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The Rise and Fall of Protestant Missions
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Lost—Without Shadows
The Rise and Fall of Protestant Missions in the Western Great Lakes Region 1800-1854

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ABSTRACT

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In The Western Great Lakes Region
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The purpose of this thesis is to bring together under one cover the data concerning Protestant missions and missionaries in the Western Great Lakes region in the first half of the 1800s—or until the last removal in 1854. These dates are not artificial, since the establishment of missions followed the westward movement of the frontier. In most cases the missions were closed as treaties and removal policies forced native people from their lands. Although many missions as far west as Minnesota are included, the study encompasses only the missions established among Eastern Woodland tribes. Missions to the Sioux are not treated in this work.

The paper concludes that the Protestant missions in the western Great Lakes region were relatively shortlived and generally unsuccessful. Yet while some of their histories seem almost inconsequential, they reflect the religious spirit of the age and Americans' perception of the nation they were shaping. The missionaries who directed them varied from unbending managers to empathetic souls struggling with the consequences of empire-building. In every case they were ethnocentric, lost in a culture they did not understand and facing the moral dilemma larger than any Goliath. It was a battle they could not win.

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The Mission Enterprise

In 1814 two young men published *A Correct View of that Part of the United States Which Lies West of the Allegheny Mountains With Regard to Religion and Morals.* A firsthand view might have been a better term. The men, Samuel J. Millls and John F. Schermerhorn, had just returned from a long journey into Kentucky and the Northwest Territory. Their motivation was religious. Burning with missionary zeal, they hoped to prove that the frontier was ripe for missionary work.

Schermerhorn was especially concerned with the Indian population in the western Great Lakes area. He concluded that there were about 19,220 native "souls" east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio River to the Great Lakes. These included, "Wyandots, Shawnoes, Putawatamies, Delawares, Miamies, Kickapoos, Kaskaskias, Piorras, Winebagoes, Menomene, and Chippeways." [1]

Mills concentrated on the work of various denominations on the frontier. He felt that the Presbyterians had the most intelligent and educated missionaries in the western Great Lakes area, and not surprisingly, were "the most ready to support schools."[2] At the opposite pole were the Baptists, at least according to Mills. Not only were Baptist preachers and missionaries on the frontier generally uneducated, they belittled education. Utmost to them was

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[1] *A Correct View* included Schermerhorn's special report "for propagating the gospel among the Indians." His listings of the tribes included numbers and locations. See his report in John F. Schermerhorn's and Samuel J. Mills' *A Correct View of the Part of the United States Which Lies West of the Allegheny Mountains With Regard to Religion and Morals* (Hartford, 1814), 4 ff.

[2] Schermerhorn and Mills, 37-38.

that their people be led by the Holy Spirit, something that certainly could be done without any formal training.

In the middle of the road were the Methodists. Mills saw the Methodists as being generally uninformed about doctrine. But these people, he felt, had the best system of domestic mission in America. A Methodist missionary would gather a core of people and start a church. The natural leaders would be left in charge of the church, while the missionary rode on to establish another group in another place. From time to time, he would return and visit the churches begun. Thus, the Methodist preachers or missionaries were circuit riders, ministering to small churches in an often extensive region.[3]

Although some Protestant missionaries worked among settlers and Indians before 1814, Mills and Schermerhorn's report marked the beginning of a flurry of mission work by Protestant societies among the Woodland Indian people of the western Great Lakes area. Schermerhorn noted, in fact, that the Moravians and Quakers had missions in Ohio and Indiana respectively, and that Presbyterian missionaries had "met with considerable success" with the Wyandots in northwestern Ohio.[4] But after the War of 1812 to about 1854 when the majority of Indian people had finally been removed to lands further west, a number of Protestant mission societies worked vigorously to bring Christianity to the 19,000 souls in Schermerhorn's report. In addition to the denominations mentioned by Mills, these missionaries were sent by Episcopalian, Congregationalist, or Lutheran societies, or by interdenominational groups such as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the American Missionary Association.

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[3] For a colorful explanation of the Methodist circuit rider system, see Jerald C. Brauer, *Protestantism in America* (Philadelphia: The Westminister Press, 1953). 138-139.

[4] Schermerhorn & Mills, 4.

To a great extent the establishment of missions in the Indian lands of this western Great Lakes area spread geographically from east to west and chronologically from the early 1800s to the 1850s. In the early 1800s most of the Protestant missions were located in northwestern Ohio and lower Michigan. By the 1830s and 1840s these missions were closing, however, and most of the missionary activity was located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Wisconsin, and northeastern Minnesota. By 1850 mission work was confined only to the northernmost areas. Altogether, various Protestant missionary societies established and subsequently closed more than thirty missions in this western Great Lakes area in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The rise and subsequent fall of the missions kept pace with the opening and closing of the western frontier. As settlers clamored for lands, thousands of Indians were forced to reservations west of the Mississippi River. The Indian people of northwestern Ohio which included Delaware, Seneca, and Wyandot or Huron people who had already been driven from their homes in the East, were forced west again. By the 1830s the Ottawa and the Potawatomi of lower Michigan were forced north or westward, and the Ojibwa of northern Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota gradually lost their lands in the 1840s and 1850s. Missions, as a result, were often short-lived simply because white settlers arrived, took Indian lands, and pushed the Indian people on. Indian missions could not exist where there were no Indians.

What motivated the Protestant denominations to engage in the business of establishing missions in a region where Christianity had been preached only by French priests?[5] One explanation is that missions were a natural outcome of renewed religious vigor in American Protestant churches in the early

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[5] Jesuit priests first came to the western Great Lakes area in the mid-1600s and continued their work for more than a century.

1800s. Churches urged their members to exercise their faith by trying to convert the unconverted. At the same time, the newly converted were given a charge to bring others to the faith. There was, in short, a new emphasis on a Christian's responsiblity to save the lost.

The idea that Christians must "do something" about their own and others' salvation worked at all levels of society. The revivals and camp meetings of the period dealt largely with the uneducated on a purely emotional level. But the leaders of those meetings were spurred by religious thinkers in the eastern seminaries.

William Sweet credits Samuel Hopkins as the "father of American Missions."[6] Believing that Christ died for all men, Hopkins concluded that holiness came not from placing one's own happiness as one's goal for life, but from becoming involved in "disinterested benevolence," or concern with the greatest good and happiness of the whole. The theology of disinterested benevolence, Sweet says, "perhaps more than any other furnished the incentive for the formation of the first organized agencies to lead the advance against the powers of ignorance and darkness throughout the nation, particularly on the frontier. . .."[7]

Samuel J. Mills was one of the young theologians inspired to lead such an advance. On a sultry day in the summer of 1806 a thunderstorm in Massachusetts sent Mills and a small group of his young college friends scurrying for shelter under a haystack. While waiting for the storm to subside, they

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[6] Hopkins was a Yale-educated theologian whose career extended from 1743 to 1803. A protege of Jonathon Edwards, Hopkin's docrtine, Hopkinsianism, was a simpler version of Edward's Calvinism. Henry Warner Bowdin, *Dictionary of American Religious Biography* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977), 217-218.

[7] William Warren Sweet, *Religion in the Development of American Culture, 1765-1840* (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1952), 235.

talked about the possibilities of spreading Christianity among the heathen people of the world. Together they prayed and vowed in secret to devote their lives to missionary work.

When Mills and his friends graduated from college, most went on to Andover Seminary. There they met several others who shared the same fervent desire to spread the Christian message of salvation in heathen lands where people would perish without the knowledge of the Christian gospel. In 1810 the Andover students met with the General Association of Massachusetts, a group of evangelically-minded Congregational ministers, urging the formation of a foreign mission society and offering themselves as missionaries. The result of the meeting was the founding of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, or ABCFM.

Although the ABCFM began with an eye toward foreign missions, it also came to include missions among the American Indians. With their study, *A Correct View*, Mills had a part with Schermerhorn in convincing the organization to direct some of its efforts to Indians.[8] But it is the contention of R. Pierce Beaver that many Protestant leaders were ready to consider mission work among Indians in a way they had not been possible before. Since the threat of Indian attack was now only a vague memory in the minds who lived in the settled East, it was easier to muster compassion for the natives whose lands had been confiscated. The guilt from the wrongs inflicted upon the Indians was beginning to weigh on the minds of thoughtful Americans. Giving them Christianity, according to Beaver, was to give them restitution.[9]

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[8] Mills' dream, like most young missionaries of the time, was to go to some foreign land. Poor health forced him to stay at home, however, and he thus turned his interest to missionary work in America.

[9] R. Pierce Beaver, *Church, State, and the American Indian* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), 62.

While religious leaders built the spiritual foundation for missions, government officials began to see the practical value of such missions. Henry Knox, Secretary of War under George Washington, also envisioned a civilization program for Indians that would be carried out by Christian missions. In a report to President Washington, Knox said that the missionaries "should be made the instruments to work on the Indians. . .. They should be their friends and fathers. Such a plan, although it might not fully effect the civilization of the Indians, would most probably be attended with the salutary effect of attaching them to the interest of the United States."[10] Knox did not endorse, however, teaching Christianity in schools that might be set up by the government.

Because of battles with the Indians in the Northwest Territory and the War of 1812, there were few attempts to establish a working policy between the United States Government and mission societies until 1816. At that time Cyrus Kingsbury, a ABCFM missionary, convinced President James Madison that the establishment of schools would be a way to repay some of the wrongs done to the native people. Kingsbury's plan asked that the federal government provide funds for buildings and farm supplies only. Missionary teachers would not receive any wages for their work—at least from the government. Over two decades later, Kingsbury began the partnership with the government that Knox had once planned.

A formal, far-reaching policy that united missions and government took place with the passage of the Civilization Fund in 1819. The bill appropriated $10,000 to responsible agencies who would engage in the education of the Indians, responsible agencies being mission societies who had to some extent

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[10] Knox in Beaver, 64.

already begun the work. Government monies, of course, provided a great impetus to various plans of mission societies. From the government point of view, it was an economical way to hire honest, devoted, and enthusiastic workers.

Although the greatest number of missions established and those most often referred to were among the Southeastern tribes, the Civilization Fund did help the growth of missions in the western Great Lakes area. Nearly all the missions in northwestern Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota benefitted from government monies. At the same time the missions also suffered from government policy, as the removal policies established by President James Monroe in 1825 and heightened by Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Bill of 1830 made any kindness shown by missionaries seem hypocritical. In the words of Beaver, "the government set out to destroy with its left hand all that it had sought to achieve with the right. The cause of civilization, so loudly acclaimed, was retarded by removal."[11]

But while the partnership was at its peak, the cooperation of missionaries and government symbolized strong forces at work—the partnership of religion and government. In *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville was struck with how political theory and religious doctrine were interwoven in America's democracy. British colonists, Tocqueville said, "brought with them into the New World a form of Christianity which I cannot better describe by styling it democratic and republican religion. This contributed powerfully to the establishment of a republic and a democracy in public affairs; and from the beginning, politics and religion contracted an alliance which has never been

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[11] Beaver, 90.

dissolved."[12] In short, it was not only a very practical idea for missionaries to work with the government, it was a natural union philosophically.

In the same way, many Americans believed that Christianity was an integral part of the civilizing process which the native people must undergo. They would, of course, have to give up their unsettled lives of hunting and fishing and become farmers. As early as 1793 Congress authorized President Washington to give Indians farm animals and farm tools by passing a Trade and Intercourse Act. It was believed, according to Roy Harvey Pearce, that civilization would come naturally as Indians settled into farming. "Americans," Pearce said, "had always felt that the process of acculturation . . .would be relatively simple. To be civilized the Indian would have merely to be made into a farmer. . .. Christianization would follow inevitably; perhaps Christianization itself was the way to civilization." [13]

Methodist missionary John Pitezel who worked in Michigan's Upper Peninsula fervently believed that Christianization and the civilizing process must go hand in hand. He reminded his readers that there was more to bringing the Gospel to Indians than saving souls. "One other motive should prompt us to duty here," Pitezel said. The Indian "must be elevated by means of a Christian civilization, or he must become extinct at no distant day. His fisheries are monopolized by others, and his hunting-grounds have been mostly destroyed. He can live but little longer by the chase. He never can become truly civilized without the entering wedge of Christianity."[14]

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[12] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America, V. I* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945), 300.

[13] Roy Harvey Pearce, *The Savages of America* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1965), 66.

[14] John Pitezel, *Lights and Shades of Missionary Life* (Cincinnati: The Western Book Concern, 1857), 419.

Thus, the missionaries who set out to the western Great Lakes region to bring Christianity to the old Woodland families had lofty goals before them. They were working for God and country and a race they believed was nearing extinction. They were part of a grand nation that had extended its boundaries all the way to the Pacific Ocean and had proved its sovereignty once and for all by defeating Great Britain in the War of 1812. No doubt caught in the nationalistic spirit of the day, they were helping the government carry out a civilization plan that would improve life for all people. On a humanitarian level, they were reaching out to a people who had only one road left to them—the road of civilization and Christianity. Spiritually, the missionaries were working for the glory of God, reaching out to souls who not only had suffered gross mistreatment at the hands of Americans, but who were bound to suffer eternally without the knowledge of Christ.

With such goals before them, it is easy to understand that a missionary's work was a heroic effort to say the least. "Yes, I say, we are indebted to these men for this reformation," wrote James Gilruth after observing a mission in Ohio in 1826. From Gilruth's perspective the missionaries had already "not only taught the poor bewildered Indians the way to God, but by their example taught them the way to live. To these men, under God, the praise is due. . .." [15]

A doctor in northern Wisconsin clearly saw this heroic status in missionary Lenorad H. Wheeler who served in that area. "His primary object," the doctor wrote about Wheeler, "was to preach Christ, but he saw clearly that the Indian must be civilized or exterminated. When unscrupulous and grasping men were to rob and wrong the Red men, his watchful eye and sound judgment saw the danger and, like the old cavilier [sic] without fear and

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[15] *The Methodist Magazine*, V. IX, (New York, 1826) 195.

without reproach, he raised his voice and used his pen for their defence [sic]. His intercession in their behalf was usually productive of essential good, for those that knew him knew that truth and justice were at his back, and that it was not safe to take up the gauntlet against so unselfish a champion. It was not for himself that he pleaded but for those who could not defend themselves."[16]

In evaluating an earlier Moravian mission in Michigan that had not been successful, John E. Day still saw the heroism in its failure. If we were to judge the Moravians by what they accomplished, he tells us, "we shall arrive at an unjust and altogether unsatisfactory conclusion, for the results of their efforts were meagre in the extreme, only a few of the old men and squaws yielding to the influence of their teaching. But if we think of the grandeur of the attempt to plant christian civilization among the Indian inhabitants of the wilds of Michigan, under the most unfavorable conditions, and a a most unpropitious season. . .we shall arrive at a more just estimate of the nobility of the enterprise and what it cost."[17]

The Moravian mission did not last, like the other Protestant missions that followed. They often closed, as was stated earlier, because the Indians were forced from the region. But the missions also failed, even in the eyes of their staunchest supporters. They failed in their attempt to plant Christian civilization, as Day had said.

While Day saw a certain glory in a failed mission, not everyone shared his point of view. Their inability to bring about marked changes among the Woodland people held tremendous disappointment for some missionaries. If they left a mission with a sense of failure, they did not seemed to be inclined

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[16] J. N. Davidson, *In Unnamed Wisconsin* (Milwaukee, 1895), 1965.
[17] John E. Day, "The Moravians in Michigan," *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections V. XXX*, 44.

to view the stituation as one where they personally were not well-suited for the task. Neither did they seem to wonder if the entire Indian question needed to be reevaluated with new approaches developed. Rather they often blamed the native people themselves for being too lazy or too savage.

Some missionaries blamed their lack of success on the influence of "bad" whites. Baptist missionaries such as Isaac McCoy, for example, fervently believed that Indians should be moved far from white civilization to be protected from evil whites. (McCoy's ideas are discussed in more detail on pages 33 and 34.) Reverend Abel Bingham recorded his conflict with Chief Red Jacket and a white lawyer who defended the Indian leader's right to keep missionaries from Indian lands. "Here again we can see," Bingham reminisced, "how readily educated infidelity and heathenish paganism can unite their forces against evangelical Christianity."[18] Other missionaries, in exhaustion, simply gave up and went on to different and more fulfilling fields—often leaving a mission to deteriorate and close.

