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CONFINING INDIANS: POWER, AUTHORITY, AND THE COLONIALIST IDEOLOGIES OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY REFORMERS

VOLUME ONE

By

C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa

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ABSTRACT

CONFINING INDIANS: POWER, AUTHORITY, AND THE COLONIALIST IDEOLOGIES OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY REFORMERS

By

C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa

This dissertation examines a critical, though much neglected, period in the development of federal Indian policy. It draws upon the life and career of Ely Parker and a constellation of other Indian policy reformers and reform organizations to illustrate the contested and complex voices that attempted to speak for Indian people and the roles that Indian people themselves played in the policy debates of the mid-nineteenth century. It contends that throughout this period, supporters of policies designed to protect Indian communities as distinct entities, or to provide Native peoples with opportunities to balance dispossession and compensate for a history of colonialism, confronted a group of conservative, zealously Christian, elitist reformers who championed indigenous confinement and coercive assimilation within the context of United States expansion. The rhetoric these men and women employed, and the actions they took, shed light upon the intersectionality of race, class, and gender discourses in Indian/white relations and although this era was significant for the establishment of a framework for dissent against disruptive colonialist governance, it ultimately resulted in the professionalization of federal Indian affairs and in the solidification of policies aimed at dispossession and domination by the end of the century as the state itself developed an active colonial bureaucracy, a role once filled by agents outside mainstream administrative structures.

This project explores the notion of "confining Indians," which refers to the often forced containment of Indian communities on reservations. Confinement, during this era,

though, also conveyed a notion of social, political, economic, and cultural marginalization for Indian people. The reformers that populate these chapters fit into two distinct categories. Ely Parker, Thomas Bland, and the National Indian Defense Association comprised one group and supported compensatory legislation to create opportunities for dispossessed Indian groups. They also fought to maintain Indian communities as distinct entities. The Welsh family, members of the Board of Indian Commissioners, and the Indian Rights Association comprised a second group, characterized by their support for coercive assimilation. These individuals all believed that United States expansion would likely continue into the future, but their goals hinged upon an expectation of complete Indian confinement. The policy agenda of the coercive assimilationists focused on land allotment and sought to replace customary Indian cultural and political practices with Euro-American structures and values. They also promoted mandatory Christian education for Indian youth and encouraged their parents to become involved in the market economy. None of these policies could succeed without the complete and total confinement of Indian people by the government. On the other hand, the "compensatory" reformers rejected this expectation of confinement, and although they did not imagine a lengthy continuation of the nation-to-nation relationship between Indian people and United States, they believed that with the proper tools and opportunities Native people could assimilate and compete successfully within mainstream society on their own terms, following their own time frame. Understanding how the notion of "confining Indians" shaped the development of these competing policy frameworks, as well as how it informed emerging political conflicts and debates, is a critical pathway through which to conceptualize nineteenth-century Indian policy reform.

For Sara

And

In loving memory of
my Grandfather

Joseph Genetin (1927-2004)

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Introduction

Following seven bitter months of public controversy Seneca sachem Ely S. Parker resigned from his position as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. He had been the first Native American to hold this office, but stated that the duties and responsibilities of his once important position had become, "under the present arrangements...those of a clerk to a Board of Indian Commissioners, operating outside of and almost independent of the Indian Bureau." "I would gladly and willingly do anything in my power to aid in forwarding and promoting to a successful issue the President's wise and beneficent Indian policy," he continued in his June 1871 resignation letter, "but I cannot, in justice to myself, longer continue to hold the ambiguous position of Commissioner of Indian Affairs."[1] In the aftermath of the Civil War, as the federal government of the United States worked to reunite a fractured nation and a divided polity, the governance of Native people and communities took on a new importance as policymakers and citizens looked at western settlement as a safeguard against the sectional tensions that had characterized the previous generation.[2] Within this context, non-Native and Native reformers such as Ely Parker developed policy agendas and reform campaigns, and fought vicious political battles against each other as they struggled to control the increasingly important Bureau

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[1] "Resignation of Gen. Parker as Indian Commissioner," *New York Times*, 18 July 1871.

[2] In her recent book, Heather Cox Richardson argued that the American West played a central role in the popular mindset, as well as in the development of the government in the post-Civil War era. It was within and through this region, she asserted, that citizens and policy-makers rectified the contradictory notions government intervention and rugged individualism to reveal, by the end of the nineteenth-century, the middle-class imperialism that characterized Theodore Roosevelt's term in office. See Heather Cox Richardson, *West from Appomattox: The Reconstruction of America after the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 3-5, 343-345.

of Indian Affairs. More significantly, they questioned and rethought the fundamental roles and responsibilities of the American state.

In this dissertation I examine a critical, though much neglected, period in the development of federal Indian policy. I utilize the life and career of Ely Parker and a constellation of other Indian policy reformers and reform organizations to illustrate the significant contestation and complexity of voices that attempted to speak for Indian people and the roles that Indian people themselves played in the policy debates of the mid-nineteenth century. I contend that throughout these debates and conflicts, supporters of policies designed to protect Indian communities as distinct entities, or to provide Native peoples with opportunities in an effort to balance dispossession and compensate for a history of colonialism, confronted a group of conservative, zealously Christian, elitist reformers who championed indigenous confinement and coercive assimilation within a larger context of United States expansion. The rhetoric these men and women employed, and the actions they took, shed light upon the intersectionality of race, class, and gender discourses in Indian/white relations at mid-century, and although this era was significant for the establishment of a framework for dissent against disruptive colonialist governance, it ultimately resulted in the professionalization of federal Indian affairs and in the solidification of a policy agenda aimed at dispossession and domination by the end of the nineteenth century as the state itself developed an active colonial bureaucracy, a role once filled by agents outside mainstream administrative structures.

