain, December 13, 1882.

Box 2 Correspondence

77. Bushyhead to Senate. Explanation for not signing the bill entitled "An Act in Relation to the Cherokee Domain west of 96°", No date.

78. Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Extra session concerning the delegates in Washington, Lands, tribes, funds, etc, April 30, 1883.


80. Bushyhead to Senate. Requesting an appropriation to defend the Nation against a timber suit, May 3, 1883.

81. Bushyhead to Senate. Return of bill authorizing Intruders and Claimants to sell improvements in common domain, May 16, 1883.

82. Bushyhead to Senate. Return of bill entitled "An Act providing for the payment of the balance due on lands west of 96 per capita.", May 18, 1883.


85. Bushyhead to Senate. Appointment of Charles Starr as High Sheriff of Cherokee Nation, November 14, 1883.

86. Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Appointment of an interpreter for commission applying for pensions, November 15, 1883.
Bushyhead to Council. Suspension of L. W. Shirley from office of Tahlequah District Judge, November 23, 1883.


Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Revenue report, November 24, 1883.

Bushyhead to Senate. Transmittal of Board of Education's invitation to celebrate Thanksgiving at Male Seminary.

Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Claim of D. H. Ross for services of his father in 1853 as delegate on Indian treaties, November 27, 1883.


Bushyhead to National Council. Funds for artificial limbs, stationery and admittance of family to citizenship, December 5, 1883.

Bushyhead to National Council. Request for contingent fund to defray expenses of Executive Department, December 6, 1883.

Bushyhead to National Council. Concerning claim made by certain citizens for $348.00, December 6, 1883.

Bushyhead to Senate. Nomination of Wallace Ross and W. B. Breedlove for the offices of Stewards of the Male and Female Seminaries, December 8, 1883.

Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Appropriation bills, December 10, 1883.


Bushyhead to Senate. nomination of J. G. Schrimpsher and L. B. Bell as delegates to Washington, December 12, 1883.

Bushyhead to National Council. Leasing of Outlet, December 12, 1883.

Bushyhead to National Council. Increase of confirmation for the services of the Medical Superintendents of the Seminaries and Orphan Asylum, December 12, 1883.

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<tr>
<td>103.</td>
<td>W. T. Adair to Bushyhead. Request for medical supplies from Seminaries and Orphan Asylum, December 12, 1883.</td>
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<tr>
<td>105.</td>
<td>Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Membership of delegation to be three men instead of two, December 14, 1883.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106.</td>
<td>Bushyhead to United States Congress. Memorial concerning Cherokee land title (from the <em>Cherokee Advocate</em>, March 20, 1884), No date, 1884.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107.</td>
<td>Bushyhead to Jesse Cochran, Sheriff of Cooweeskowee District. Laws regarding cattle seizure, July 8, 1884.</td>
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**Box 3 Correspondence**

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<tr>
<td>114.</td>
<td>Bushyhead to Senate. Objections to the bill to regulate the employment of non-citizen labor in the Cherokee Nation, November 3, 1885.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115.</td>
<td>Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Finances, education etc. (from the <em>Cherokee Advocate</em>, November 12, 1885), November 1885.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116.</td>
<td>Lucien B. Bell to Bushyhead. Presentation of account for services rendered while serving as Cherokee delegate to the Creek Nation, November 25, 1885.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
118. Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Concerning L. B. Bell and justifying the presence of a Cherokee delegate at the International Convention, November 30, 1885.


121. Bushyhead to Senate. Requesting that the vacant seat on the Supreme Court be filled, December 3, 1885.

122. Bushyhead to Senate. Reasons for returning bill entitled "An Act providing for the payment of the money received as tax for stock grazing upon the Cherokee lands west of 96, per capita." December 3, 1885.

123. Lucien B. Bell to Bushyhead. Submission of Senate bill entitled "An Act to create a joint Commission on Citizenship to try and settle claims on Cherokee citizenship." Reasons for the bill being submitted late, December 5, 1885.

124. Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Concerning a written report to be given for the purpose of explaining conditions of relations with the U.S. government, December 5, 1885.

125. Bushyhead to Senate. Pending claims for Cherokee citizenship as one reason for calling special session, December 7, 1885.


127. Bushyhead to Senate. Concerning a bill pending in the Senate to act as a substitute for the writs of ejectment in force at that time, December 8, 1885.

128. Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Concerning account of William S. Drew, who was ordered by Judge Parker to produce a prisoner on a writ of Habeas Corpus, December 9, 1885.

129. Bushyhead to Senate. Concerning the appointment of a U. S. agent, December 12, 1885.

130. Bushyhead to National Council. Submission of request for action on carrying deadly weapons in the Cherokee Nation, December 12, 1885.
131. Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Requesting the return of documents, December 12, 1885.


133. Bushyhead to Rabbit Bunch. Bushyhead in Washington with delegation. Concerning bills pending in U.S. Congress. (From the Cherokee Advocate, April 2, 1886)

134. Bushyhead to editor of the Washington Herald. Concerning clarification of an article on Cherokee lands. (From the Oklahoma War Chief, April 15, 1886), March 31, 1886.

135. Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Concerning the Southern Kansas Railway Company and its attempt to construct a road through the Cherokee Nation, April 12, 1886.


137. Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Concerning stock grazing in the Outlet, April 14, 1886.


140. Bushyhead to National Council. Concerning the patent on Cherokee lands, April 19, 1886.

141. Bushyhead to Senate. Appointment of T. A. Scales and D. M. C. Duncan to "revise and codify all existing laws" of the Cherokee Nation, April 21, 1886.


143. Bushyhead to National Council. Concerning claims for citizenship, April 26, 1886.


146. Bushyhead to National Council. Transmittal of claims of heir of Bluford West, November 27, 1886.

147. Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Unfinished business from regular session, December 6, 1886.


151. Bushyhead to National Council. Concerning the lack of copies of the laws of the Nation. Recommendation to make a compilation of all the Cherokee laws, December 18, 1886.


153. Bushyhead to Senate and Council. Concerning the destruction by fire of the Cherokee Female Seminary, May 9, 1887.


156. Bushyhead to D. W. C. Duncan. Endorsement of Liberal Party platform. (From the *Cherokee Telephone*, June 11, 1891)

157. Bushyhead to Dr. M. Frazee. Liberal party platform and allotment issue. (From the *Cherokee Telephone*, June 18, 1891), June 2, 1891.


**Box 4 Speeches and Proclamations**
159. Platform speech made while running for office of Principal Chief in 1879. From the *Indian Journal*, July 31, 1879.


161. Thanksgiving proclamation, November 25, 1879. From the *Cherokee Advocate*, November 26, 1879.


163. Thanksgiving proclamation, November 1880. From the *Cherokee Advocate*, November 17, 1880.

164. Third annual message of D. W. Bushyhead. Delivered at Tahlequah; November 9, 1881. From the *Cherokee Advocate*, November 9, 1881.


166. Speech of D. W. Bushyhead delivered upon reelection, November 7, 1883. From *Indian Chieftain*, November 16, 1883.


169. Proclamation in honor of President U.S. Grant, upon his death in 1885. Delivered July 30, 1885. From the *Indian Chieftain*, August 6, 1885.

170. Special address concerning the destruction of the Female Seminary. May 9, 1887.

**News-Clippings**

171. Editorial on the annual message of November 1879. The *Cherokee Advocate*, November 26, 1879.

172. Editorial on the message concerning finances and Bushyhead himself. The *Cherokee Advocate*, November 17, 1880.


177. Editorial concerning Bushyhead and the Cherokee Outlet. The *Oklahoma War Chief*, April 15, 1886.


**Biographies and Obituaries**

196. Autobiography written in the 1880's.