The missionaries failed in their attempts for reasons they were likely unable to discern from their perspective. They expected to convert the Indians to Christianity and turn them into civilized American farmers simply and quickly. But what they found was a native people deeply rooted in their own religion and way of life that had served them long and well. The Indians did not convert to Christianity in large numbers, and those who did convert often tended to blend the new teachings with their old beliefs. They did not view the missionaries' arrival as a golden opportunity to change of lifestyle, including language, dress, and division of labor. The missionaries' expectations of such a

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[18] "Sketches of the Life of Rev. Abel Bingham," *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections V. II*, 151.

cultural transformation were both arrogant and naive.[19] Making the Indians fulltime farmers was again unrealistic. While some native people did create farms, farming simply was not a viable way to earn a living in the northern parts of the region.[20]

Another contributing factor to their lack of success was the Protestants' disunity at the national level. In the beginning of the century, Protestants made noble attempts to work together in a number of areas, including missions. The Plan of Union formed in 1801, for example, made it possible for Presbyterians and Congregationists to be connected to each other and for congregations to be served by ministers of either denomination. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, begun by the Congregationalists in 1810, had members from Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed churches by 1816. The United Foreign Missionary Society of 1816 included Presbyterian, Reformed, and Associate Reformed, while the American Home Missionary Society, begun in 1826 largely by Presbyterians to help weak churches on the frontier, was soon helped by Congregationalists. It seemed to many that the mission field was so immense that only through cooperation could the church hope to reach the many souls in need.

The cooperation did not last. Gradually the Presbyterian denomination was plagued by controversy. On one side were the conservative members who clung to a strict Calvinistic philosophy. The other side consisted of members influenced by the Congregationalists and the liberalizing elements of frontier

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[19] One of the best and most quoted studies on this subject is Robert F. Berkhoffer, Jr., *Salvation and the Savage* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky, 1965).

[20] Keith Widder's "Together As Family" (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 1989) portrays the dilemma of a people well suited to the fur trade, a business that was morally harmful from the missionary point of view and deteriorating from an economic standpoint.

churches. In 1837 the problems came to a head and the old school Presbyterians denounced the Plan of Union, the American Home Missionary Society, and the ABCFM and established a mission society composed only of Presbyterians with old school beliefs. Further dividing the Presbyterians was the issue of slavery that began to be debated regularly by the 1830s. The new school Presbyterians were divided again between congregations in the North and South. Another disruption came from a group of New school Presbyterians and Congregationalists at Oberlin College in Ohio. Those missionaries influenced by the "Oberlin theology" formed the American Mission Association which established missions in northern Minnesota.

The spirit of cooperation that marked the beginning of the century had all but disappeared by the 1830s. Rivalry was intense among Protestant denominations, and the idealism that sent many missionaries into the field sometimes was overcome by the competition to win souls. At times the Indians seemed to be important to missionaries only as scores on some imaginery salvation scoreboard that pitted Lutherans against Methodists against Presbyterians. The denominations often represented class divisions which even Indian converts reflected.[21] "Natives," says Martin Marty, "reproduced some of the subtler features of Christian disunity. Mixed-bloods of better education and moderately high status became part of the upper-class church groups while full-bloods and those who had had fewer opportunities to advance themselves joined the simpler, ore primitive, lower-class white churches."[22] In short, the Protestants seemed to lose sight of the noble causes that once inspired them.

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[21] For a discussion of these divisions see Colin Goodykoontz, *Home Missions on the American Frontier* (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Press, 1939), 232.

[22] Martin E. Marty,*Righteous Empire* (New York: The Dial Press, 1970) 10-11.

Also plaguing Protestants on every front was their fear of Catholicism. This fear was spurred in the 1830s with an influx of Catholic immigrants began taking place. The spreading "popery" threated every Protestant sect. S. F. B. Morse warned: "We must make an immediate and a vigorous, a united, a perservering effort to spread religious and intellectual cultivation through every part of the country. Not a village, not a log-hut of the land should be overlooked."[23]

The Indians of the Great Lakes area were vulnerable to popery. Visited by priests since the 1600s, it was likely that Catholicism could win the race for Indian converts in the 1800s. Protestant missionaries again turned their attention from pure mission efforts to the competition from Catholic priests. The celebrated Father Frederic Baraga particularly set Protestant missions into chaos by his success with native peoples.[24]

It is not surprising that near the close of the nineteenth century the Protestant missions and missionaries who built them were viewed by commentators in less romantic ways. In describing the McCoy mission in Niles, Michigan, Franklin Everett was unequivical about its failure. "The school at Niles was admirably conducted, and the teachers were zealous; but missionary and teacher were ashamed of their pupils, soon after they left school. There was scarce an exception to the general rule—*no good came of it.* They tried to make civilized men and women of those who could have no place among the civilized, and none among the savage."[25]

In the more objective approaches of twentieth century history, the Protestant Indian missions, particularly in the western Great Lakes area,

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[23] S. F. B. Morse in *Home Missions on the American Frontier*, 233. Goodykoontz has an informative discussion of the threat of Catholicism on pages 221-234.
[24] A discussion of Baraga's competition will follow later in the paper.
[25] Franklin Everett, Memorials of the Grand River Valley. (Chicago, 1878), 275.

received little mention, . And by the early 1970s the work of missionaries working among the Indians could be viewed almost solely as an example of blatant ethnocentricity, much to the embarrassment of Protestant scholars. Better that these missions, and their missionaries, remain lost —their shortcomings buried.

With the emergence of Native American viewpoints in recent years, Protestant missions and missionaries have also had to endure retribution from Indian writers. Forrest Carter's *The Education of Little Tree* contains heart-breaking experiences endured by him at the hands of missionaries who could not tolerate the young Indian "bastard." Other novels, both juvenile and adult, show mission schools of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as uncaring, rigid places run by rigid people.[26]

Gerald Vizenour records a less condemning, yet pointed observation, in his book, *The People Named the Chippewa.* An elderly Indian woman recalled the work of the Reverend and Mrs. Sherman Hall in northern Wisconsin in the mid-1800s."The two of them," she said, seemed to be lost, without shadows, with no humor to throw at the weather. Their isolation turned into a dedication to convert the tribes. Sometimes, we whispered, it was the missionaries who needed to be saved. . .. Some of our friends think it is strange to find pale, weak and shadowless, individual church heroes, in the middle of old woodland families." [27]

The missions sites of the western Great Lakes area are not places where tourists flock in their visits to historic places. The names of Protestant missionaries of the period would not be recognized by most. Yet somewhere

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[26] Some of these are Scott O'Dell's *Zia*, Victor Barnouw's *Dream of the Blue Heron*, and Margaret Craven's *I Heard the Owl Call My Name.*

[27] Gerald Vizenour, *The People Called the Chippewa* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 46.

between the romantic characterizations of the past and the seering portraits of the twentieth century lies the work of the missionaries and the missions they established. These people may have been lost, without shadows and humor, or driven, inspired, arrogant, adventuresome, or truly humanitarian. Their missions, also lost for the most part, were utopias, rigid reformatories, casual farms, or struggling centers in the wilderness.

Scholars such as William McLoughlin and Keith Widder remind us that there were many dilemmas, then as always. What to do with a people who had been conquered, shamefully set aside, was an immense problem. No mission station, whether academically oriented by the Presbyterians or spiritually led by the Baptists, could create an example—the spiritual or physical solution to such a problem.

Lost, with very little influence on their localities or the native people, the stories of these missions are nevertheless worth recovering. They are ideal symbols of the interplay between the religious spirit in America and Americans' perception of the nation they were so fervishly working to shape. They portray the tragic effects of Eurocentricity and paint the moral dilemma of a people grappling with the consequences of empire-building. The words of Methodist missionary John Pitezel capsulize the feelings of a large number of thinkers and leaders of the day: "The Indians have been the sufferers, and the only recompense we can make them is to give them the joy, the undying hope, imparted by the Gospel." [28]

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[28] *Lights and Shades of Missionary Life*, 419.

Consider Zeisberger & the Delawares et. al. as alt. agencies during the natural-imperial conflict the American Revolution.

Chapter II

The Missions of Northwestern Ohio

The missionaries who came to the northwest area of Ohio in the early 1800s were not religious trailblazers in the region. A handful of Moravian missionaries had preceded them, setting an example of devotion and even martyrdom for their beliefs. No doubt the new missionaries, whether Methodist, Congregationalist, or Presbyterian were well aware of the gripping story of the Moravians who had once worked in the region.

The Moravians, a Protestant group originating in Germany and noted for their missionary zeal, had established several small missions across northern Ohio in the last half of the eighteenth century.[1] Under David Zeisberger, John Hechenelder, and several others, the Moravians preached peace, urging the Delawares and other Indians with whom they worked to remain neutral during the American Revolutionary War. But caught between the British and Americans, the Moravians and their group of praying Indians seemed suspicious to both sides. When the British Colonel Arent DePeyster demanded that Zeisberger and others be taken captive and marched to Detroit where he could personally determine their political leanings, a group of American soldiers invaded the fields where Moravian Indians were harvesting corn and murdered nearly one hundred of them.

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[1] The Moravians established missions in Schonbrunn, Gnadenhutten, Salem, and Lichtenau. Zeisberger is credited with founding Ohio's first settlement at Schonbrunn.

After the massacre, DePeyster offered his Moravian missionary captives land near Detroit where they could carry on their mission work with some protection from the British. Naming their mission New Gnadenhutten, the Moravians remained for four years in what is now Mount Clemens. As John Day said, their Michigan mission was something of a failure, with few Indian converts. At the close of the war the Moravians had to give up their land, with some returning to Ohio and others to Canada.

The Moravians had established a small mission at Goshen near Ohio's Tuscarawas River when a newly converted Methodist named John Stewart arrived there in 1815. Stewart's conversion was a dramatic one. Troubled by alcoholism, Stewart was converted at a camp meeting and shortly after heard voices while he was praying. The voices seemed to be calling him to set out in a northwest direction and find a place to preach the gospel. At the Moravian mission he learned of a Wyandot Indian community to the northwest at Upper Sandusky.

With staunch determination to answer the call, Stewart journeyed on to the Wyandot lands in northwestern Ohio. There he met Mr. and Mrs. William Walker, Sr., government subagents who were part Indian, and Jonathan Pointer, a Negro who could interpret the Wyandot language. With their help and encouragement, Stewart set about to convert the Indians.

From all reports John Stewart, who was part Indian and black, was quite well-received among the Indians. Success, of course, was based on the number of converts, and Stewart apparently had an unusual number. The fact that he

was not white no doubt helped him be accepted by the native people. But Stewart also had a beautiful voice that captured the attention of his audiences and a creative spirit that gave life to his services. He freely mixed his songs with sermons and prayers. Without being licensed by his Methodist brothers, he performed baptisms and marriages.

By 1819 Stewart had the attention of those who directed Methodist Episcopalian missions. They reviewed his work, found him too successful to discipline, and licensed him as a minister. In addition, other Methodist circuit preachers in the area volunteered to help Stewart at the Wyandot mission. Among them were James Montgomery, Anthony Banning, Samuel Hitt, Martin Hitt, Robert Miller, Thomas Lansdale, Joseph Mitchell, and Moses Henkle.

A Methodist missionary who made a particular impact on the Wyandot community along with Stewart was James B. Finley. Well-known for his preaching and his firm stand on Indian rights, Finley first presided as an elder over the area of Ohio that included the Wyandot reserve at Upper Sandusky, often referred to as the Grand Reserve. He convinced Wyandot chiefs to allow their children to attend a missionary school for both Indians and whites at Camp Meigs on the Maumee River. But the chiefs wanted a mission school on their own lands. In 1821 they sent a message to a Methodist missionary conference in Ohio requesting the Methodists to create such a school. They eloquently added that the schoolmaster should be a minister. "We would further let the conference know, that we wish our teacher to be a

preacher, that can teach and baptize our children, and marry our people; a man that loves our nation, that loves us and our children. . .." [2]

The Methodists responded by creating a permanent mission near Upper Sandusky with Finley in charge. The missionary began the work by building a log cabin for his family — a building that was also to be used as a classroom for Indian children until a school could be built. Late in 1822, however, the school became a reality when a log building, 48 feet long and 38 feet wide, was completed.

After a short absence from the mission due to illness, Finley returned to Upper Sandusky and applied for government funds to expand the mission. After he had secured them he directed the construction of three more buildings and a second schoolhouse where children were boarded. Under Finley's direction, the mission boasted a church membership of two hundred and twenty Wyandots and fifty-one Indian children enrolled in the mission school. The mission lands included eighty acres of fenced pasture and fifty acres of rich, cultivated farmland which included an orchard. The mission's crops of corn, potatoes, and vegetables were the envy of white settlers in the area. Not far down the river from the mission were a grist mill, a blacksmith shop, and sawmill which had been built by government funds according to treaty requirements. In 1824 a stone church, thirty by forty feet, was built with blue limestone from the bottom of the Sandusky River.

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[2] Wade Barclay, *History of Methodist Missions, Part One: Early American Methodism 1769-1844* (New York: The Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church, 1950), 119.

Along with overseeing the practical matters of the mission, such as the supply of beds and blankets for the boarding school, Finley did not neglect the spiritual work required by his position. He preached a sermon each Sunday and held a class. Once a week there was à prayer meeting for him to direct. Helping him in the church and school were Charles Ellicott,[3] who directed the mission during Finley's illness, William Walker, Jr., and Lydia Barstow. Especially popular with the Indians was Harriet Stubbs, whom her peers called "the idol of the whole nation."[4]

Just when the Wyandot Mission seemed to promise to be a model for all missions, problems began to arise. Although Stewart had continued his work there, his health was bad and he died in 1823. The charismatic mulatto preacher was sorely missed. Friction also developed between Finley and the government subagent at the Wyandot reserve, John Shaw. A major rift, however, began to take place between the Wyandots themselves. Some felt the reserve should be divided into independent farms, while others did not. There was also rivalry between the Christian Wyandots and the pagan Wyandots, as the non-Christian Indians were termed by the missionaries.

When Finley returned from a spring missionary conference in 1824, he was upset to find that the Wyandots had been dancing, a custom he strictly forbid. Finley blamed Shaw for allowing the Indians to revert to native ways, and the discord between the two men widened. As a result, Secretary of War

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[3] He may have been Charles Elliot, since sources do not agree on his name.
[4] Barclay, 120.

John C. Calhoun dismissed Shaw and appointed Finley as the government subagent for the reserve.[5]

The new duties as a subagent proved to be too much for Finley. In 1826 he was replaced by Charles Cass, brother of Lewis Cass. Finley continued his work at the Wyandot mission, however, until 1828.

Finley's departure from Upper Sandusky to resume his previous job as presiding elder of the district, was the beginning of the end of the Methodist mission there. A few years later, the mission became part of a circuit, which meant it was only visited by missionaries who could not begin to do the work required to keep the community as prosperous as it once had been. At the same time the government began moving tribes west, and the missionary conference felt that the Wyandot's chances of remaining on their lands were poor. The conference did not wish to become involved in the politics of removal, although Finley himself was outspoken in his opposition to removal.[6]

Some of the Wyandots felt abandoned when they were no longer a focus of missionary activity. One Indian leader said, "The minds of our people [are] in a constantly unsettled state, and many have been induced to believe that their friends and the former patrons of the mission had become discouraged, and were about to abandon them to their fate." [7] The mission continued to be

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[5] A thorough study of this dispute has been made by Robert E. Smith, "The Clash of Leadership at the Grand Reserve (*Ohio History*, V. 89, Spring 1980), 181-205.

[6] Barclay, 124.

[7] Barclay, 112.