This project problematizes the existing interpretations of Indian policy development in the post-Civil War era. Scholars of American Indian policy characterize the mid-to-late nineteenth-century period as an almost linear progression toward the land

severalty program embodied in the 1887 General Allotment Act, a program that forced Indian people to abandon communal land ownership practices and embrace private, individual landholding in an effort to open the reservations for non-Native settlement and economic exploitation. Indeed, the common interpretation states that "to be pro-Indian," in this era, "was to be pro-allotment and pro-assimilation."[3] These writers have focused on the ways in which the common social, religious, and economic backgrounds shared by the Quaker and Episcopalian missionaries of the 1870s, as well as the reformers who called themselves the "Friends of the Indians" in the 1880s and 1890s, including the Indian Rights Association, the Women's National Indian Association, the Boston Indian Citizenship Committee, and the attendees of the annual Lake Mohonk Conference in upstate New York shaped their policy agendas and colonialist ideologies.[4] This process, though, was more complex. Other reformers such as Ely Parker in the 1860s and 1870s, and Thomas Bland and his National Indian Defense Association in the 1880s, though operating within colonialist ideologies of their own, established a significant tradition of

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[3] Siobhan Senier, "Allotment Protest and Tribal Discourse: Reading Wynema's Successes and Shortcomings," *American Indian Quarterly* 24(3) (2000): 420-440, 422.

[4] The idea that the missionaries and reformers were "well-intentioned" runs throughout this literature. In the 1930s two books began this trend. In the first, D.S. Otis asserted that it was not private interests that motivated the development of the allotment program, but rather that it came out of the idealism of Congress and the reformers who wished to protect and "civilize" Indians. J.P. Kinney argued that the late-nineteenth century reformers represented the culmination of two hundred years of efforts to assimilate and "civilize" the Indians. See D.S. Otis, *The Dawes Act and the Allotment of Indian Lands* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934 [rep.1973]) and J. P. Kinney, *A Continent Lost – A Civilization Won: Indian Land Tenure in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1937). Henry Fritz suggested that there were some conflicts during that Lake Mohonk conference, but these involved the timetable and intensity of coercive assimilation plans, not the coercive/assimilative ideology itself. See Henry Fritz, *The Movement for Indian Assimilation, 1860-1890* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963). See also Francis P. Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian, 1865-1890* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976); Clyde Milner, *With Good Intentions: Quaker Work among the Pawnees, Otos, and Omahas in the 1870s* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982); Robert Keller, *American Protestantism and United States Indian Policy, 1869-1882*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983); Francis P. Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, vol. 2 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984 [rep. 2001]).

dissent against coercive assimilation programs and their accompanying rhetoric of indigenous confinement. The development of the allotment and coercive assimilation legislation, then, was both contested and complex.

Ely S. Parker and Nineteenth-Century Indian Policy Reform(ers)

Few scholars know that the Seneca leader Ely Parker drafted the surrender agreement which ended the United States Civil War. On April 9, 1865, General Ulysses S. Grant entered Wilmer McLean's parlor in the village of Appomattox Court House and introduced each member of his personal staff to Confederate General Robert E. Lee. Lee welcomed each man with a courteous, if condescending, handshake and greeting. That was, until he saw Ely Parker. Witnesses in McLean's parlor reported that when Lee saw Parker's complexion and features he mistook the Indian for an African American and became visibly angry that Grant would insult him by inviting such a person to the surrender negotiations. In fact, many onlookers feared the negotiations would end immediately. However, Lee realized his mistake, composed himself, extended his hand toward Parker, looked directly into his eyes and said "I am glad to see one real American here." Parker grasped Lee's hand and replied "We are all Americans."[5] At the very birth of the Reconstruction era, Parker's statement personified what many believed could be the legacy of the immense sacrifices of the Civil War: that in the end, the nation would overcome sectional differences and racial tensions. In fact, even his presence, as an Indian man, at this incredibly significant historical moment indicated the optimism that would characterize the years following the surrender. Looking back from the perspective

[5] Parker's biographers often recount this particular event. See Arthur C. Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker: Last Grand Sachem of the Iroquois and General Grant's Military Secretary* (Buffalo: Buffalo Historical Society, 1919), 129-133 and William H. Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps: Ely S. Parker, Union General and Seneca Chief* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1978), 108-111.

Figure 1: Ely S. Parker, ca 1863
Source: Arthur C. Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, inside cover

Figure 2: Lithograph of Lee's Surrender at Appomattox.
Parker is depicted as the third standing man from the right.
Source: Jean Edward Smith, *Grant*

of the turn of the twentieth century, however, Parker's statement seems naïve and the recreations and stories of this moment often failed to mention even his presence at the proceedings. Clearly events in the mid-to-late nineteenth century changed the ways Americans conceptualized notions of reform and the position of non-white thinkers and reformers within the processes of the government.

Most scholarly examinations of Native American reformers focus on the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and highlight the ways Indian individuals or groups responded to the land allotment and coercive assimilation policies of the 1880s and 1890s. Outspoken critics and supporters of these policies such as Carlos Montezuma, Gertrude Bonnin (Zitkala-Sa), Henry Standing Bear, Arthur Parker, Sarah Winnemucca, Charles Eastman, and Susette La Flesche populate these studies and demonstrate the varied ways Native people engaged with the mechanisms of colonial governance at the nadir of Native American history.[6] Other scholars focus on Native writers in the early-nineteenth century such as William Apess and George Copway. These individuals lived prior to the post-Civil War solidification of American colonial governance and did not confront political power directly, but used their writings to comment upon the history and trajectory of Indian/white relations.[7] This study focuses

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[6] See Peter Iverson, *Carlos Montezuma and the Changing World of American Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982); Leon Speroff, *Carlos Montezuma, M.D.: A Yavapai American Hero: The Life and Times of an American Indian, 1866-1923* (Portland: Arnica Press, 2004); Susan Rose Dominguez, "The Gertrude Bonnin Story: From Yankton Destiny into American History, 1804-1938" (PhD Diss., Michigan State University, 2005); Lucy Maddox, *Citizen Indians: Native American Intellectuals, Race, and Reform* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005); Joy Porter, *To Be Indian: The Life of Iroquois-Seneca Arthur Caswell Parker* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001); Siobhan Senier, *Voices of American Indian Assimilation and Resistance: Helen Hunt Jackson, Sarah Winnemucca, and Victoria Howard* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001); Raymond Wilson, *Ohiyesa: Charles Eastman, Santee Sioux* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983); and Benson Tong, *Susette LaFlesche Picotte, M.D.: Omaha Leader and Reformer* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999)

on the mid-nineteenth century in an effort to understand how one body of Native-centered reform fit within the larger context of state development during the exact period in which federal policymakers shaped and defined the ill-fated land allotment and assimilation policies that characterized the subsequent generations. And while the following chapters focus directly on the life and career of Ely Parker, they also seek to examine his connections to other prominent reformers in the period. In doing so, I hope to show the complex ways Indian leaders engaged with government-sponsored reform in the nineteenth-century United States and how the opposition to assimilationist reformers, often attributed to early-twentieth-century, non-Native reformer John Collier, was initiated as an Indian-centered agenda in the mid-nineteenth century.

Ely Parker (or Hasanoanda, "Leading Name") was born in 1828 on the Tonawanda reservation in western New York State and studied at the adjoining Baptist mission school as a child. Around the age of ten his parents sent him north to the Six Nations reserve in Canada along the Grand River so that he could focus on customary Seneca skills and cultural practices including woodcraft and the annual ritual cycle. The young man returned to New York in 1840 to find his community in chaos. The twelve-year-old Parker quickly grasped the larger forces shaping events in western New York as the Ogden Land Company worked tirelessly to dispossess and remove the Seneca in an effort to profit from their land speculation. In the 1838 Treaty of Buffalo Creek, Ogden officials used alcohol, bribery, forgery, threats, misinformation, and a disregard for

[7] See Maureen Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827-1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Andy Doolen, *Fugitive Empire: Locating Early American Imperialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); Robert Allen Warrior, *The People and the Word: Reading Native Nonfiction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); Tim Fulford, *Romantic Indians: Native Americans, British Literature, and Transatlantic Culture, 1756-1830* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); and David Carlson, *Sovereign Selves: American Indian Autobiography and the Law* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

customary Seneca governmental practices to dispossess the Indians of all their remaining New York lands except the unoccupied, one square mile Oil Spring Reservation, as well as the Wisconsin lands purchased for them by the United States. Seneca leaders immediately fought the execution of this treaty. Although Parker did not participate in the initial resistance campaign, he perhaps recognized the value of understanding the English language and devoted himself to education. He completed two more years at the Baptist mission school and in 1842 earned a tuition-free enrollment at Yates Academy in Cayuga, New York. In 1844 Seneca leaders, aware of his linguistic abilities, employed the sixteen-year-old Parker as an interpreter for petitions and protests, and frequently brought him to Albany and Washington DC to meet with prominent political leaders. Parker was the descendent of a politically powerful Tonawanda family. His mother belonged to the Wolf Clan, the same as Red Jacket and Handsome Lake's successor, Jimmy Johnson. His inclusion in these political matters at such a young age prepared him for a future leadership role in the community.[8]

In 1844, Parker traveled to Albany with a Tonawanda delegation and while there, visited a bookstore to search for ethnographic and historical data that might aid Seneca leaders as they presented their case to New York legislators. Lewis Henry Morgan, a lawyer and founder of the Grand Order of the Iroquois, a literary fraternal organization, was also searching for materials on Iroquois history and culture in this bookstore, and approached the young Seneca. Over the next several years Parker became Morgan's first

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[8] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 17-19; Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 53-55, 75-76; Elisabeth Tooker, "Ely S. Parker" in *American Indian Intellectuals* ed. Margot Liberty, (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1978): 15-30, 17-18; "Ely Samuel Parker: From Sachem to Brigadier General," *New York State and the Civil War* 1 no. 4 (1961): 1-5, 1-2; D.A. Brown, "'One Real American,'" *American History Illustrated* 4 no. 7 (1969): 12-21, 13; and Arthur C. Parker, "Ely S. Parker – Man and Mason," *Transactions – American Lodge of Research* 8 no. 2 (1961): 229-247, 232-235.

and most significant informant, and assisted in the creation of *The League of the Ho-de-no-sau-nee, or, Iroquois* (1851), one of the founding studies of American anthropology.[9] In return, Morgan provided Parker with an entrée into the Cayuga Academy in Aurora, and helped him prepare for the bar exam. As an Indian though, Parker was not a citizen, he could not be admitted to the bar, and in 1848, Morgan persuaded him to begin a career in civil engineering. Parker completed a basic course at Rensselear Polytechnic Institute in Troy and began a career working on the New York canals. He then constructed buildings for the United States Treasury Department, first in Detroit and later in Galena, Illinois.[10] At the same time, the Tonawanda community acknowledged Parker's leadership and efforts in the Ogden Land dispute and "raised" him to one of the fifty sachemships of the Iroquois Confederacy, in 1851. He was 23 years old. Along with his new status in the community came a new name as well: Donehogawa, or "Open Door." This was the customary name bestowed upon the Iroquois sachem that guarded the western door of both the physical and symbolic longhouse against outsiders. As the Seneca spokesperson who dealt most directly with non-Native people in the nineteenth century, this was an appropriate name for Parker.[11]

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[9] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 1-3, 39-41; Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 80-90. For one of the most sensitive readings of the Parker/Morgan relationship, see Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 71-94. See also William Fenton, "Tonawanda Longhouse Ceremonies: Ninety Years After Lewis Henry Morgan," in *Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 128* (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1941): 139-148. For more on Morgan life's life see Bernhard Stern, *Lewis Henry Morgan: Social Evolutionist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931); Carl Resek, *Lewis Henry Morgan: American Scholar* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); Elisabeth Tooker, *Lewis H. Morgan on Iroquois Material Culture* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1994).