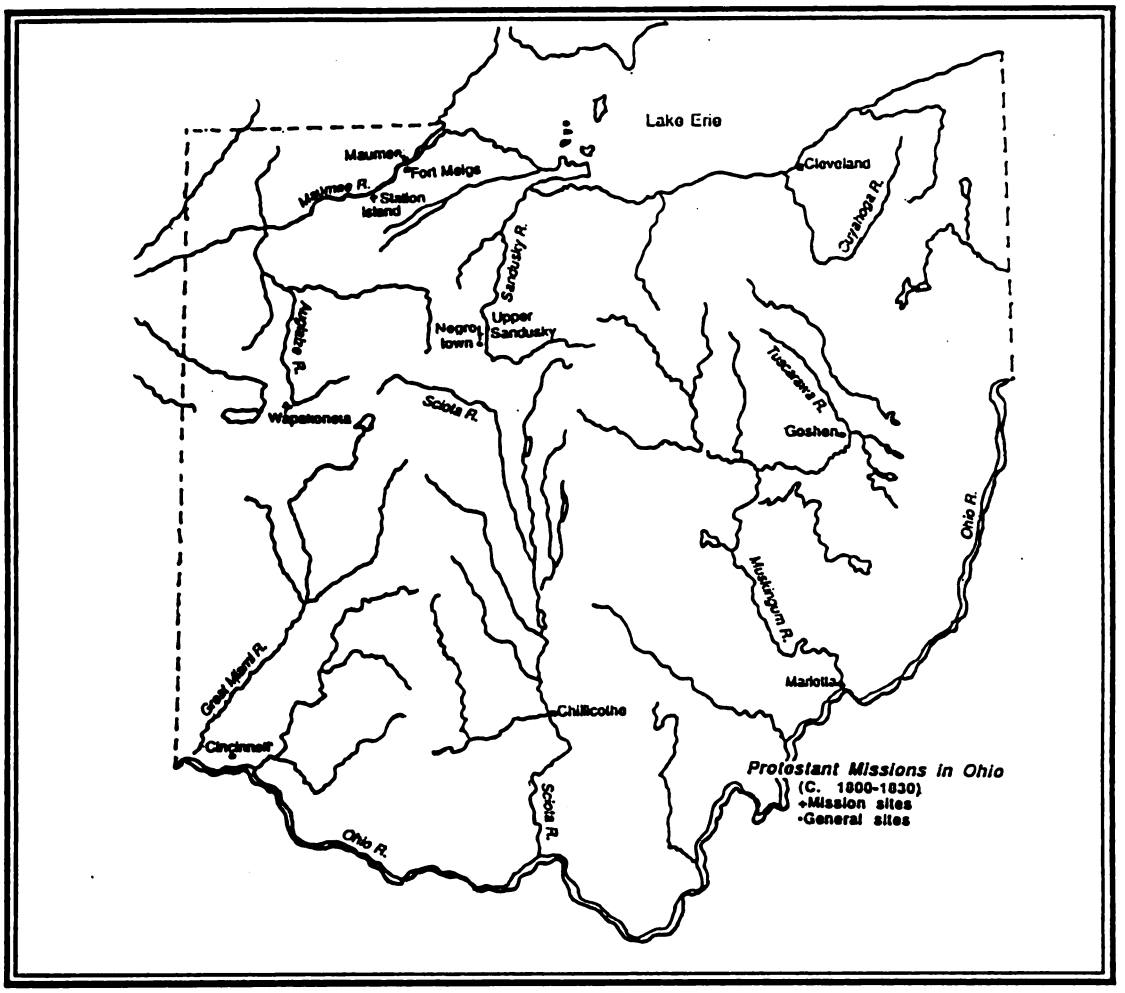
visited by Methodist missionaries, however, until the Wyandots moved to Kansas in 1843, the last Indian group in Ohio to do so.

The Methodists also created a small branch mission at Big Spring, a Wyandot reserve located about thirty miles north of the Grand Reserve. This mission consisted of one building which served as a meeting house and a school. The strength of the mission also suffered when the Methodists decided to make the missions part of a circuit. Then, in 1832, the Wyandots there gave up their land and moved to the Grand Reserve.

Other missions and missionaries in northwestern Ohio

By the early 1800s all Indian missions except the few Moravian settlements were located in northwestern Ohio. This was not a coincidence, since Ohio's Indian population had been forced to cede nearly all of their land except that in northwestern Ohio. This area, then, became the home for Wyandots, Ottawa, Seneca, and Shawnee, as well as the center of Protestant missionary work. John Stewart was not first missionary in the area, for a few Quakers, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians preceded him and the Methodist mission at Upper Sandusky.

Because it was largely a matter of individual conscience that sent Quakers to Indian villages and not formal missionary organizations, the names of these missionaries are difficult to trace. The most well-known Quaker mission in the western Great Lakes area was at Wapakoneta among the Shawnees. Isaac Harvey and his family started a mission school for Shawnees at Wapakoneta in



1807. In 1811 the Harveys and other Friends built a gristmill and purchased a sawmill for the community.

The War of 1812 disrupted the Friends' mission work at Wapakoneta. The Shawnees, however, asked for their return when the war was over. The mission was revived and continued successfully until the Shawnee's removal in 1832 and 1833. Native men were taught to farm, with a number of families acquiring their own farms, while native women were taught domestic skills.

Some of the other Friends mentioned in this mission work included George Ellicott, Gerald T. Hopkins, and Henry Harvey.

Quaker records reflect the mutual love and respect between the Friends and the Indians. "We have been brothers together with you the Quakers for a long time," said one Shawnee as his people prepared to leave their lands in Ohio. "You took us by the hand and you held us fast. We have held you fast too."[8] Missionary Henry Harvey talked about the sadness of the removal. "All had to leave at the bidding of the white man; sick or well, prepared or unprepared, this people—who were once a free people—had now to obey their masters."[9]

Presbyterian records are more explicit and show that Reverend Joseph Badger was a major figure working among the Wyandots. Under the Connecticut Missionary Society Badger traveled and preached in the northern Ohio area for several years. Then, in 1806, he made arrangements with the Western Missionary Society, a Presbyterian society based in Pittsburgh, to open a mission on the Sandusky River at Lower Sandusky. Starting a mission at that particular settlement was difficult, since many of the Wyandots there were influenced by Tenskwatawa, often referred to as The Prophet, and Tecumseh, who were trying to unite the tribes of the Northwest Territory to hold back the influx of white settlers.

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[8] Errol T. Elliot, *Quakers of the American Frontier* (Richmond, Indiana: The Freinds United PRess, 1969), 246.
[9] Elliot, 246.

Joseph Badger worked among the Wyandot for a number of years, building a mission house, a school, and some "necessary buildings" for farming.[10] The missionary taught farming and elementary school, and Green reports that the mission "went on in a very prosperous way" until the War of 1812. [11] At that time buildings were burned, and although the Presbyterians made some attempt to rebuild and revive, the mission was eventually suspended for lack of success.

While Badger was working at Lower Sandusky he also traveled to other Wyandot settlements, including Maguago, eight miles south of Detroit. In addition, he preached frequently to a settlement of blacks near Upper Sandusky and used a black couple as interpreters.[12] When the War of 1812 broke out, Badger was called to serve as a chaplain for General William Harrison's forces. Van Tassel lists Reverend Elisha Macurdy as Badger's successor, but Macurdy's work may have involved the unsuccessful efforts to revive the mission after the war.[13]

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[10] E.B. Welsh, *Buckeye Presbyterianism* (United Presbyterian Synod of Ohio, 1968), 137.

[11] Ashabel Green, *Prebyterian Missions* (New York, 1839), 36.

[12] Most sources mention blacks working with both Presbyterians and Methodists in northwestern Ohio. These people evidentally lived near the Wyandots at a place called Negrotown and had good relations with the Indians. One of them, Jonathon Pointer, had been brought to the area as a boy by the Indians who raided the farm where he worked.

[13] Charles S. Van Tassel, *The Story of the Maumee Valley Toledo and the Sandusky Region, V. 1* (Chicago, 1879), 719. Macurdy served on the board of the Western Missionary Society and was sent to see "whether another school can be established among the Indians" in 1816. See documents in William Warren Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier 1783-1840, VII, The Presbyterians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936), 614.

Other Presbyterian missionaries working in the area before the War of 1812 were Reverend Thomas Hughes and James Satterfield, sponsored by a Virginia synod. Reverend David Bacon from the Connecticut Missionary Society also worked on the nearby Maumee River, ministering to Ottawa Indians who lived there. No missions were built by these men, although their preaching very likely helped the later work of both the Presbyterians and Methodists.

Presbyterian records of their mission at Lower Sandusky indicate that their work there was not free from conflict. In 1808 the Wyandots complained about Badger to Governor William Hull a complaint that apparently had something to do about money. Both Hull and Badger contacted the Western Missionary Society which made an investigation into the "conduct of Mr. Badger" and decided "to let out Missionary Farm at Sandusky on the shares. . .."[14]

If an investigation suggests that there was some wrongdoing at the mission, other sources do not substantiate it. In an extensive history of the Sandusky area, Charles Van Tassel portrays Badger as an honest man, a true missionary who would give up material comforts for a life devoted to bringing the gospel to the native people. The historian makes reference to Badger's contempt for wealth and worldly possessions.[15]

Badger himself blames traders for starting rumors about the missionaries among the Indians. "This has been one of the strategems of the traders to

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[14] Sweet, 611.
[15] Van Tassel, 720.

persuade them [the Indians] that we were to do their work and they do nothing. . . .At other times they [the traders] have alarmed them [the Indians] with the idea that their land would all go to pay me for what I was doing, if they permitted me to stay."[16] Welsh, too, states that English traders tried to break up the mission.[17] The traders, of course, had little good to say about missionaries who encouraged farming instead of hunting among the tribes and usually worked fervently to stop the use of alcohol among the native peoples.

Late in the fall of 1822 the Presbyterians of Pittsburgh opened a new mission on the Maumee River between Perrysburg and Grand Rapids. At an attractive location named Station Island, the Reverend Thomas Hughes mentioned earlier worked to educate and convert Ottawa and perhaps some Wyandots to Christianity. Other missionaries at the station were Reverend Isaac Van Tassel and his wife Lucia, Isaac Van Tassel II, and Abigail Wright. The mission existed for twelve years during which time it was transferred to the United Foreign Missionary Society, a mission society of the Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed churches, and then to the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions.

Another Presbyterian working among the Indian people in northwestern Ohio was Reverend Alvin Coe. In 1821 Coe, who had begun an Indian mission school in Greenfield Township, Huron County, attempted to get the support of the Western Missionary Society. Not long after he had received their support,

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16 Van Tassel, 718-719.
17 Welsh, 137.

board members decided that Coe should dismiss his school at Greenfield and move on to a new station being established on the Maumee River. Coe's relationship with the board never seemed to be a good one, and on two occasions board officials denied his requests to take time off to study the Indian language. Coe was formally dismissed from the Western Missionary Society in 1823.

The site chosen by the Western Missionary Society for mission work among the Indians in the early 1820s was along the Maumee River. The site lay between Perrysburg and Grand Rapids, at the mouth of Tontogany Creek on the Maumee River. Mission lands included a section along the creek and river as well as an island about a mile and one half in length on the Maumee. A white woman who attended the mission school wrote this description of the area:

> The founders of the mission had an eye to the beautiful in selecting this place, as a more picturesque spot can not be found in the valley. The river here is about a mile wide between the high banks. It has a moderate current and an average depth of about eight feet in low water. What is known as the Station pond is about two and a half miles long between the rapids. Within the pond are four islands. The missionary or large island, containing about 230 acres, extends about half way up the pond. About midway up the pond Tontogany Creek enters from the south, forming a deep narrow valley. It was here the mission buildings were located on an eminence over-looking the pond, the land descending toward the river on

the west and toward the creek on the south.[18]

The mission opened in November, 1822. The building first constructed was a log structure sixteen by sixty feet. The main mission, thirty by eighty feet, was two stories high, with a one story annex of two thousand square feet. At least one other two-story building was also constructed at the site, making the Maumee Mission a sizeable complex. During its existence the mission boasted of a fine apple orchard south of the buildings and mulberry trees with a successful silk industry on the island, often referred to as Station Island.

Although the mission seemed to have plenty of workers, the superintendency and ownership of the mission fluctuated in its early years. The board of the Western Missionary Society first chose Reverend Thomas Hughes who had missionary experience in that area to be superintendent. When Hughes declined, the board chose Reverend Samuel Tait to begin the work at Maumee. Tait served only seven months until Reverend Ludovicus Robbins was appointed to the position. But Robbins resigned in 1825, just before the mission was transferred to the United Foreign Mission Society. In 1826 the United Foreign Mission Society consolidated with the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions, again giving the Maumee mission new administrators. The main missionary at Maumee at that time was Reverend Isaac Van Tassel.

Charles Van Tassel provides interesting specifics about some of the workers and their duties at the Maumee mission.[19]

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[18] An unnamed writer quoted in Van Tassel, 727.
[19] Van Tassel, 724-727.

Reverend Samuel Tate*	Temporary superintendent
Mrs. Tate	Cook
Reverend Leander Sackett	Farmer
Mrs. Sackett	Cook
John McPherson	Carpenter
Mr. Straight	Blacksmith
Hannah Riggs	Housekeeper
Rev. Barnes	
Rev. Isaac Van Tassel	Teacher
Lucia Badger Van Tassel	Teacher
Rev. Alvin Coe	Teacher

**Most sources refer to him as Reverend Samuel Tait*

When ABCFM closed the mission in 1834 because of the removal of the Ottawa Indians to lands west of the Mississippi, Isaac and Lucia Van Tassel remained, conducting a boarding school for white children. They were aided by Van Tassel's nephew, Isaac Van Tassel II, and Abigail Wright.

Chapter III

Michigan Missions and Missionaries

The Baptists move into Michigan Territory

With the Chicago Treaty of 1821, the United States secured most of the land in what is now southwestern lower Michigan from the Ottawa and Potawatomi people. Under the direction of Territorial Governor Lewis Cass, the government agreed to give them a cash annuity, to be followed by annual payments for a blacksmith, teacher, and agricultural instructor. Within this framework entered a Baptist missionary named Isaac McCoy and his wife Christiana. Isaac McCoy had been working with Indians in Illinois and Indiana and had already secured money and food for his school at Fort Wayne from Cass. In 1822 Cass appointed McCoy to help see that the terms of the Chicago treaty were carried out.

According to Franklin Everett, McCoy was given a set of instructions from Cass:

1. Give the Indians, young and old, such instructions as are suited to their condition.
2. Wean them from their allegiance to any other government, and try to attach them to the United States.
3. Contend against whiskey.
4. Watch the traders.
5. Encourage agriculture.

6. Show the Indians the best way to spend their income.

7. In general, work for the good of the Indians. [1]

In the fall of 1822 McCoy moved his family and some of his Indian students from Fort Wayne to a site which later became Niles, Michigan, on the St. Joseph River. The Carey Station, which McCoy named the mission, was one hundred and eighty miles from any white settlement. After a difficult beginning with insufficient provisions, the mission seemed to prosper. Together the Indians and the white teachers and assistants cultivated two hundred acres of crops. They also raised peach and apple trees and built a flour mill.

Some interesting comments by a A. B. Markham verifies that the mission and farm did appear prosperous. But Markham states twice in his writings that the Indians were not particularly happy with the missionaries. "I went among the Indians, and learned that they were not so well pleased with the missionaries as some would suppose. I dined with the missionaries. They had Indians as servants or helpers. All these helpers could speak English, and were very polite." [2]

If we can believe Markham, the Indians had little to be thankful for. They learned English, constructed buildings, and farmed the land without pay. It seemed to them as if the missions were only for the benefit of the missionaries.

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[1]Franklin Everett, *Memorials of the Grand River Valley* (Chicago, 1878), 299-300.

[2] A.B. Markham, "Early History of the Township of Plymouth," *Michigan Pioneer Collections, VII*, 1878, 565.

The excessive work, the English language, and a strange religion were hardly compensation for their land.

With the Carey Station underway, McCoy set out to help establish a second mission among the Ottawa Indians in what is now Grand Rapids. Although the Ottawa were especially angry with whites because of the Chicago Treaty and had opposed the government teachers and blacksmiths, an Ottawa leader called Nawequageezhik finally gave his support to the establishment of the Thomas Station late in 1824. Although the mission was first run by a government teacher and blacksmith, it was taken over early in 1827 by Leonard Slater and Mary F. Ide Slater who stayed for approximately ten years. Over that time Slater, his assistants, and the Indians built log houses, a farm, a sawmill, a blacksmith shop, and a building used for both school and worship.