[10] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 41-43; Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 91-98. See also "Alumni Notes," *The Polytechnic* 12 no. 1 (1895): 11.

[11] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 49-51; Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 91-92. See also Arthur C. Parker, "Ely S. Parker: Last Grand Sachem," *The American Indian* 1 (1944): 11-15. For more on the real and symbolic significance of the longhouse in Iroquois culture and society see Daniel K.

In Galena, Parker met and befriended a store clerk and Mexican War veteran named U.S. Grant. He was also an active member of many fraternal organizations. In 1857, with the help of several non-Native lawyers and concerned citizens, Parker brought to a conclusion the decades-long Ogden Land dispute. The Tonawanda paid a high price in both social and political capital, but they maintained a portion of their homeland. In 1861, Parker returned to Tonawanda to help alleviate some of the community tensions unleashed by the legacy of the land dispute and reformed the reservation government by instituting a system of elective offices and legislative mandates.[12] When the Civil War broke out he petitioned the Department of War for a commission in the Union Army, citing his militia experience, but Secretary William Seward denied the request. Finally in 1863, he was granted a commission at the rank of Captain and joined Grant at the Battle of Vicksburg. He served first as an assistant adjutant general, and then quickly became Grant's military secretary, as well as a cherished member of his inner circle. After the war ended, Parker stayed in DC as Grant's aide-de-camp and took the opportunity to work for the Bureau of Indian Affairs as it negotiated with the southern Indian groups who had joined the Confederacy.[13] In 1867 he married a young, white, Washington DC

Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992). For the best discussion of Seneca culture more generally, see Anthony F.C. Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York: Knopf, 1969).

[12] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps,* 61-70; Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 94-98.

[13] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps,* 71-107; Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 99-116. Although there has been very little written about Native service during the Civil War in general, the best treatment of an individual group's involvement is Laurence Hauptman, *The Iroquois in the Civil War: From Battlefield to Reservation* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993). Hauptman devoted one brief chapter to a discussion of Parker entitled "'Grant's Indian': Ely S. Parker at the Battle of Chattanooga" and asserted that while his Seneca heritage and Tonawanda experiences shaped the ways that he understood his Civil War experience, after the war, he abandoned his people and sought fame and fortune in mainstream society.

socialite named Minnie Sackett and although events surrounding the wedding were clouded in mysterious circumstances and public scrutiny, he and his wife became fixtures in elite DC society. After Grant's inauguration, the new President appointed Parker as the first Indian Commissioner of Indian Affairs.[14]

Parker accepted his appointment optimistically, convinced that his experience working with legislators and policymakers, as well as his ability to operate within the federal bureaucracy, would allow him to implement a reform agenda based on the lessons he learned during the Ogden Land dispute. Parker intended to shape the Bureau of Indian Affairs by creating public oversight committees to monitor policy administration. He wanted these committees to be led by both Native and non-Native individuals. He also intended to establish and protect specific land rights for Native communities, a process that he believed to be crucial to any BIA reform agenda. Finally, he proposed to make the Office of Indian Affairs a more efficient, effective, and impartial bureaucracy by transferring it back to the War Department (it was housed in the Interior Department after 1849) in an effort to end corruption and to protect policymakers from the influence of land speculators, railroad companies, and the contractors who supplied goods for treaty appropriations. Parker also believed that the government should provide money, goods, and new opportunities for Native people, particularly in the form of education, in an effort to compensate for their dispossession.

Almost immediately Parker ran into fierce opposition from a group of conservative, Christian, elitist, non-Native reformers. One of these men was William Welsh, an Episcopal layman who built a fortune in mid-nineteenth-century Philadelphia

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[14] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps,* 122-136; Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 143-147.

though the importation of West Indian sugar.[15] Welsh worked for various philanthropic causes and founded several Episcopal churches and a hospital. Later in life he became an outspoken voice in the development of Indian policy. From 1869 through the end of his life Welsh channeled his energies into a reform agenda that attempted to mold Indian people into his conservative, Christian vision of "civilization" by eliminating tribal autonomy and by destroying Indian communities. Welsh used the Board of Indian Commissioners, an early innovation of Grant's Peace Policy to oppose Parker. This board was led by George Stuart, another wealthy Philadelphia merchant, who was "zealously Christian," and by Felix Reville Brunot, a Pittsburgh businessman, who had fought for temperance and other conservative reforms as a college student.[16] The Board, described as an unpaid oversight committee of concerned citizens, provided these men significant power in the execution of their duties. Their driving philosophy, however, argued that the Christian philanthropists of the United States understood the best interests of Indian peoples, even better than Indian peoples themselves. They worked within the bureaucratic framework to monitor Indian appropriations and the purchase and disbursement of goods and supplies, while they simultaneously pushed a reform agenda that was Christian, conservative, coercive, and "civilizing."

In 1871, Welsh filed formal charges against Parker and the BIA. He alleged that Parker had committed fraud and had willfully mismanaged the Indian Office. Although a House of Representatives investigation exonerated Parker later that year, he resigned

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[15] Francis P. Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* vol. 1 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 502.