Leonard Slater's work at the Thomas Station received mixed reviews. From the outset, the relationship between Slater and McCoy was not a good one, and as early as 1829 McCoy reported the Thomas Station to be in disarray.[3] Some years later Father Frederic Baraga noted that a certain Protestant missionary, most certainly Slater, had worked in the Grand River Valley for nine years and had converted fewer Indians than Baraga did in a much shorter time with much less financial support.[4] But local histories do not verify the views of McCoy and Baraga. Fisher's *History of Grand Rapids and Kent County* paints a more positive picture of Slater as does Franklin Everett's *Memorials of the*

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[3] Robert Bolt, "Reverend Leonard Slater in the Grand River Valley," *Michigan History LI.3* (Fall 1967), 247.
[4] Bolt, 248.

Grand River Valley. It is important to take into account that competition between Protestant and Catholics was keen at this time, and the number of converts seemed to outweigh all other matters. Slater also worked to learn the Ottawa language, an idea not embraced by all missionaries or missionary societies at that time.

Meanwhile, Isaac McCoy developed a plan to which he devoted the rest of his life. Like many of his peers, McCoy felt that the whites with whom the Indians were acquainted had a negative impact on the Indians. Many were the outcasts of eastern American and in the missionaries' eyes, had low moral standards. The Indians, whom the missionaries hoped would become Christians and good Americans, needed mentors of the highest caliber. In McCoy's mind, the solution was to create a separate Indian nation further west where the native people supposedly would not rub elbows with questionable whites. "At this time," which was about 1823, " I formed the resolution that I would, Providence permitting, thenceforward keep steadily in view, and endeavor to promote a plan for colonizing the natives in a country to be made for ever theirs, west of the State of Missouri, &c., and from that time until the present I have considered the promotion of this design as the most important business of my life." [5]

From that time on, McCoy's energy was directed far beyond the Carey or Thomas Stations in Michigan. He took his ideas to Cass, to the Baptist Board of Missions, and finally to Congress and President Monroe. In his ardent support

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[5] Isaac McCoy, *History of Baptist Indian Missions* (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970 - 1840), 197.

for removal of Indians, however, McCoy saw a definite place of power for himself. He would rule in this Indian land, which would be a Baptist haven—a great missionary state.[6] In 1830 McCoy eagerly accepted a government post to survey possible reservations lands and relocate Indians west of the Mississippi. Although he still promoted Baptist missions, the remainder of McCoys' life was devoted largely to politics and writing. His dream of a great Indian state obviously was not realized. And as Robert Berkhofer, Jr. has pointed out, after a career as a missionary and Indian advocate, McCoy showed very little knowledge of Indian culture or genuine love and respect for the people he proposed to lead.[7]

The Carey and Thomas Stations were closed in 1830 and 1836 respectively. While McCoy went on to work at a national level, Leonard Slater disassembled his chapel and moved it to Prairieville in Barry County. There he established a new mission, Slater Station, where he continued to work with Ottawa people until 1852.

Why did Slater leave the Grand River Valley? One might conclude from some sources that Father Baraga did create more competition in the area than Slater could stand. In *People of the Three Fires* James McClurken contends that the Baptist-Catholic conflict widened a gulf that already existed among the Ottawa in that area .[8] But wherever Baraga went, as he did later in northern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula, he set Protestant missionaries on edge.

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[6] Berkhofer in McCoy, v.
[7] Berkhofer in McCoy, xxvi.
[8] James McClurken, et al, *People of the Three Fires* (Grand Rapids: Grand Rapids Inter-Tribal Council, 1986), 26.

Even without intertribal conflicts there was no love lost between Protestants and Catholics, with each side counting Indian converts to Christianity like marks on a scoreboard. Still another local history source contends that neither Baraga or Slater could cope with the drinking problems among the Ottawa.[9]

It is McClurken who gives the most recent and plausible reason for Slater's move—the politics of removal. The Treaty of 1836 was requiring the Ottawa to cede their lands in the Lower Peninsula and a section in the Upper Peninsula. They did have a right to use the land until Americans wished to buy it, however, and the government gave them yearly annuities along with schools, missions, equipment, and other goods. But the Ottawa along the Grand River were expected to move immediately, since there land was already in demand by white settlers. McClurken tells us that several Ottawa families gave Slater money to buy land for them near Bradley. [10]

This gives us another view of Leonard Slater. One of his differences with McCoy was apparently over removal. And although he had not achieved a great following, some Ottawas trusted him enough to allow him to secure a new home for them. At least he was not so objectionable that they could not take advantage of his position to help them relocate in a nearby area. When Slater finally left the Ottawa, he worked with blacks in the Kalamazoo area and ministered to injured soldiers in Tennessee during the Civil War. We could conclude from these aspects, then, that even if Slater had not run the Thomas

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[9] Mary M. Lewis Hoyt, "Life of Leonard Slater," *Michigan Historical and Pioneer Collections, X*, 151.
[10] McClurken, 30.

mission to McCoy's liking or converted Indians in the same measure as Baraga, he had the heart, soul, and commitment of a man who believed what he preached.

Baptist work in the Upper Peninsula

Before McCoy left Michigan he encouraged Reverend Abel Bingham and his wife Hannah to leave their work among the Seneca Indians in western New York and come to the Michigan Territory. But Bingham did not join McCoy. Instead the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions sent him to Sault Ste. Marie to work with the Ojibwa, or Chippewa Indians there. Reverend and Mrs. Bingham arrived at the Sault in 1828 where he took over the instruction of Indian students with whom Reverend Alvin Coe had worked with for a brief time. On Sundays Bingham preached to whites at Fort Brady and then again to Indians.

The Binghams stayed at the Sault for a remarkable twenty-seven years. For some years Reverend Bingham held both school and church services on the second floor of their home. Later, a separate school building was constructed. Bingham was noted for his travels by canoe, dog sled, and snowshoes to remote Indian villages in both the Upper Peninsula and Canada. He also brought home at least one Indian orphan whom the Binghams adopted.[11] An Episcopalian missionary from Canada, James D. Cameron, became Bingham's very capable assistant, working with the Indians of the Upper Peninsula and

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[11] Stanley Newton, *The Story of Sault Ste. Marie and Chippewa County* (Sault Ste. Marie: The Sault News Printing Company, 1923), 136.

marrying an Indian woman. Cameron eventually became an ordained Baptist minister.

From the time of his arrival at the Sault, Bingham was deeply troubled by the drinking habits of both white and Indian residents. In a letter to a Mrs. E. A. Sheldon in Detroit he talked of the problems of alcohol abuse:

> "When I commenced my labors here, intemperance was a vice exceedingly common, and prevalent among almost all classes. . .. In the garrison, the commissary was dealing out a gill of whiskey a day to the enlisted men, and they were allowed to purchase another gill at the suttler's store. . .. The Indian agent, also, on certain occasions, used to deal out whiskey to them; and when an Indian began to drink, he must have a thorough time of it before he could go into business again; and there was nothing to hinder him from getting what he pleased, for our place was flooded with it, and a white fish could buy enough to keep him drunk all day. . .. It seemed to me that they might at that time in truth, most emphatically be called a nation of drunkards. The state of things was exceedingly discouraging, and it was manifest, that, unless something could be done to check so free and general a use of intoxicating liquour in the place, no reasonable hope could be cherished of any great success attending the most faithful missionary labors.[12]

It was perhaps a temperance movement more than missionary work that occupied Bingham's attention for many years. And he seems to have achieved at least some degree of success. He claimed to very easily secured the pledges of

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[12] Abel Bingham, "The Early Mission at Sault Ste. Marie," *Michigan Historical and Pioneeer Collections, XXVIII*, 523.

important men at Fort Brady and eventually those of traders and Indian leaders. The sale of whiskey at Sault Ste. Marie, according to Bingham, was reduced from 15,000 gallons a year to no sales at all. This dry spell in the Sault's history lasted several years.

By the mid-1830s Bingham was only one of several missionaries at Sault Ste. Marie. Churches, too, were beginning to be established. Reverend Jeremiah Porter, a Presbyterian minister, opened a church, while a Presbyterian missionary, William Boutwell, came to the area to study the Ojibwa language. The Methodists established a mission in 1834, and like Slater, Bingham had to compete with Catholic missionaries. The rivalry among the Protestants and the Catholics for Indian converts became so intense by 1844 that Robert Stuart, Acting Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the area, sent a letter of reprimand to all missionaries. Had they forgotten that their missions were ones of peace and goodwill?[13]

In 1855 the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions closed their station at Sault Ste. Marie, and the Binghams ended their years of missionary work. In all his years the missionary did not deliver his sermons in the Ojibwa language. He was considered by some missionaries to be ineffective and dull. Francis Parkman regarded him as ignorant.[14] Others found Bingham to be a caring man who shared his goods freely with the people to whom he ministered. Perhaps his fault was one common to many of the missionaries of the time—the

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[13] John Cumming, "A Puritan Among the Chippewas," *Michigan History LI.3* (Fall 1967), 223.
[14] Cumming, 225.

presentation of a God who could accept them only if they denied their native religion, their culture — indeed their entire way of life. One can almost hear the echoes of the frightening demands of such missionary messages.

The mission at Mackinac

In 1817 a young man named William Montague Ferry entered Union College in Schenectady, New York. It was Ferry's goal to become a missionary to heathen in non-Christian nations—to work with the same zeal as the young Samuel J. Mills, who with other young seminary students such as Adoniram Judson, Samuel Newell, and Samuel Nott, Jr., had inspired the formation of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions in 1810.

While Ferry waited to be sent to Jerusalem by the ABCFM, one of his mentors informed him of another call from the United Foreign Missionary Society. Five of Ferry's peers had turned down a request from Mrs. Robert Stuart, the wife on an agent of the American Fur Trading Company, for a preacher and teacher on Mackinac Island in Michigan. Since most young missionaries felt that greatest work lay in foreign nations, it was perhaps with some personal disappointment that Ferry answered the call. He did not wish to be unresponsive to his former teacher who was enthusiastic about the work in Mackinac, but he had really dreamed of Jerusalem.

Ferry went to Mackinac Island in 1822 to begin to lay the groundwork for the mission. Then in 1823 he and his bride Amanda officially began their work there with the help of Betsey McFarland. One of the goals of the mission was to

train young Indians to be interpreters and teachers at other missions which would be built further west. In addition to teaching and preaching to the Indians, Ferry served as chaplain at Fort Mackinac. Through his years there he had many able assistants, including Amanda, a bright woman who had a good education and was also a close friend of Mary Lyon.

While the Ferrys served at Mackinac, the mission changed ownership. In 1826 the ABCFM took over control of the mission and began many years of work in the Lake Superior region. The mission began primarily as a school for Indian children. It was the goal of Ferry and his sponsors to educate these young people and sent them to teach and become interpreters for other missionaries who would go further west. Classes were held in homes until a mission house was built in 1825. The mission house served both as a school and a home for the missionaries.

Ferry's work at Mackinac included both teaching the Indians and holding church services for island inhabitants. Ferry is said to have led a revival in the winter of 1828-29 that inspired the church members to build a church. A mission report of October 1830 described the committment of the residents. "The expense of erecting the church has been borne almost entirely by the people of the village and the traders of the interior, who, on this as well as other occasions, have shown much friendship for the mission and truly Christian liberality towards other benevolent objects."[15] Reverend Williams recorded that the congregation was composed of the missionaries and their

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[15] Rev. Meade C. Williams, "The Old Mission Church of Mackinac Island," *Michigan Pioneer Collections, XXVIII,* 192.

families, the teachers and their pupils, Indian families, fur traders, and many others. "The military post, too, used to be represented. . .. The soldiers would stack their guns outside in front of the church. . .with one man detailed to stand guard over the arms. . .." [16]

The mission at Mackinac had other buildings in addition to the Mission house and church. Several other structures were built to serve as workshops. Here Indian boys learned trades such as carpentry and blacksmithing. Girls learned to sew and do housekeeping. Teachers came to the mission from eastern states and taught five and a half days a week for four twelve-week terms. In addition to the academics and trades, they taught Bible passages and hymns. Like the missionaries, these teachers were inspired to work at the mission out of their belief that they should help the Indians and spread the Christian message. "They were allured," says Williams, "by no wordly ambitions in coming out from their homes to this remote pioneer point."[17]

After twelve years of work at Mackinac, William Ferry decided to set aside his missionary career. He had been troubled by illness, but he was also well aware that other careers might be more satisfying and bring in more money to help raise his growing family. After resigning from the ABCFM, he traveled in Michigan with his friend, Robert Stuart, and eventually founded the town of Grand Haven, the First Presbyterian Church of Grand Haven, and became a well-to-do businessman.

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16 Williams, 193.
17 Williams, 194.

The Mackinac mission did not continue long after the Ferrys departed. The minutes of a 1835 ABCFM meeting tell of a revival taking place at the mission and town under the direction of a Mr. Stevens. But by 1837 the minutes reveal that the mission has been closed, since "the population around Mackinaw had so entirely changed, and the resort of Indians to that place for purposes of trade had so nearly ceased, that it was no longer an advantageous site for an Indian mission." [18] For ABCFM missions, the center of activity had moved to La Pointe in what is now northern Wisconsin.

Other Presbyterian and Congregational missions in Michigan

About the same time Isaac and Christiania McCoy established Carey Station in the southwestern corner of the present Lower Peninsula, another mission was established in the eastern Lower Peninsula at the southern tip of Lake Huron. Mr. and Mrs. John Hudson and Eunice Osmer were sponsored by the Northern Missionary Society, an upstate New York Presbyterian group. The trio left Buffalo on the famous steamboat,*Walk-in-the-Water*, which unfortunately was wrecked at the beginning of the voyage. Undaunted, the missionaries bought a team of horses or oxen and made their way slowly across Canada to Michigan.

The mission established by the Hudsons and Miss Osmer is referred to as the Fort Gratiot mission. There is very little mention of it in Presbyterian or

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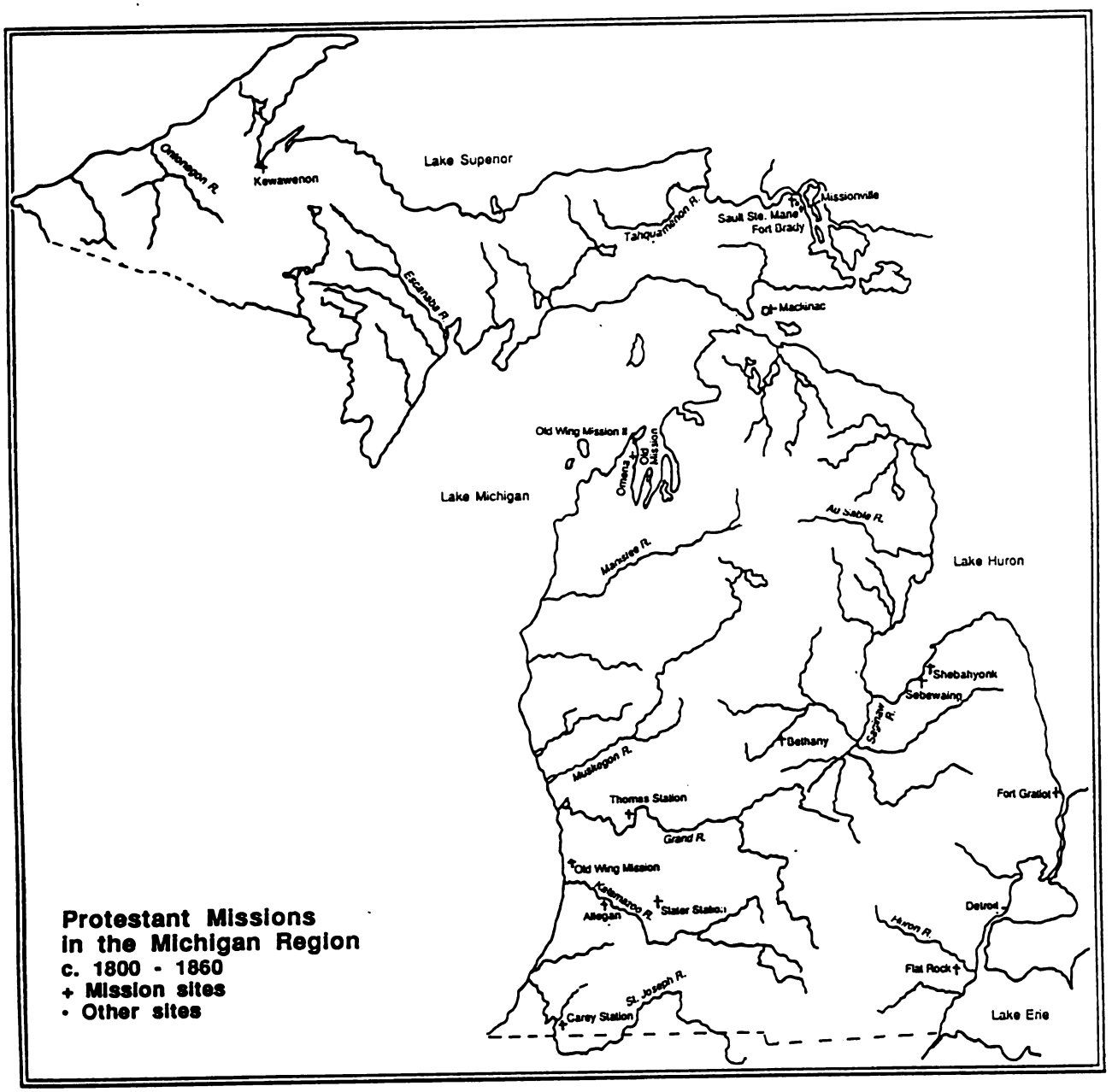
[18] *History of American Missions to the Heathen* (Worcester, 1840), 289.



local histories. For two years it evidentally existed as a small Indian school until its teachers were transferred to Mackinac.