[16] Robert E. Thompson ed., *The Life of George H. Stuart: Written by Himself* (Philadelphia: J.M. Stoddart and Company, 1890), 20-21, quoted in Francis Prucha, *The Great Father* vol. 1, 503. For more on Brunot, see Charles Slattery, *Felix Reville Brunot* (New York: Green and Co., 1907).

from the position. Following his public service, Parker won and lost a fortune in the stock market, and later became a clerk in the New York City Police Department. He became close friends with Harriet Maxwell Converse, a poet and ethnographer, and aided her as an informant and confidant. Later in life Parker suffered from diabetes, succumbed to a series of strokes, and died in 1895.[17]

Although Parker did not play an active role in federal policymaking after 1871, his notions of an efficient and impartial bureaucracy and compensatory legislation appealed to later activists and thinkers and they built upon the reform framework that he had established. One of these men, Thomas A. Bland, an Indiana physician, writer, and activist in the late-1870s and 1880s, also opposed the movement toward land allotment and coercive assimilationist policies. Bland's organization, the National Indian Defense Association (NIDA), confronted the politically powerful Indian Rights Association (IRA), led by Herbert Welsh - William Welsh's nephew. Bland and the NIDA questioned the goals and methods of coercive assimilation policies as well as the implications such policies had for the role and responsibilities of the state. In doing so, they encouraged policymakers to pause and consider Indian voices, thus slowing the legislative process significantly in the mid-1880s. In 1887, however, Welsh, the IRA, and their political allies succeeded, and Congress passed the General Allotment Act, which ushered in an era of dispossession, poverty, and despair for Indian communities across the nation. Even though Bland and the NIDA lost the legislative battles of the early-1880s, the debates and conflicts that characterized this period suggest that Indian

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[17] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps,* 152-183; Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 150-180.

affairs played an important role in the larger reform context of the late-nineteenth century.

Concepts and Analytical Frameworks

The following chapters explore the notion of "confining Indians," which refers to the often forced containment of Indian communities on reservation lands. Confinement, during this era, also conveyed a notion of the social, political, economic, and cultural marginalization of Indian people. Throughout the early-nineteenth century, legislators, military officials, and settlers sought to remove Indians from regions of settlement and contain them within a rapidly decreasing land base, and while dissenting opinions existed in the pre-Civil War period, after the war emerging groups of increasingly visible and powerful reformers developed divergent notions of Indian confinement and sought to codify these notions into written policy. I define the reformers that populate these chapters into two categories. Ely Parker, Thomas Bland, and the National Indian Defense Association comprised one group and supported compensatory legislation to create opportunities for dispossessed Indian groups. They also fought to maintain Indian communities as distinct entities. William and Herbert Welsh, the members of the Board of Indian Commissioners, and the Indian Rights Association comprised a second group, most appropriately characterized as coercive assimilationists. These reformers all operated within the larger framework of late-nineteenth-century reform and understood that United States expansion would likely continue into the future, but the goals of the coercive assimilationists hinged upon an expectation of complete Indian confinement, while the former did not.[18] The policy agenda of the coercive assimilationists focused on

[18] In his recent book, historian Philip Deloria argued persuasively that expectations of containment played a significant role in shaping late nineteenth-century notions of Indian violence and

forced land allotment and sought to replace customary cultural and political practices within Indian communities with structures and values based on Euro-American models. They also wanted to develop a system of mandatory Christian education for Indian youth, while encouraging their parents to become involved in the market economy. None of these policies could succeed without the complete and total confinement of Indian people by the government.[19] On the other hand, the reformers who supported compensatory legislation rejected this expectation of confinement, and although they did not imagine a lengthy continuation of the nation-to-nation relationship between Indian people and United States, they believed that Native people should be supplied with the tools and opportunities to assimilate into and compete successfully within mainstream society on their own terms, following their own time frame. Understanding how the notion of "confining Indians" shaped the development of these competing policy frameworks, as well as how it informed the emerging political conflicts and debates, is a critical pathway through which to conceptualize the history of Indian policy reform in this period.

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warfare, as well as pacification. While I find his description of "containment" too narrowly defined, and prefer the more expansive "confinement," my thoughts and analysis have been influenced significantly by his assertion that popular discourse shaped ideas about Indians in this period. See Philip Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2005), 20-21.

[19] Deloria grouped these processes as technologies of power and stated that to "be known by name, date and location of baptism, rations drawn, and enrollment number was to be intimately visible to the colonial bureaucracy. It made it easy to locate a particular person in time and in space and to determine the need for education, discipline, containment, and shunning." See Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*, 26. James C. Scott offered a lengthy examination of these colonial state processes, which he referred to collectively as a project of establishing "legibility." He argued that only when a state could make its citizens and wards legible, could it effectively and efficiently conduct its functions including taxation, conscription, and ration distribution, among others. See James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). Ann Laura Stoler as well as many other colonization studies scholars have addressed these issues in various regions around the world. Stoler's application of Foucauldian theory to colonization studies has been particularly influential. See Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's "History of Sexuality" and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).

This research focuses on the colonialist ideologies of nineteenth-century reformers in an effort to make sense of the complex and often contradictory viewpoints these men and women expressed as they debated policy proposals. In his recent study of Lakota/U.S. relations leading up to the Wounded Knee massacre, historian Jeremy Ostler argued that scholars who are inclined to be sympathetic toward Indian perspectives and positions have been "uninterested in critically analyzing the ideologies, policies, and on-the-ground actions associated with the United States conquest of and establishment of colonial rule over Indian people." Furthermore, he asserted that while many reformers framed their notions of assimilation using a language of altruism and philanthropy, "assimilation functioned in the larger scheme of things as a rationale for the dispossession of Indian lands and the destruction of diversity in the name of national homogeneity."[20] I build on Professor Ostler's contention and suggest that understanding the ways in which these colonialist ideologies developed and the ways that their proponents interacted within the framework of the evolving bureaucratic state can reveal the larger significance of Indian affairs within the context of the post-Civil War nation. As Ostler concluded, whether or not anyone was (or is) willing to admit it, by the end of the 1800s "the United States was firmly committed to a system of colonial rule."[21]

This project also seeks to examine colonialist action in the nineteenth-century federal government as it evolved through the ideologies of prominent reformers and reform organizations. Focusing first on the Ogden/Tonawanda land dispute, I suggest that the primary impetus for colonial action in the pre-Civil War era came from regional

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[20] Jeffrey Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5,8.