One of the most persistent missionaries among Michigan's Indians was Reverend George N. Smith, a Congregationalist minister. Along with others in western Michigan, Smith took a special interest in the Indians' welfare as

various removal acts forced Indians to new locations and formed the Western Society of Michigan to Benefit Indians. Like Slater, Smith was in a position as a minister to help Indians buy land, serve as their teacher, and help them gain funds and services provided by the government. With very little money or provisions, Smith moved his family to Allegan to start a mission project.

It was not long after Smith had created a church and school for Indians in Allegan, that he secured a more permanent place to settle with his group near the present city of Holland. In 1838 Old Wing Mission was built, along with a house for the Smiths. But life was not easy. From the beginning of Smith's mission assignments the writing of Arvilla A. Smith portrays the agony of a woman whose husband was so obsessed by his desire to help the Indians that he ignored the suffering of his family. "A union called the Western Michigan society for the benefit of the Indians pledged to erect a building and support a teacher and missionary, and a bitter cup I had to drink when the sad news reached me of his appointment! My children! What was their future? Tears and pleadings were nothing."[19] Mrs. Smith was not being overdramatic in her response. Much like Christiania McCoy, she was expected to follow at a moment's notice, provide for extra people even when there was insufficient provisions or accomodations for her own family, and survive if George Smith had left on a journey without giving thought to his family's welfare. Along with the monumental chores of daily existence, came the heartbreak of their children's death. Both Mrs. McCoy and Mrs. Smith buried children in their

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[19] Mrs. A. A. Smith, "A Pioneer Woman." *Grand Traverse Herald*, 1892 (Lansing, Michigan: Joanna B. Smith, 1981), 3.

husband's absences. There were, in fact, five graves behind the Smith's house at Old Wing.

The arrival of the Dutch colonists in Holland in 1847 created a problem for Smith and his Indian followers. It was not long before the immigrants had infuriated the Indians, taking everything from kettles to crops, and Smith's group decided to move again—as far as possible from such white settlers. This time the Smith's, along with four remaining children and two other white families, followed the Indians to what was to become Northport on Grand Traverse Bay. On a site overlooking Lake Michigan, Smith reestablished Old Wing Mission. He also held many offices in the new town, from justice of the peace to coroner.

The Smith's spent the rest of their lives in the Northport area. In 1872 he withdrew the Old Wing Mission from the Congregational board and united with the Presbyterian board. "A Pioneer Missionary," written by adopted daughter Mrs. Etta Smith Wilson near the turn of the century, paints a George Smith who was intelligent, kind, and good—something of a saint. She describes the grief of the Indians at Smith's funeral who came long distances in "great numbers:"

> Tall and rugged chieftains, followed by their dark-faced wives, advanced in single file to the casket wherein reposed the remains of their faithful leader. Bending low and gazing intently as if to fix forever upon their memory the features of their dead, each one in turn pressed his lips reverently to the pale forehead. And

when they turned away tears were coursing down their cheeks.[20]

Perhaps George Smith was a hero. But in contrast to the romantic sentiments expressed by Mrs. Wilson is the writing of Smith's wife. Straightforward and totally unaccusing, Arvilla Smith unwittingly suggests that her husband was a fanatic, fulfilling his own demanding needs through the lives of a struggling people. Absent are the views of the people he attempted to serve.

Also in the Grand Traverse area was a missionary named Peter Dougherty who had been sent by the Presbyterian Board of Missions to take advantage of removal treaties that provided money for mission work among the Indians in northern Michigan. Dougherty arrived at Mackinac Island in 1838, with the task of finding a good location for such a mission station. Reverend Ferry advised Dougherty to go to Grand Traverse, but it was some time before Dougherty found a place agreeable to him and the Indians who lived there. After building a house near the mouth of the Elk River, Dougherty moved to a site on the north side of the peninsula extending into Grand Traverse Bay where a farmer and carpenter were being assigned by the government to help the Indians. By 1847, six years after Dougherty's beginnings at Old Mission, the mission site included a mission house, a school, twenty log cabins, and about two hundred acres of cultivated land.

For thirty-three years Dougherty worked among the Indians in the Grand Traverse area. During that time he had two Indian assistants and thirteen

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[20] Etta Smith Wilson, "Life and Work of the Late Rev. George N. Smith, A Pioneer Ministry," *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, X, 211.

assistants sent by the society, although many stayed only for brief periods. Doughtery himself did whatever type of job needed to be done. He taught, preached, doctored, farmed, and cooked and baked when his wife was away. The Indians referred to him as Mickoos, or Little Beaver, because of the amount of work he accomplished.

Doughtery was perhaps most successful in his school. In 1858 he reported having more than forty Indian students, although like most missionaries, he lamented that average daily attendance was usually far below enrollment figures. During his career Dougherty also wrote a *A Chippewa Primer*, *Short Lessons in the Ojibwa Language*, and *Easy Lessons in Scripture History in the Ojibwa Language* . *Easy Lessons* was written with the help of Daniel Rodd, a teacher at Old Mission.

Two of the major problems that faced Dougherty in his years at Old Mission were the excessive use of alcohol among the Indians and the problems of removal of Indians from their land. When the Indians at Old Mission traveled to Mackinac to collect their annuity payments, he went with them and pitched his tent among them to discourage them from getting drunk. Although the Grand Traverse area Indians were not forced westward, they eventually had to give up their land at Old Mission. The church was moved to the west side of the bay at Omena in 1852 and shortly after a boarding school was also begun there.

In 1871 the mission at Omena was given up by the Presbyterian board and the Doughertys moved to Wisconsin. Before he left, Doughtery reviewed his work for the Board.

> I will briefly state some facts that show the work of the Board among these ignorant and degraded people has not been without many good fruits. Instead of heathen bands—ignorant, indolent, intemperate, clothed with a filthy blanket and living in smokey wigwams—we now see civilized families in comfortable houses, with farms and teams, industrious and exercising all rights and duties as citizens, reading the Testament, family prayer, social meetings of prayer, regular attendance on the house of God, and many giving pleasing evidence of heart piety.[21]

Markedly absent from Doughtery's testimony, were traces of love or respect for the people he had served—people, one suspects, greatly inferior to the educated, hard-working missionary.

Today a replica of the first Old Mission stands near its original place on the peninsula, and the name Old Mission is used for a lighthouse, bay, and road. Yet the name of Peter Dougherty is uncommon. The Protestant missionaries, unlike the Jesuits before them or even the legendary Baraga, simply were not destined to carve a similar niche in the Great Lakes past.

The Methodist missions in Michigan

Not far behind the Baptists and Presbyterians in establishing Indian missions in the Michigan area were the Methodist preachers. Barclay suggests that there may been more Methodist missions than are recorded. A church or small groups of churches, he says, often carried on missions without

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21 Drury, Clifford Merrill. *Presbyterian Panorama* (Philadelphia: Board of Christian Education, 1952), 141.

consulting or reporting with the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church.[22] But removal of Indians to the West in the 1830s made it more difficult and expensive for these churches to support missionary work. Since most missionary work was carried out by large societies after that time, better records of missions are available.

In 1823 the Ohio Conference of the Methodist Episcopalian Church sent James B. Finley and interpreter Jonathon Pointer into the Michigan Territory to explore the possibilities of establishing a mission among the Ojibwa. Some discussion took place about a mission in the Saginaw area. Finley and Pointer were discouraged, however, because of turmoil within the band there. No further attempt was made to open a mission in that area until 1832 when Bradford Frazee was sent to create a mission school. After a year, however, the project was abandoned. The Ojibwa and Ottawa people did not stay in one place long enough, the missionary reported, to make a school practical.

The Methodists were able to create a lasting mission for the Ojibwa at Sault Ste. Marie, however, in 1833 under the direction of Reverend John Clark. Clark's assistants at the mission school were Lydia Gardner and Julia Baylies. One of the things that impressed Clark was the variety of work involved in missionary life. He wrote about the physical work of building a school so that classes could be moved out of the rented house that was the residence of the Clark family as well as Gardner and Baylies. Miss Gardner did not stay long,

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22 Wade Barclay, *History of Methodist Missions, Part One: Early American Methodism 1769-1844* (New York: The Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church, 1950), 117.

Clark wrote sarcastically, since she did not find "the opening for usefulness such as met *her* views of *duty*. . .."[23] The duties of a missionary were, evidentally, more varied than Miss Gardner could accept.

Like Abel Bingham, John Clark ministered to whites at the Sault as well as to the Indian population. On Sundays he preached to white citizens and officers at 10:30, Indians at 12:30, and soldiers at 3:30. Every evening except Monday he held prayer meetings or Bile classes.

Clark also worked to create other missions in the Upper Peninsula. One was established at Missionville, a few miles from the Sault at an Indian settlement there. Missionville reportedly had thirteen houses as well as a school and mission house. Another was located in the Indian village of Kewawenon, now L'Anse, on Keweenaw Bay. John Sunday, a native exhorter, had already been invited to preach to the Indians there, who Barclay describes as "degraded, drunken, quarrelsome."[24] As the Methodists were inclined to do, Clark used unordained Indian assistants, John Sunday, Thomas Frazer, and Thomas McGee, to run the Kewawenon mission. In 1834 Reverend Daniel Chandler was sent to the mission with Indian assistants George Copway and John Taunchy. Another recruit, Milton Bourne, was appointed to help Clark upon the departure of Julia Baylies.

In 1836 Clark left the Sault for an assignment in Illinois. By the time of his departure the mission schools at the Sault and Missionville had twelve and

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23 Barclay, 155.

24 Barclay, 155. These are not Barclay's words, but it is unclear whose they are—possibly Clark's.

thirty-eight students respectively. Both had active Sunday schools. The school at Kewawenon had twenty-seven pupils. Clark was succeeded as supervisor of the Sault and Kewawenon missions by Chandler and two years later by William H. Brockway. Several ministers worked under Brockway, including a native preacher Peter Marksman.

Brockway had come from another Indian mission in the Lower Peninsula. He began his missionary career at the Huron Mission at Flat Rock, a station originally established by Finley. The mission at Flat Rock was a natural outgrowth from the Methodist mission at Sandusky, since some of the Wyandot had settled there. With the teaching of young Brockway and the preaching of a supervising circuit minister, James Gilruth, and a junior minister, E. C. Gavitt, the mission had a few years of success. But mission work there probably ended about 1838, since activities were no longer recorded after that time.

One of the most interesting figures among the Methodist missionaries was Reverend John H. Pitezel, perhaps because he wrote a book about his years in the Lake Superior area, *Lights and Shades of Missionary Life*. Pitezel began his missionary work at the Sault under Brockway. In 1844 he was transferred to Kewawenon and late in 1846 was in charge of both the Indian mission there and to provide some sort of worship services for the copper miners on the Keweenaw Peninsula. For a time Pitezel was appointed to a mining mission at Eagle River, but in 1848 he became superintendent of the Upper Peninsula Indian missions in place of Brockway.

In *Lights and Shades*, Pitezel tells the readers succinctly, and quite eloquently, the reasons for missionary work among the Indians. "The claims of the Indians upon the Christian sympathies are great beyond measure," Pitezel says. "Christianity makes us the debtor to these people. But added to this, we are the inheritors of their once vast forests, broad rivers, and lakes."[25] Pitezel continues rather adamantly about the wrongs done to the Indians, although he feels some government action was well-intended.

Pitezel, like others of his time, felt that the only choice for Indians was to become part of the mainstream civilization or to perish. It was not an unreasonable conclusion. Game had been seriously depleted by the fur trade, and neither the climate or soil of the Lake Superior country made for productive farming. At times fishing was bad or impossible because of the weather, or wild rice crops were poor. Missionaries were personally familiar with these hardships of the country along with the annual end of winter supply shortages. With such a background, it is not difficult to understand that Pitezel and and others felt that the Indian might become extinct.

Explicit in Pitezel's book was the idea that if Indians were to become civilized, they would need to be Christian. It didn't demand a fervent mission spirit for many at that time to agree with Pitezel that an Indian could not "become truly civilized without the entering wedge of Christianity."[26] But unlike many of his time, Pitezel argued that this was not an overnight process. His book, in fact, was in many ways an argument to the statements of the day

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25 John H. Pitezel, *Lights and Shades of Missionary Life* (Cincinnati, 1857), 419.
26 Pitezel, 419.

that Indian missions had proved a failure. Comparing the number of early Christians with the population of the world, he pointed that the number of Christians was exceedingly small, but "the world was bettered by the introduction of Christianity, before a millionth part had actually tested its virtue." In the same way, the Indian nation would be benefitted. "Christianity has been introduced among them—it is the leaven hid in the meal, and must affect, more or less, the entire lump. Its work must be slow and gradual, but it must go on and increase."[27]

But Pitezel's book portrays a man true to the missionary ideals that sent him to the frontier. On one hand we can understand the energy and practical knowledge any missionary needed for survival. Pitezel gives us an excellent picture of many adventures, hardships, and household duties, such as making shoes for his wife and daughter. Perhaps most welcome in his account is a sense of humor that assures us that missionaries were, after all, just people who sometimes bumbled the job and could laugh about it.

What Pitezel managed to do was to uphold the ideal of trying to undo some of the wrongs done to the Indian people without falling into self-righteousness, being hypocritical, or competing with other missionaries simply to gain souls. His writing reveals a man who is thoughtful, athletic, resourceful, and compassionate—mindful of the hardships his wife must endure and appreciative of her important role in the missions. He gives us

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[27] Pitezel, 415.

hope that some missionaries did help establish a better relationship between Indian and whites in some way, if only by quality of their own lives.

Other Protestant missions in Michigan

Both the Episcopal and Lutheran churches created missions in Michigan that have been noted by historians. Reverend James Selkrig was the founder and pastor at an Episcopal church in Niles when he was placed in charge of an Indian colony, the Bradley mission, in northeastern Barry County in 1839. Selkrig stayed at the mission, preaching to Ottawa, Potawatomi, and white people until his death in 1878. Another minister, Reverend Henry Jackson, joined Selkrig at the mission. Jackson was an Ojibwa from Canada who was an excellent speaker. Besides preaching, Jackson gave lectures about Indian life and customs to white audiences in the state's cities.

For two decades the German Lutherans in the Saginaw Valley also worked with Indians and established several missions. Friedrich August Craemer believed that Indians should be brought into white settlements for their religious training, and with this philosophy he worked unsuccessfully to create an Indian mission in his town of Frankenmuth. Craemer's recruits to the Indian mission project were more successful.

One missionary appointed by Craemer was Edmund Baierlein, who practiced a slow, indirect approach to win Indians to Christianity. Baierlein gave the Indians time to observe the results of his farming and building skills before he tried to teach them new ways. Instead of teaching in English,

See Roy A. Swelflow,
"Lutheran Missions in the
Saginaw Valley" Mich Hist
LI. 3 (Fall 1967) 238-9.