[21] Ostler, *The Plains Sioux*, 17.

actors outside the state, such as land speculators like the Ogden Company, transportation developers, and mineral extraction industries.[22] While these profit-seeking individuals and corporations often appealed to the federal government for assistance in their efforts to rob Indians of their lands and resources, and undermine their rights of self-government, state action itself was only one colonial weapon among the many they used, including fraud, deception, misinformation, and sometimes outright violence. Following the Civil War, however, the state became the active force in United States colonialism through its land allotment and coercive assimilation programs. In this period, reformers and policymakers sought to open Indian lands for settlement and development in an effort to stimulate westward expansion and an economic windfall in the aftermath of the Civil War and rather than appealing for colonialist action from the federal government, as they had in the past, settlers, miners, developers, and land speculators benefited from federal legislation directly. The federal government itself profited from the sale of unused reservation lands throughout the allotment process. Unable to remove Indians further, though, these reformers and policymakers worked to confine them spatially on individual land plots and socially through coercive assimilation.

Scholars of United States history are often reluctant to consider the nineteenth-century a colonial period, but as analyses of colonialism have expanded, some historians and theorists have begun to consider the ways in which the United States advanced a variety of colonialist agendas throughout this period.[23] Immediately after the Civil War,

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[22] While the removal policies of the 1830s might seem like an exception to this interpretation, it is important to note Andrew Jackson was himself a land speculator and his administration's efforts to remove Indians was both motivated by and benefited land speculators and developers.

[23] See Amy Kaplan, "'Left Alone with America': The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, ed. Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993). In this article, Kaplan asserted that America's exclusion from postcolonial

some historians assert that the state acted broadly as an active colonial agent, particularly through Reconstruction programs and the Freedmen's Bureau, and then in the West, through the Bureau of Indian Affairs.[24] In the late-1860s, some policy-makers even considered the annexation of Canada, parts of Latin America, and the Caribbean. By the end of the century, United States colonial excursions extended westward to the Islands of Hawai'i and the Philippines.[25] Indian policy, understood within the larger context of this

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studies has reiterated the popular notion that it existed outside the larger global history of colonial expansion and resistance, rather than as an interrelated part of it. Several scholars have called for a corrective to this older trend. The most influential general call for scholars to situate United States history within the framework of global colonization studies is Ann Laura Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies," *Journal of American History* 88, no. 3 (Dec. 2001): 829-865. Stoler also edited a larger volume of essays in which other scholars attempted to demonstrate the analytical prospects of following her ideas. See Ann Laura Stoler ed, *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006). One of the most influential suggestions for scholars to situate American Indian history within the framework of global colonization studies is Frederick Hoxie, *Parading through History: The Making of the Crow Nation in America, 1805-1935* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995). American Indian activist/scholars have more readily asserted their interpretations of United States colonialism in recent years. See for example Andrea Smith, *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2005) and Waziyatawin Angela Wilson and Michael Yellow Bird eds., *For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonization Handbook* (Santa Fe: School of American Research, 2005).

[24] The classic text on Reconstruction and the Freedmen's Bureau is Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988). For more see Richardson, *West from Appomattox*; Paul Cimbala, *Under the Guardianship of the Nation: The Freedmen's Bureau and the Reconstruction of Georgia, 1865-1870* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997); Paul Cimbala and Randall Miller eds., *The Freedmen's Bureau and Reconstruction* (New York: Fordham Press, 1999). On settlement of the Western Territories, see Robert Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West, 1846-1890* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984); Robert Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974); Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988);Richard White, *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991); Robert Wooster, *Nelson A. Miles and the Twilight of the Frontier Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993); Karen Merrill, "In Search of the 'Federal Presence' in the American West," *Western Historical Quarterly* 30 (Winter 1999): 449-474; Thomas Buecker, *Fort Robinson and the American West, 1874-1899* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003); and Douglas McChristian, *Fort Bowie, Arizona: Combat Post of the Southwest, 1858-1894* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005).

[25] In 1865-1866 the idea of American annexation played a key role in the development of the confederation movement in Canada. In 1866 an annexation bill even passed the House of Representatives. For more on Canadian confederation see Ged Martin, *Britain and the Origins of Canadian Confederation, 1837-1867* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1995); Christopher Moore, *1867: How the Fathers Made a Deal* (Toronto: M&S, 1997); and Frederick Vaughan, *The Canadian Federalist Experiment: From Defiant Monarchy to Reluctant Republic* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2003). For more on United States involvement in Latin America and the Caribbean in post-Civil War Era see William Nelson, *Almost a Territory: America's Attempt to Annex the Dominican Republic* (Newark:

nineteenth-century colonial action suggests that Indian affairs were related to these more visible and public agendas, both within and outside the nation.

Studying colonialism, however, is not a simple task and scholars can no longer situate these events or historical actors within simplistic dichotomies, such as domination/resistance, traditionalist/progressive, or accommodationist/hostile.[26] Even the formerly monolithic categories of colonizer and colonized, once relied upon by scholars, are now understood as problematic.[27]

The chapters that follow focus upon the subtleties, nuances, and variances in nineteenth-century Indian policies of the United States and rely on assumptions gleaned from recent literature in colonization studies. First, colonial regimes were not monolithic, but existed in a constant state of flux. As colonial theorists Frederick Cooper and Ann Stoler argued, "competing agendas for power, competing strategies for

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University of Delaware Press, 1990); Steven Topik, *Trade and Gunboats: The United States and Brazil in the Age of Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996); Theodore Webb, *Impassioned Brothers: Ministers Resident to France and Paraguay* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2002); David Healy, *James G. Blaine and Latin America* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001); John J. Johnson, *A Hemisphere Apart: The Foundations of United States Policy Toward Latin America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990); and Robert Holden and Eric Zolov eds., *Latin America and the United States: A Documentary History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). For more on the annexation of Hawai'i see Tom Coffman, *A Nation Within: The Story of America's Annexation of Hawai'i* (Kane'oha: EPI Center, 1998) and Noenoe Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004). For more general studies of American Imperialism in this time period see Ernest Paolino, *The Foundations of American Empire: William Henry Seward and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973) and Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963); Eric T. Love, *Race Over Empire: Racism and U.S. Imperialism, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

[26] Theorist Jurgen Osterhammel examined the ways in which the study of colonialism has shifted over time. He argued that defining the analytical terms of colonial studies holds profound import. See Jurgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, trans. Shelley L. Frisch (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1997), 4.