Baierlein learned the Ojibwa language. Within three years his Bethany mission had a membership of forty adults. In 1851, however, Baierlein was called to a mission station in India. He was replaced by E.G.W. Mieszler, who did not have the former missionary's leadership abilities, and the work at Bethany declined.

Other Lutheran missions for Indians were established at Sebewaing and Shebahyonk. Missionaries there were Johann Auch, J. F. Maier, J. E. Roeder, and others. The Lutherans generally began to believe that their work among the Indians was too little and too late. The Methodists had already made some inroads in the area, so the Lutherans believed that they not only had to reach those Indians who had not been exposed to Christianity, but change the faulty doctrinal beliefs of Indians converted by the Methodists! One Lutheran missionary declined to work among the Ojibwa since he believed they were on the verge of extinction and any missionary work would be comparable to holding a requiem for a dying people.[28]

The Lutheran work in the Saginaw valley illustrates the unfortunate aspects of Protestant missionary work in the western Great Lakes area in the mid-1800s. Although Craemer was extreme in his views that Indians should be uprooted from their communities to join white communities, there was little if any respect for the Indian culture or sympathy for the people who were expected to undergo an extreme cultural change in less than a generation. It

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[28] Roy A. Suelflow, "Lutheran Missions in the Saginaw Valley." *Michigan History* LI.3 (Fall 1967), 238-239.

was simply assumed by missionaries that the Indians would naturally and quickly welcome the improved way of life offered by white civilization.

Secondly, the attempts made by Protestant missionaries in the region were often marred by interdenominational rivalry. Even the more progressive Baierlein saw little hope for Lutheran missions because of the stronger Methodist influence in the area. The work of missionaries quickly loses it luster when it becomes apparent that making more Lutherans or Methodists or Presbyterians is a primary goal. Adding anti-Catholicism to the formula clouds the missionary attempts even further. Each makes the Ojibwa or Ottawa or Wyandot souls, something to be confiscated—much like the land.

By the 1820s & 1830s,
Wisconsin became a
place for resettling
Indians from the East.

Chapter IV

Missions on the Wisconsin and Minnesota Frontier

Missionaries among the New York Indians

Several of the Protestant missions in the southern part of Wisconsin in the first half 1800s were established as various Indian people from the East were resettled in the Wisconsin area. Samuel Stambaugh, Indian agent at Green Bay, reported that "the country allotted by the agreement between the United States and the Menominie Tribe for the New York Indians lies on the west side of the Fox River and Green Bay. It contains, as near as I can compute. . .five hundred and seventy thousand acres."[1] Among the tribes who settled here were the Stockbridge Indians, who were first moved from Massachusetts to New York, the Oneida, and the Brotherton.

The new Stockbridge settlement, called Kaukauna, was located on the Fox River about twenty miles south of Green Bay. Over the years the Stockbridge people had been accustomed to having Protestant ministers preach to them, including the famous Jonathon Edwards and David Brainerd. Their exposure to white civilization and religion, then, made them seem to be a group with whom missionaries might be successful. In 1825 the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions sent Reverend Jesse Miner to work among

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[1] Samuel Staumbaugh, "Report on the Wisconsin Territory," *Wisconsin Historical Collections, XV*, 409.

them. Within a few years Miner sent for his family to join him at the mission, but he died just as he completed building a home for them.

Reverend Cutting Marsh was sent to Kaukauna as Miner's replacement in 1830. His wife was Eunice Osmer who had been a teacher at the Mackinac mission. Cutting and Eunice Marsh worked with the Stockbridge people for eighteen years. Since there were only about two hundred and twenty-five Indians at Kaukauna, thirty-nine whom were church members, Marsh's job was to extend to neighboring tribes of Menominee, Brotherton, and Winnebago. But there was plenty of other activity to occupy Marsh's time. The settlement was shaken by the Black Hawk War in 1832, and on several occasions threats of attacks by Sac and Fox bands sent the Stockridge and their missionaries hurrying for protection at Fort Howard (Green Bay). At the war's end, Marsh began searching for better land for the Stockbridge, land farther from white settlers. In 1834 the group moved to what is now the village of Stockbridge on the eastern shore of Lake Winnebago.

Near the close of Marsh's ministry among the Stockbridge he reported that there were fifty-one members in regular standing, only a few more than when he had come. Three, he reported, were "under censure." "As I become more and more acquainted with the native character," he wrote to a Scottish board who sent financial support, "I am more deeply convinced that my first impressions were erroneous, and that any individual upon a slight acquaintance will form erroneous conclusions. I mean that a person by long

acquaintance sees and feels more deeply the hidden, withering effects of paganism long after its outward forms have seemingly passed away—." [2] Marsh had discovered after 18 years of service that one simply does not come to a settlement, even a small settlement like Kaukauna, and change the spiritual and cultural heritage of a people, labeled paganism by the missionaries, to a new way of living, speaking, and worship—as superior as it may have seemed to the changer.

If it was not enough to work at the task of changing the Indians' entire way of life, missionaries such as Marsh had government policies and treaties with which to contend. In several annual reports Marsh blamed his low church membership and lack of spiritual progress on the actions and inactions of the government. "Some of them [problems] are inquestionably inseparable from the Indian state growing out of the frequent Treaties for the purchase of land and the oftentimes gross neglect on the part of the officers of the general government to carry into effect promptly treat stipulations. Often these are not only neglected but violated, which perplexes the Indian, and destroys his confidence in the white man."[3]

The division among the Stockbridges on whether to move west as a tribe or become individual citizens and stay on their farms split the settlement and ended the work of the ABCFM. With some moving and some remaining, Cutting

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[2] William Ward Wight, "Documents Relating to the Stockbridge Mission, 1825-48," *Wisconsin Historical Collections, XV*, 197.
[3] Wight, 175.

and Eunice Marsh ended their work at Stockbridge. They remained in Wisconsin, however, with Cutting ministering to white settlements through the American Home Missionary Society.

The Oneida Indians came to the Wisconsin Territory with their own Episcopal missionary, Reverend Eleazer Williams, who had helped arrange for land for the New York tribes. The main Oneida settlement was located at Duck Creek on the west side of the Fox River south of Fort Howard. A small settlement of Oneida, most who had intermarried with the Stockbridge, lived near the Stockbridge at Kaukauna.

Williams, who himself was Indian and white, became a colorful figure in Wisconsin history. He had hoped that in their new Wisconsin home he would become a Christian chief not only for the Oneida, Brothertown, Stockbridge, but also for the Winnebago and native Menominee. Williams' plan failed, but about that time H. D. Eastman of Green Bay wrote a novel about a boy raised by Indians who turned out to be the lost son of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. Eastman modeled his character after Williams, who was well-educated and refined. Being the lost Dauphin seemed like a good idea to Williams, and in 1849 he announced that he was indeed the son of Louis XVI. When that proved to be false, Williams became a target of ridicule and returned to New York state. His actual work among the Oneidas has been obscured by the lost Dauphin story.

Other Episcopalian missionaries and teachers worked with the Oneidas in addition to Williams. Reverend Richard Fish Cadle ran an Indian mission

school from 1829 to 1834 which was recorded as having fifty children in 1831.[4] Most of the children were part Indian and white. The school very likely had several teachers or missionary assistants. One of them mentioned was Albert Ellis, a man who later founded a newspaper in Green Bay.

Like the Episcopals, the Methodists also had missionaries working among the Oneida before their move to Wisconsin. Two of their most effective missionary teachers were Daniel Adams, a Mohawk, and Electa Quinney, a Stockbridge, who also made the Wisconsin move. But the Oneida also asked the Methodists for an ordained mininster, and Reverend John Clark answered that call in 1832. Together Clark, Adams, and Quinney established a school at a Oneida-Stockbridge settlement on the east bank of the Fox, twenty-five miles south of Green Bay. As in many missions, a log mission house served both as a school building and a church. Thirty-five to forty people attended church services, and Quinney also held a Sunday school for children and adults. The Oneida then moved to Duck Creek, taking the Methodist school with them.

At Duck Creek another log mission house was built along with log houses for Indian families. In 1837 Salmon Stebbins, a presiding Methodist elder in the region, reported that the Indians were "opening farms, building houses and barns. . .. Their piety is equally as good."[5]

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[4] This school may have been located in Green Bay.

[5] Wade Crawford Barclay, *The History of Methodist Missions, V. II* (New York: Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church), 151.

Clark soon was placed in charge of Indian missions in Green Bay, Kewawenon, and Sault Ste. Marie, the latter of which became his headquarters.Assisting him at Duck Creek was Reverend George White, Rolla H. Chubb, Etherlinda Lee. When Clark gave instructions for the establishment of a second school north of the settlement, the Indians objected, destroying the school within days of its opening.

Another missionary at Duck Creek was Daniel Poe who had come to the Oneida settlement in 1836 and soon found himself a wife who was working in another Indian settlement in the Green Bay vicinity. "I found her," he wrote proudly to a Methodist missionary conference, "among the Brothertown Indians alone, teaching the children in the wigwams of the distant West."[6] Jane Ingram was a woman devoted to the cause of helping Indian people. After marrying Poe, she donated three hundred dollars she had saved earlier from teaching in Michigan toward a school at the Oneida settlement. The couple remained at Duck Creek until 1839 when they left to become missionaries in Texas. Tragically, both died within an hour of each other in 1844, leaving three small children orphaned.[7]

Methodist work among the Oneida continued until all the Indians of the area were forced to move West as a tribe or become citizens with private lands. One of the leading missionaries in the final years at Duck Creek was Reverend

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6 William B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Methodist Pulpit* (New York, 1861), 788.

7 The sketches in Sprague refer to a fever causing the Poes' deaths, perhaps malaria.

Henry R. Colman. During Colman's tenure the settlement had good farms and comfortable houses. But even though his peers considered him successful, Colman felt the Oneidas did not live up to his hopes and expectations. Like Cutting Marsh of the ABCFM, Colman felt the government treaties kept the Indians in an unsettled state. He also came to believe that the Indians had lived so long without restrictions in their society, that they simply could not be restrained enough to form a civilized community.[8]

The Brotherton Indians established a settlement on the east side of the Fox River, about twenty miles south of Green Bay. This was not agreeable with the Menominee, and they moved close to the Stockbridge Indians on the east shores of Lake Winnebago. Records show that Baptists worked with the Brothertons for approximately seven years under the direction of Thomas and Deborah Dick. When Thomas Dick died in 1841, the Methodists seem to taken over the work with missionary Jesse Halstead. In 1842 Hiram W. Frink was appointed to take Halstead's place, apparently until like the Stockbridge and Oneida, the Brotherton moved East or assumed private ownership of their farms.

Protestant missionaries did not seem to make any inroads among the native Menominee or Winnebago people. Any Christian influence within these tribes was accomplished by Catholic priests who had the benefits of early visits by Jesuit priests, such as the notable Claude Allouez. The Green Bay area was, in

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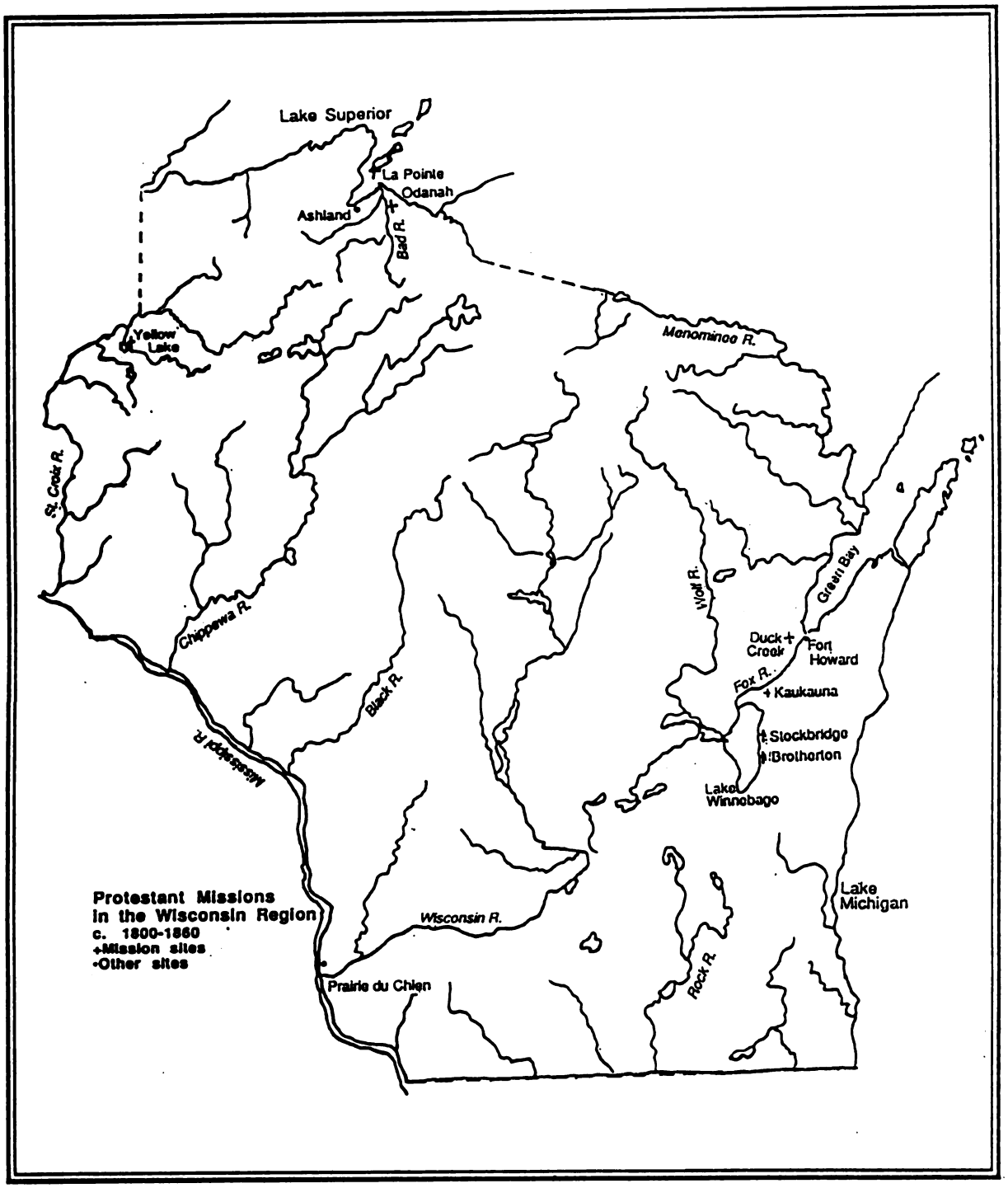
[8] Barclay, V. 2, 151.

fact, the heart of the Catholic missions with the establishment of the St. Francois Xavier mission in the early 1670s. More effort by Protestant missionaries in the Wisconsin Territory in the first half of the 1800s was made among the Ojibwa in the Lake Superior region. Here the ABCFM, the Methodists, and the American Missionary Society worked to make civilized Christians out of a people who had spent centuries hunting, fishing, moving frequently, and occasionally warring with the Sioux.

Ojibwa missions in upper Wisconsin

In 1831 the first Protestant mission in upper Wisconsin was established at La Pointe, an Ojibwa settlement and headquarters of the American Fur Company on Madeline Island among the Apostle Islands of Lake Superior. The Protestants were late. One hundred and sixty-six years before the Catholics had a built a mission station and some Indians were still followed the Catholic faith. Officials of the American Fur Company, however, welcomed the efforts of the ABCFM in the region.

The first Protestant mission at La Pointe was founded unofficially by Frederick Ayer, an unordained missionary teacher who had worked at Mackinac. Ayer's school began with white children of the settlement, while he worked to learn the Ojibwa language. In 1831 Reverend Sherman Hall gave the La Pointe mission its official beginning as he arrived with his wife and an interpreter, Mrs. Elizabeth Campbell. Meanwhile Ayer explored the region



looking for other places to establish missions. He also wrote an Ojibwa spelling book, which he took back to New York to have printed.

By 1833 there were a number of missionaries and assistants at La Pointe, ready to reach out and establish a network of missions in the region. In addition to the Halls who would head the La Pointe station for many years were Reverend and Mrs. William Boutwell. Edmund F. Ely, Frederick Ayer and his wife, Delia Cook, and Sabrina Stevens. The Boutwells, Ayers, and Ely soon set out to other stations. Even though La Pointe served as something of a hub for missionaries and traders, Ely found it disappointing, with only about a dozen bark-covered buildings.[9]

The Halls managed the station at La Pointe for over twenty years, which meant operating a school, preaching to both whites and Indians, and supervising the outlying missions. In 1835 the ABCFM faced revived competition from the Catholics with the arrival of Father Frederic Baraga. Fast becoming a legend in the region, the energetic and charismatic Baraga worked quickly and built a log church, a house, and a school. He complained that "the Protestants were deluding the poor Indians of that place into damnable errors"[10] and in a short time claimed to convert over one hundred Indians. He then moved on, leaving another priest in charge.

The Halls were indeed the dedicated Christian heroes described by an elderly Indian woman in Chapter 1.[11] Hall preached in the Ojibwa language

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9 Roy Hoover, "To Stand Alone in the Wilderness," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 49 (Fall, 1985), 268.
10 Edmund Jefferson Danziger, Jr. *The Chippewas of Lake Superior* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979), 82.
11 See page 15.

and translated the Old Testament into Ojibwa. One of his students remembered that he did care for them, but that when he was displeased with them "two small muscles would twitch on his face."[12] During the Hall's years at La Pointe, the native people were faced with removal. The Ojibwa people had agree to sell their land in 1842, reserving the right of occupancy. But not even the missionaries or the honest Indian agents who worked to protect the Indians' rights believed there was any fear for encroachment except for copper mining. It came as a shock,then, when the government began calling for removal. Hall traveled to Washington to help convince officials that the Ojibwa should have the right to stay, but returned unoptimistic. Perhaps it would help, he apparently told them, if they adopted more civilized habits in their dress, planted more crops, and became more conscientious in their school and church attendance. When the government insisted on removal, however, Hall moved the school and his home to the Crow River along the Mississippi. He continued to work there until 1854. The interest in the school dropped and there was talk that the Indians would rather have their share of the school money than have the school. The Halls retired.

Another ABCFM missionary at La Pointe, Reverend Leonard Wheeler, also worked to help the Ojibwa retain their right to stay in the region. After he and his wife Harriet arrived in La Pointe in 1841, Wheeler began to look for a place where the Indians could farm more extensively. He chose land along the Bad

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[12] Gerald Vizenour, *The People Named the Chippewa* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 46.

River, about nine miles from Ashland. He and the Bad River Band, as they came to be called, named the mission Odanah and built houses and a school. Wheeler was highly respected by white settlers along the Lake Superior shores who saw him as a great defender of the Ojibwa people.

The Bad River band were determined not to move West and lived for two years when their annuities were withheld from them. Mrs. Wheeler wrote, "They are fully determined not to go. . . .I doubt very much whether there is a band of Chippewas beyond the Mississippi, with all their annuities, that are as well fed and clothed as ours are."[13] The Wheelers shared the Ojibwas' delight when they finally received payment in 1852 and then again in 1853 when the fear of removal of this band seemed to be over at last. "The Lord reigns," wrote a triumphant Wheeler.[14]

Missions beyond La Pointe

During his exploration of Lake Superior country in 1831, Frederick Ayer visited Sandy Lake and Leech Lake in the Minnesota area with the idea of eventually establishing missions there. But the following year he and his wife Elizabeth instead set out to establish a mission at Yellow Lake in northwestern Wisconsin.

Although Ayer was an experienced teacher, his work at Yellow Lake did not turn out as he had hoped. The Ojibwa band there had ambivalent feelings

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13 J. N. Davidson. *In Unnamed Wisconsin* (Milwaukee, 1895),
14 Davidson, 169.

about allowing Ayer, the dedicated Elizabeth Ayer, and their assistant, John L. Seymour, to work there. They approved their work, but with the building of the school they became fretful about white encroachment on their lands and told him to leave. Shortly after, they changed their minds, and the school was built. Still, the situation was not good. Food was scarce, and families scattered, making it difficult to hold school. Ayer became convinced that the few Indians who were attracted by what he and his assistants had to offer should be separated from the rest of the band. When another group of Ojibwa invited him to come to Pokegama in 1836, he took the group of "praying Indians" from Yellow Lake and made the move.

Meanwhile, other ABCFM missionaries began working at Sandy Lake and Leech Lake. At Leech Lake was Reverend William T. Boutwell and his new wife, Hester Crooks who was part Ojibwa. Although Boutwell had worked at Sault Ste. Marie and Mackinac in order to learn the language, tried hard to acquaint himself with native customs, and had even married a woman who was part Ojibwa, he found he was unable to cope with life at Leech Lake. The Indians there, a band called the Pillagers, murdered an American Fur Company agent and poisoned one of his children. They also treated the Boutwells poorly, robbing their garden and killing their cattle.

Shortly after the establishment of the Leech Lake mission, Edmund Ely opened a mission at Sandy Lake. The Indians here were less hostile than those at Leech Lake, and it was not long before the discouraged Boutwells moved to

the Sandy Lake mission, allowing Ely to move on and establish a school at Fond du Lac, which later became an important area for the work of Methodist missionaries. Ely seems to have stayed at this post for several years, perhaps until the ABCFM abandoned it temporarily in 1840. During part of that time he was assisted by Granville T. Sproat.

In 1838 the Boutwells moved to Pokegama Lake and Ayer joined Ely at Fond du Lac where Sproat had left for La Pointe. But the situation in both places seem to vary between accepting, then hostile, acts toward the missionaries. At each station the native people killed cattle to show their displeasure with their white teachers. When the band at Fond du Lac left to fish, the ABCFM missionaries there went to Pokegama. Records show that Boutwell, Ayer, Ely, and another assistant, Sabrina Stevens, were all working in 1840.

One of the missionaries' frustrations was getting the native people to work in their gardens and plan for the winter ahead. According to Boutwell and others, the Indians seemed content to beg and starve rather than work as their teachers were instructing them to do. Boutwell's letters show his frustration and his need to reevaluate his Christian ideals about feeding the hungry:

> Seven winters that I have been in the country I have fed the hungry, and they are none the wiser, none the more provident. It's enough! I will feed you no longer. If you choose to smoke and sleep all summer, you may beg in the winter and get nothing. I have planted, hoed, and dug potatoes with my own hands till

> I am tired, and if you will not raise them for yourselves you shan't eat them hereafter.[15]

Boutwell's policy after seven winters, it seems, was to force the Ojibwas who begged to do some work for the food, such as cutting his wood. The two cultures' view of work, however, remained an unresolved source of contention and misunderstanding.

In 1841 the Ojibwa at Pokegama were attack by Sioux warriors. Since the Ojibwa had feared an attack, they had camped on an island in the lake. When a group of men went to shore the next day to talk to some of the Ojibwa warriors stationed in a different area, they were attacked by some Sioux. The Ojibwa men escaped to land, but two girls who had come along to bring the canoe back to the island were killed. Both girls were students of the missionary school, and their brutal deaths shook the missionaries. After several days of fighting, the Ojibwa managed to drive away their enemies.

The Sioux attack on Pokegama frightened the Ojibwa and drove them away from the settlement. The ABCFM missionaries went to Fond du Lac with some of the Pokegama residents for a time, except Frederick Ayer, who journeyed to Oberlin College in Ohio to become an ordained minister. In 1843 the missionaries and Indians returned to Pokegama, hoping to live there peacefully. But two years later the Ojibwa settlement was abandoned, along with the mission, since white settlers wanted the land. When the mission work at Pokegama came to an end, Ely returned to work at La Pointe where Sproat

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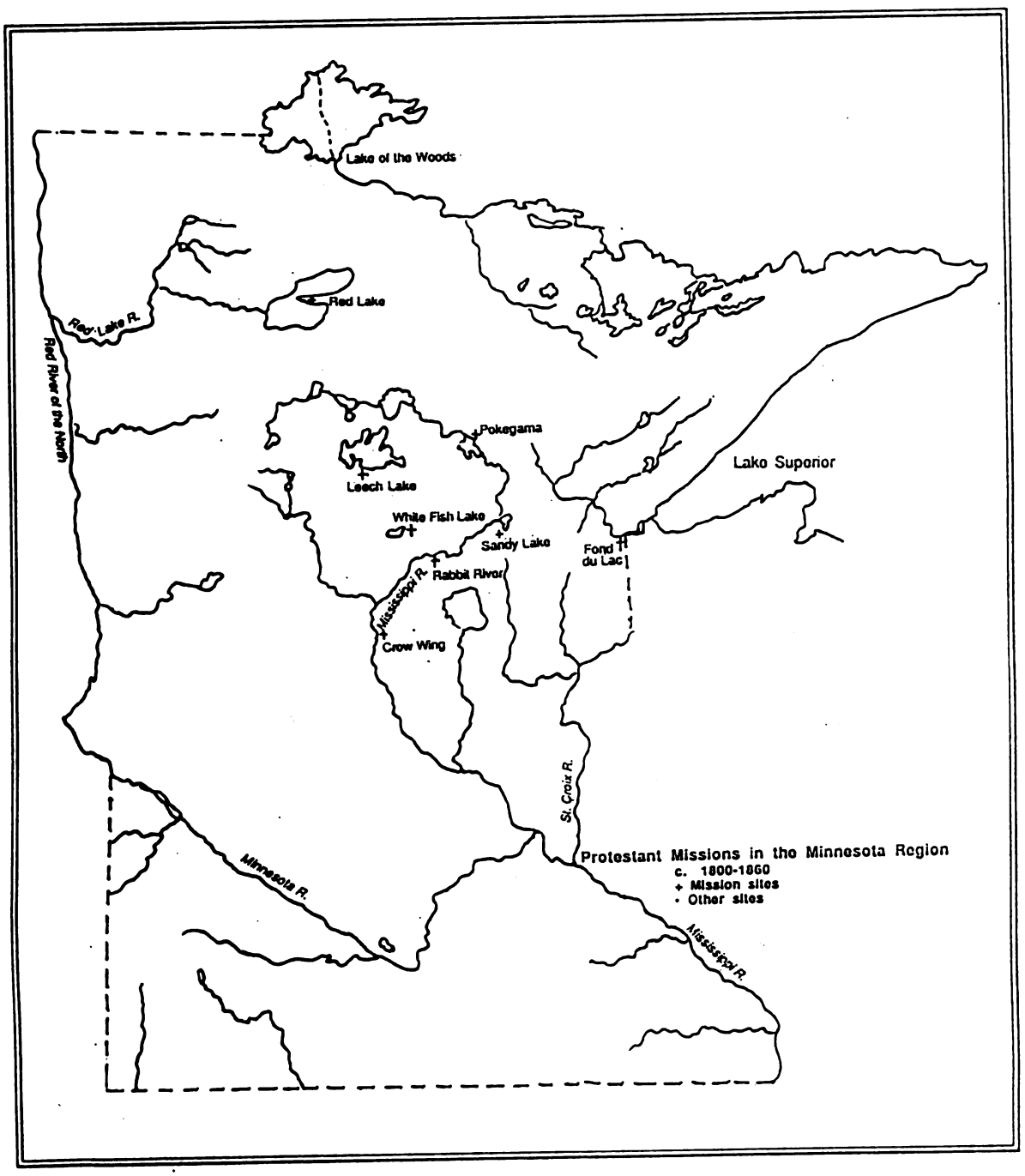
[15] Return I. Holcombe, *Minnesota in Three Centuries* (Minnesota, 1908), 227.

had left a vacancy, and Boutwell gave up work with the Indians altogether and began ministering to whites.



The Amerian Missionary Association

In 1843 Reverend Sproat wrote from La Pointe: "Mr. and Mrs. Ayer are here. They are going on to Red Lake, and with them a reinforcement of missionaries."[16] Ayer's ordination at Oberlin brought another group to the Lake Superior area to work among the Ojibwa of the region. This new missionary society, the American Missionary Association, was tied to Oberlin College. Their first mission was Red Lake, an Ojibwa settlement that Ayer and David Brainerd Spencer had selected after a long exploration trip a few months before. Among the first AMA workers to journey to Red Lake were Mrs. David Spencer, Dr. and Mrs. William Lewis, Mr. and Mrs. P. O. Johnston, Mr. and Mrs. Alonzo Barnard, and Sela G. Wright.

The members of the AMA, although welcomed at La Pointe, were perhaps considered overly zealous in their racial views by members of the ABCFM. Members of the Oberlin group were strong abolitionists, as well as people convinced that they must help the neglected Indians even if it meant giving their lives for their work. Perhaps stronger than their Christian message, although that was certainly powerful,was the idea of service to a forgotten and abused people. The ideas of the man behind the AMA, Dr. Charles G. Finney, reportedly required "very great modification when reduced to actual practice. . .." [17]

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[16] Davidson, 163 n.
[17] Davidson, 163.

The AMA supported a mission at Red Lake for many years. Ayer himself was part of the work here for some time and translated the New Testament in Ojibwa. He then left in 1849 and went on to establish a school at Crow Wing near the Mississippi River. Other workers involved with the mission through the 1850s were Mr. and Mrs. O. A. Coe, Mr.R. M. Lafferty, and Mr. E. Carver. In the 1850s the AMA was chosen to take charge of the educational and civilization funds provided by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The work, however, proved to be too much. The AMA decided to withdraw from Red Lake, because of "unreasonable demands of the Indians upon the missionaries for secular labors and assistance." [18]

AMA missionaries went from Red Lake to other stations. Dr. and Mrs. William Lewis and Mrs. and Mrs. P. O. Johnson spent two years trying to establish a mission at Leech Lake where ABCFM missionaries had failed some time earlier. The Ojibwa band there, the Pillagers, treated the missionaries badly, killing cattle and threatening them when the missionaries objected to their begging. The problems became so grave that the station at Leech Lake was closed in 1845. The Johnsons retired from missionary service while the Lewises went to Red Lake. The Spencers and the Barnards went to missions among the Sioux in Minnesota and the North Dakota areas.

Meanwhile, the Ayers opened an independent school for Ojibwa in Crow Wing. The school was designed for the more advanced Ojibwa students, and

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[18] Riggs, 159.

enlisted support from whites in the area, including traders. The Ayers gained the help of excellent teachers from both Oberlin and Mount Holyoke and the school continued for a number of years, although many of its later students were white. After a long career of missionary work in the Lake Superior region, Frederick and Elizabeth Ayer moved to the South to help freed slaves. When Frederick died in 1869, over three thousand people were said to have come to his funeral. Later a friend wrote about Elizabeth Ayer. "She is a living embodiment of a well-spent life. . .."[19] He and his wife were undoubtedly Christian heroes who had dedicated their lives to their beliefs.

Methodist, Baptist, and Episcopalian missions among the Ojibwa

In 1836 Reverend John Clark who headed Methodist missionary stations from his headquarters in Sault Ste. Marie sent George Copway, John Tounchy, and Peter Marksman to what is now the Lac Court Oreilles reservation. The following year a Methodist mission was begun there. Although this and other Methodist missions are not as easy to trace as those of the ABCFM, it is evident that these missionaries spent a number of years in the western Lake Superior region ministering to the Ojibwa.

In 1837 the Illinois Conference of the Methodist Church created an Indian Mission District that included western Wisconsin Ojibwa. In charge of the district was Reverend Alfred Brunson. Under Brunson's leadership a number

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[19] Schell, 41.

of missions were opened. Two of them were at Fond du Lac and Sandy Lake where the ABCFM missionaries also worked. Another began at Elk River and was soon moved to Rabbit River and finally to White Fish Lake, where John Johnson was in charge.

Sandy Lake mission first shows up in Methodist history in 1840. Stationed here were Reverend and Mrs. Samuel Spates with Ojibwa assistants Henry P. Chase and John Johnson, which indicates that the White Fish Lake mission was not a long lasting one. Life at the Sandy Lake mission was not an easy. The settlement was threatened by Sioux raids which caused the missionaries to withdraw to Rabbit River for some time. There were also food shortages because of the lack of game and poor wild rice harvests. Mrs. Spate wrote to Mrs. Pitezel telling of how the missionaries' crop of three hundred bushels of potatoes was saving many from starvation. She also noted that a poor supply of rabbits in the area had created a great demand for clothing.[20] Just how long the Methodists continued their mission at Sandy Lake is uncertain, but another minister, Reverend H. J. Bruce, assisted Spates at the mission.