[27] Jeffrey Ostler found that even when Sioux leaders acted in ways that have been constructed as accommodationist, they often did in an effort to resist total assimilation domination. Ostler, *The Plains Sioux*, 7.

maintaining control, and doubts about the legitimacy of the [colonial] venture" often characterized these regimes.[28] Individual reformers and reform organizations in the post-Civil War period competed and struggled to gain or maintain power and authority within the federal state structures and reflected these theorists' contentions quite clearly. Second, the "otherness" of colonized people was an unstable notion that had to be re-evaluated and re-asserted frequently.[29] Whether they provided opportunities for Native people to participate in their reform campaigns, as did the reformers who supported compensatory legislation, or attempted to demonstrate that they understood the best interests of Indian people, better than Indian people themselves, as was the case with the coercive assimilationists, the "otherness" of Indian people was a constant source of contestation. The concept of "resistance" requires critical analysis as well. At crucial moments in the nineteenth-century United States the needs and interests of Native leaders converged with those of the Washington bureaucrats and Indian agents. Within these moments it was not uncommon for leaders who often fought against government programs to support their implementation and administration, for example, Red Cloud, the Oglala Sioux leader supported BIA-run schools and the institutionalization of Euro-

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[28] Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, "Tensions of Empire: Colonial Control and Visions of Rule," *American Ethnologist* 16, no. 4 (Nov., 1989): 609-621, 609. See also Ann Laura Stoler, "Intimidations of Empire: Predicaments of the Tactile and Unseen," in *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* ed. Ann Laura Stoler (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006): 1-23; Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, Power* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 26-32.

[29] Cooper and Stoler, "Tensions of Empire," 610. See also Ann Laura Stoler, "Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: Cultural Competence and the Dangers of Metissage" in *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* ed. Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002): 79-111, 79; Uday Mehta, "Liberal Strategies of Exclusion," in *Tensions of Empire: ColonialCultures in a Bourgeois World* eds. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

American agricultural practices among the Lakota, and Ely Parker suggested the BIA be transferred into the War Department.[30]

In the post-Civil War era, reformers also varied in the lengths to which they wished to extend dispossession and coercive assimilation policies. Some reformers believed that the only answer to the "Indian Problem" was the complete and total assimilation of Native people and usurpation of indigenous sovereignty, while others envisioned a relationship between the state and its wards as one in which "the sovereign aims toward a mutual, an organic relationship with the people being governed." These reformers, like those who championed compensatory legislation, might support state-sponsored education for Indian children or the restructure of customary practices of governance in Indian communities, but they did not envision the complete usurpation of indigenous sovereignty.[31] Finally, the events and actions examined in these chapters reaffirm the assertion that the history of colonialism is both a story of conquest and territorial acquisition and a story of the development of state structures and bureaucratic mechanisms within the federal government.[32]

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[30] Osterhammel referred to this process as the "convergence of interests." Osterhammel, *Colonialism*, 64.

[31] My understanding of direct and indirect colonialism is influenced greatly by Akim Reinhardt's study of John Collier and his reform program in the 1930s BIA. Reinhardt argued that Collier differed from other policymakers in the allotment period because he supported indirect colonial measures similar to those of the British in India. His Indian New Deal programs were modeled on these structures. I have found, in my study of reformers leading up to the allotment period, that the notions of indirect colonialism existed, though in a less articulated form, much earlier than Collier's administration. See Akim Reinhardt, "A Crude Replacement: The Indian New Deal, Indirect Colonialism, and Pine Ridge Reservation," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 6, no. 1 (2005).

[32] Osterhammel asserted that the process of colonialism could be best understood as "a history of the gradual emergence of state structures and societal forms and their geographic expansion or contraction within nominally claimed regions." See Osterhammel, *Colonialism*, 28.

It is impossible to study the history of Indian/white relations in the United States without acknowledging the significance of power relationships and notions of authority as they existed between and among Indian agents, bureaucrats, and Indian people themselves. For my purposes, power represents the ability of one person or a group of people to establish and shape the parameters within which other people acted. Authority refers to the ability to make these parameters firm.[33] The following chapters suggest, though, that these were contested notions and that within the bureaucratic framework of the government, Indian agents, military officials, legislators, and reformers, as well as individuals within Indian communities struggled against one another to assert both power and authority. It is also important to recognize that as these people struggled, they did not do so on a level playing field. Political and economic structures placed Indian people at a disadvantage in nineteenth-century society, but this fact makes understanding the actions of Indian leaders as they engaged in political debates with agents of the BIA even more critical.