About a year after ABCFM missionaries abandoned Fond du Lac, Methodist missionionaries began their work there. George Copway is listed as serving the mission from 1841 to 1843. Also listed as working at the mission until 1845 are Thomas M. Fullerton, Samuel Spates, John Johnson, and Peter Greensky. The mission was likely abandoned after 1845.

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[20] Pitezel, 396.

Reverend Eric H. Day and his family served a group of Ojibwa Indians for a time, in the vicinity or perhaps at the Fond du Lac mission. Day, who wrote of his travels in Lake Superior country much like Pitezel, spent more of his efforts describing the Indians habits, the landscape, and his adventurous travels on Lake Superior than in chronicling the details of his mission work. He was later sent to Eagle River where he established a mission for copper miners.

The Episcopals, too, established some schools among the Ojibwa bands of northern Wisconsin and Minnesota. In the 1850s Reverend James Lloyd Breck added his name to the list of Protestant missionaries who tried unsuccessfully to create a mission at Leech Lake. Aiding him were Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Rees, Emily West, and Kate Heron. Breck eventually established a mission school at Faribault. The Episcoplians also helped Ayer with his school at Crow Wing.

The removal of Indians to reservations further West, the breakup of bands into individual citizenship and ownership of property, and the beginning of the Civil War ended the flurry of missionary activity in the Great Lakes by 1860. But the end also came within each denomination or missionary society because of the feelings of discouragement among the missionaries themselves.

The old Indian women who remember Reverend Sherman Clark working at La Pointe perhaps best described the lack of success felt by the Protestant

missionaries. This woman vividly contrasted the two cultures and the spiritual world of the Indian that white missionaries were unable to penetrate.

> These missionaries were never loons, never bears, their wives and mothers were never killdeers on the shoreline. We were animals and birds, even when we were converted, and that was the difference between culture and civilization. We once spoke the language of animals, the missionaries were caught in word -winds.[21]

In their dedicated desire to convert, to civilize, and to change the native people it is unlikely that Hall and others understood that they had entered a deeply spiritual world.They identified only the outward trappings of something they termed paganism, and worked fervently to snuff it out. When no amount of their labor or good works seemed to produce civilized Christian communities in place of the old Woodland families, the white teachers tried to intellectualize their disappointment. They did not perceive that they were not loons or bears in a land of loons and bears. Sent out by their own convictions and culture to become heroes, they were lost, without shadows, in a world they could not understand.

The Protestant missionaries who set out to the Great Lakes region may well have dreamed of missions that would grow to become settlements of whites and native people—agrarian Christian utopias that proved Christianity and civilization went hand in hand. But such was not the case. With few exceptions

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[21] Vizenour, 46.

of reconstructed churches on Mackinac Island or Mission Point near Traverse City, there are few traces or shadows of these Protestant missions. Some had their moments of promise with fine crops or bright young scholars. But overall, the tiny log mission houses in the forests did not become the leaven in the Indian nation as Pitezel had hoped. At best, the missions may have been places where whites and native peoples gained a better understanding of each other. And they were certainly places where both peoples tried.

APPENDICES

American Missionary Association Missionaries & Teachers at Indian Missions
Western Great Lakes Region, 1800-1860

Missionary/Teacher	Mission	Approx. Years of Service
Adams, Rev. A. B.		6 years
Adams, Mrs. A. B.		6 years
Ayer, Elizabeth Taylor	Red Lake*	
Ayer, Frederick	Red Lake*	
Barnard, Rev. Alonzo	Red Lake*	1843 - 10 years
Barnard, Sara Philena Babcock	Red Lake*	
Carver, E.	Red Lake	7 years
Coe, O. A.	Red Lake	22 years
Coe, Mrs. O. A.	Red Lake	22 years
Fischer, J. S.	Red Lake	10 years
Fischer, Mrs. J. S.	Red Lake	10 years
Johnston, P. O.	Leech Lake	
Johnston, Mrs. P. O.	Leech Lake	
Laferty, R. M.	Red Lake	11 years
Lewis, Dr. William	Red Lake	10 years
Lewis, Mrs.William	Red Lake	10 years
Spees, Francis F.	Red Lake	12 years
Spencer, Cordelia Leonard	Red Lake*	1848
Spencer, David Brainerd	Red Lake*	1842-
Wright, Sela G.	Red Lake	
Wright, Mrs. S. G.	Red Lake	5 years

Baptist Missionaries & Teachers at Indian Missions
Wester Great Lakes Region, 1800-1860

Missionary/Teacher	Mission	Approx. Years of Service
Baylies, Julia	Sault Ste. Marie	1833
Bingham, Rev. Abel	Sault Ste. Marie	1828-45
Bingham, Hannah	Sault Ste. Marie	1828-45
Brockway, W. H.	Sault Ste. Marie*	1839-44
Cameron, James D.	Sault Ste Marie	
Crosley, W. M.	Carey Station	1825-26
Dick, Deborah	Brothertown	1834-41
Dick, Thomas	Brothertown	1834-41
Frink, Hiram W.	Brothertown	1842-45
Gardner, Lydia	Sault Ste. Marie	1833
Gavitt, E. C.	Huron Mission	
Halstead, Jesse		
Jones, Jane Kelly		
Lykins, Johnston	Thomas Station*	
Macomber, Eleanor	Sault Ste. Marie	1830
McCoy, Christiana	Carey Station	1822-30
McCoy, Isaac	Carey Station	1822-30
Meeker, Jotham	Carey Station	
Morse, Elizabeth		
Polke, Charles	Carey Station	
Pratt, John G.		
Pratt, Olivia Evans		
Purchase, L.	Thomas Station	
Rice, Mary	Sault Ste. Marie	
Richardson, Eleanor	Thomas Station	1 1/2 years
Richardson, David	Thomas Station	1 1/2 years
Sears, John	Thomas Station	
Simerwell, Robert	Carey Station	
Simerwell, Mrs. Robert	Carey Station	
Slater, Leonard	Thomas Station**	1827-52
Slater, Mary F. Ide	Thomas Station**	1827-52

Lutheran Missionaries & Teachers at Indian Missions
Western Great Lakes Region, 1800-1860

Missionary/Teacher	Mission	Approx. Years of Service
Auch, Johann J. F.	Sebewaing	1845-53
Baierlein, Edmund	Bethany	1847-57
Cameron, James D.	Sault Ste. Marie	
Craemer, Dorothea	Frankenmuth	1833-45
Craemer, Friedrich	Frankenmuth	1833-45
Dumser, Johann Simon	Sebewaing*	1846
Flessa, Johann Lorenz	Saginaw Valley	1846
Maier, J. F.	Shebahyonk	1845-50
Miessler, Ernst Gustav Herman	Bethany*	1851-68
Roeder, J. E.	Shebahyonk	1851-53
Schmid, Rev. Friedrich	Sebewaing*	1842-45
Schuster, Georg Konrad	Saginaw Valley	1846
Sievers, G. E. C. F.	Bethany	1853
Sinke, Georg	Sebewaing	1845-51

Methodist Missionaries & Teachers at Indian Missions
Western Great Lakes Region, 1800-1860

Missionary/Teacher	Mission	Approx. Years of Service
Adams, Daniel**	Duck Creek*	
Allen, S. M.	Wyandot	1837-38
Banning, Rev. Anthony	Wyandot	
Barstow, Lydia	Wyandot	
Baylies, Julia	Sault Ste. Marie	
Bigelow, Russel	Wyandot	1827
Bourne, Milton	Sault Ste. Marie	
Boydson, B.	Wyandot	1830
Brooks, John C.	Wyandot	1826-27
Brooks, Mrs. John C.	Wyandot	
Brown, G.W.	Kewawenon	3yrs.
Bruce, Rev. H. J.	Sandy Lake	
Brunson, Rev. Alfred	MN/WI supt.	1835-39
Bushey, Joseph	Sault Ste. Marie	1844-
Cahbeach, John**	Kewawenon	1834-
Chandler, Rev. Daniel M.	Kewawenon	1834-36
Chase, Henry P.**	Sandy Lake	
Chubb, Rolla H.	Duck Creek	
Clark, Rev. John	Sault Ste. Marie*	1832-36
Colman, Rev.Henry R.	Duck Creek	1840-45
Copway, George**	Fond du Lac*	1840-
Day, Rev. Eric H.	Fond du Lac	
Elliot, Charles	Wyandot	1822
Finley, James B.	Wyandot*	1821-28
Frazee, Bradford	Saginaw	1832
Frink, Hiriam	Sheboygan	1837
Fullerton, Thomas	Fond du Lac	1840-
Gardner, Lydia	Sault Ste. Marie	
Gavitt, E. C.	Flat Rock*	1835-36
Gibbs, Mrs. H. E.	Wyandot	
Gilruth, James	Wyandot*	1827-28
Greensky, Peter	Fond du Lac	
Haag, Christianna	Wyandot	
Halstead, Jesse	Brotherton	1839
Henkle, Moses Sr.	Wyandot	1819
Hitt, Martin	Wyandot	
Hitt, Samuel	Wyandot	
Hooker, Jacob (possibly Hooper)	Wyandot	1823-24
Hooper, Jacob (possibly Hooker)	Wyandot	1824-26
Hooper, Margaret	Wyandot	
Hott, Rev. Joseph	Kewawenon	1846
Huddleston, Rev.	Elk River	
Jacokes, D. C.**	Kewawenon	1841-
Johnson, John**	Sandy Lake*	
Johnson, Rev. P.O.	Sault Ste. Marie	
Kavanaugh, Rev. B. F.	Elk River*	
King, Rev. David	Little Crow	1837

King, George**	Kewawenon	1840-
Lansdale, Thomas	Wynadot	
Lee, Etherlinda	Duck Creek	
Marksman, Rev. Peter**	Kewawenon*	1840-
Miller, Robert	Wyandot	
Mitchell, Joseph	Wyandot	
Montgomery, James	Wyandot	1816
Parker, Jeane	Wyandot	
Pitezel, Rev. John H.	Kewawenon*	1843-1848
Peet, Rev. James	Fond du Lac*	
Poe, Daniel	Duck Creek	1836-39
Poe, Jane West Ingram	Deansburg *	1836-39
Pounds, Lewis	Wyandot	
Prentice, Liberty	Wyandot	
Quinney, Electa**	Duck Creek	
Reed, Henry W.	Duck Creek	1838-40
Riley, Jane	Wyandot	
Sabin, Asbury	Wyandot	
Scarritt, Isaac	Salem Mission	1828-29
Shaw, S. P.	Wyandot	1835-38
Simms, Thomas	Wyandot	1832
Spates, Samuel	Sandy Lake*	12 years
Spates, Mrs. Samuel	Sandy Lake*	
Steele, Salmon		
Steele, Rev. E.		
Stewart, John	Wyandot	1816-1823
Stubbs, Harriet	Wyandot	
Stuff, George L. S.	Duck Creek	1843-44
Sunday, John	Kewawenon*	
Taunchy, John		
Thompson, Thomas	Wyandot	1830-36
Van Order, Harvey	Sault Ste. Marie	1842-43
Walker, Jesse	Salem Mission	1824-28
Walker, William, Jr.	Wyandot	
Walker, Lydia	Wyandot	
Wheeler, James	Wyandot	1840-44
White, Rev. George	Duck Creek	1834

**Only one of the missions where this person served.*
*** Native missionary*

Presbyterian/Congregationalist/American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions
Western Great Lakes Area, 1800-1860

Missionary/Teacher	Mission	Approximate Yrs.
Ambler, Augustus	Stockbridge	1828-1831
Ayer, Elizabeth Taylor	Mackinaw*	
Ayer,Frederick	Yellow Lake*	1830-1865
Badger, Rev. Joseph	Upper Sandusky*	1806-
Barker, Rev. Abel	Mackinaw	1833-34
Boutwell, Hester Crooks	Leech Lake*	
Boutwell, Rev. William T.	Leech Lake*	1831-46
Brewster, Sidney L.	Maumee	1831-33
Brewster, Sarah Withrow	Maumee	1832
Campbell, W. R.	Mackinaw	1835-37
Campbell, Dolly Farrar	Mackinaw	1834-37
Coe, Rev. Alvin	Maumee*	1819-21
Cook, Delia	La Pointe*	1825-38
Doughtery, Rev. Peter	Old Mission	1838-71
Ely, Catherine Bissell	La Pointe*	
Ely, Rev. Edmund E.	La Pointe*	1833-49
Ferry, Rev. William	Mackinaw	1822-34
Ferry, Amanda	Mackinaw	1823-34
Fleming, Rev. John	Old Mission*	1837-39
Garey, Lucius	Mackinaw	1834-37
Garey, Francis Skinner	Mackinaw	1834-37
Goodale, Hannah	Mackinaw	1828-37
Hall, Chauncey	Mackinaw*	1832
Hall, Matilda Hotchkiss	Mackinaw*	1828
Hall, Rev. Sherman	La Pointe	1831-53
Hall, Mrs. Betsey	La Pointe	
Hearsey, Mason	Mackinaw	1834-36
Heydenburk, Huldah Warner	Mackinaw	1828
Heydenburk, Martin	Mackinaw	1824-33
Hornell, George	Mackinaw	1828-29
Hornell, Mrs. George	Mackinaw	1828-29
Hotchkiss, Matilda	Mackinaw	1828-37
Hudson, John	Fort Gratiot*	1825-30
Hudson, Mrs. John	Fort Gratiot*	1825
Hughes, Rev. Thomas	Maumee*	
James, Mrs. Woodbridge	La Pointe	
James, Rev. Woodbridge	La Pointe	
Leavitt, Jane	Mackinaw	1833
Loomis, Elisha	Mackinaw	1830-32
Loomis, Maria	Mackinaw	1830-32
Macurdy, Reverend Elisha	Upper Sandusky	
Marsh, Rev. Cutting	Stockbridge	1830-48
Marsh, Eunice Osmar	Mackinaw*	1824-48
McFarland, Betsey	Mackinaw*	1823-34

Miner, Amanda Head	Stockbridge	1828-29
Miner, Rev. Jesse	Stockbridge	1827-29
Mudgett, Sophia	Stockbridge	
Newell, Rebecca	Maumee	1828-33
Newland, John	Mackinaw	1828-29
Newland, Mrs. John	Mackinaw	1828-29
Newton, Abel D.	Mackinaw	1830-34
Osmar, Eunice (see Marsh)	Fort Gratiot*	
Parker, Betsey	Mackinaw*	1831-55
Quinney, Electa***	Stockbridge	
Robbins, Rev. Ludovicus	Maumee	1823
Rodd, Daniel	Old Mission	
Riggs, Hannah	Maumee	1827-33
Satterfield, James	Maumee	
Seymour, John L.	Mackinaw*	1833-40
Seymour, Jane Leavitt	Mackinaw*	
Skinner, Francis	Mackinaw*	1834-37
Skinner, Persis	Mackinaw*	1830-35
Smith, George	Old Wing	1838-
Smith, Arvilla A.	Old Wing	
Spees, Francis F.	Red Lake	12 years
Spooner, Abigail	La Pointe	
Sproat, Florantha Thompson	La Pointe	1838-46
Sproat, Granville T.	La Pointe	1835-46
Stevens, Rev. Jedidiah D.	Stockbridge*	1829-67
Stevens, Julia	Stockbridge	1829-46
Stevens, Sabrina	Maumee*	1828-46
Tait, Rev. Sam	Maumee	1822-
Taylor, Elizabeth		1828-49(?)
Town, Joseph	La Pointe	1834-37
Town, Hannah Hill	La Pointe	1835
Van Tassel, Rev. Isaac	Maumee	1833
Van Tassel, Isaac II	Maumee	
Van Tassel, Lucia	Maumee	1822
Warner, Huldah	Mackinaw	1828-33
Wheeler, Rev. Leonard	La Pointe*	
Wheeler, Harriet Wood	La Pointe	
Woodford, Elizabeth	Mackinaw*	1833-34(?)
Wright, Abigail	Maumee	1822
Wright, Mrs. S.G.	Red Lake	5 years
Wright, Rev. Sela G.	See AMA	1857-

**Served more than one station*

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