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[33] The study of power and authority within the context of colonialism has developed significantly in the past thirty years. In particular scholars have approached this topic along two related trajectories. On one hand, they have studied how agents of the state exercised power over colonized populations in different geographical contexts. For this approach see Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, *Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa,* vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1991); and Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992). On the other hand, historians and anthropologists have begun to focus more closely on how power and authority were defined within colonized populations. For this approach see Raymond Fogelson and Richard Adams, eds. *The Anthropology of Power: Ethnographic Studies from Asia, Oceania, and the New World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Mary W. Helms, *Ulysses' Sail: An Ethnographic Odyssey of Power, Knowledge, and Geographic Distance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Gregory Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1740-1815* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1991); Geoffrey White and Lamont Lindstrom, *Chiefs Today: Traditional Pacific Leadership and the Postcolonial State* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); Eric Wolf, *Envisioning Power: Ideologies of Dominance and Crisis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); and Claudio Saunt, *A New Order of Things: Property, Power, and the Transformation of the Creek Indians, 1733-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Questions

This dissertation raises several questions about the study of Indian history and about the opportunities this field provides to reframe larger issues in United States historiography. First, in an effort to reject an older historiographical approach that privileged the experiences of the United States government and government officials, Native and non-Native scholars have produced studies of the particular histories and unique circumstances of individual Indian communities.[34] On one hand, this trend has revealed the richness and depth of the Indian experience in American history, yet on the other, because it limits the ability to synthesize or demonstrate the connections Indian people had to the larger nation, it has the potential to make the study of Indian history a marginalized, insular, and ignorable field. My project asks: how can we continue to honor the unique and important histories of individual tribal nations and Indian communities, while simultaneously recognizing that the Indian experience in the nineteenth century shaped the United States in profound ways? One potential analytical approach might be to examine how a localized issue had broader national implications. Along these lines, I analyze the connections between a unique controversy, namely the Ogden Land dispute at the Tonawanda reservation, and the reform agenda of the Peace

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[34] Some of the best examples of the classic, "top-down" approach include Loring Benson Priest, *Uncle Sam's Stepchildren: The Reformation of United States Indian Policy, 1865-1887* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1942); Francis Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*; Edmund Danziger, *The Indians and the Bureaucrats: Administering the Reservation Policy during the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974); Francis Prucha, *The Great Father*; Fred Hoxie, *A Final Promise*. Some of the best examples of the community-based approach include Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 1540-1866* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979); Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*; Michael McConnell, *A Country Between: The Upper Ohio Valley and its Peoples, 1724-1774* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992): Tom Hatley, *The Dividing Paths: Cherokees and South Carolinians Through the Era of Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Hoxie, *Parading Through History;* Jean O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees: Indian Land and Identity in Natick, Massachusetts, 1650-1790* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Rebecca Kugel, *To Be the Main Leaders of Our People: A History of Minnesota Ojibwe Politics, 1825-1898* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1998); Saunt, *A New Order of Things*; Greg O'Brien, *Choctaws in a Revolutionary Age, 1750-1830* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002).

Policy on the national level. Although separated by time and space these developments suggest that it was the political education Ely Parker received during the land dispute that provided the foundation upon which the Peace Policy was built. From these events in the 1840s and 1850s, Parker came to recognize, on a close, personal level, the fundamental ways that dispossession and colonial action could disrupt an Indian community. Parker was realistic and understood, as the nineteenth century progressed, that United States colonialism would likely continue, but he designed a reform agenda that sought to minimize the disruptions this process caused for Native people. He did this by trying to create policies that would protect Indian communities as distinct entities, and that would provide educational and employment opportunities, as well as money and goods in an effort to compensate for the disruptions related to dispossession. He believed that these opportunities could help Native people assimilate into mainstream society on their own terms, in their own time. Approaching the study of Indian history in this way demonstrates the interconnectedness of local events and national developments.

Second, this project problematizes the established narratives about Ely Parker, like those of other prominent Indian leaders who worked within non-Native structures of governance, as an indigenous "sellout." I suggest that Parker was an innovative policymaker who wedded an indigenous worldview with a western intellectual framework. He also, however, underestimated the level to which the state had shifted toward a system of disruptive, coercive assimilation by the early-1870s. Viewed within the context of the evolving nineteenth-century state, his efforts to reform BIA corruption, to create policies, and to expand indigenous educational opportunities can more appropriately be interpreted as a "path not taken," rather than an abandonment of an

indigenous heritage. Parker's life is also illustrative of the tensions and conflicts that surrounded nineteenth-century indigenous leaders who sought to resist dispossession and cultural disruption by working with the mainstream structures of governance.

This dissertation also asks how the events, debates, and conflicts of the mid-to-late nineteenth century shaped Indian policy in the twentieth century. Examining Parker's Indian-centered reform framework suggests that early-twentieth century developments that resulted in the creation of the Indian New Deal, had their foundation in intellectual traditions from the immediate post-Civil War period.[35] As he attempted to work within and reform the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the late-1860s and early-1870s, Parker fought against those who saw dispossession and coercive assimilation as the only appropriate goals of federal Indian policy. Although he lost the political battles in this period, his ideas evolved through the work of Thomas Bland and the National Indian Defense Association in the 1880s as they battled against a new generation of coercive assimilationists. Finally, after several dark decades during the allotment period, John Collier emerged as a champion of compensatory legislation for Indian communities. Although none of these individuals appear to have known each other directly, their policy agendas and notions of reform drew from the same framework that Parker established in the aftermath of the Civil War.

Finally, by focusing on the development of Indian policy in the post-Civil War period this project also asks questions about the broader narratives of state development in the United States. First, it asks how and why so many reformers saw the

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[35] The only lengthy study of Collier's life and career is Lawrence Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983).

Reconstruction era as a potential moment of optimism for the reconfiguration of racial politics as they pertained to American Indian people. It also asks why this moment was brief and fleeting. The chronology of this study, however, also spans the period between the Reconstruction and Progressive Eras. Narratives of American state development generally focus on the significance of the Civil War and Reconstruction and then jump forward to urban social and political reforms and the bureaucratic innovations of the Progressive Era.[36] The mid- to late- nineteenth-century BIA, however, served as a crucial meeting ground for ideologies of governmental authority and its development not only demonstrated the lengths to which the federal government was willing to experiment in this period, as policymakers allowed the state to take on increasingly active functions, but also shows the evolution of social policymaking from the hybrid public and private character of Reconstruction programs to the institutionalized federal compensatory programs of the early-twentieth century.[37] Highlighting the primacy of the BIA in this

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[36] Scholars of American Political Development suggest that re-evaluating the evolution of the state in the nineteenth century is of critical scholarly importance. See William Leuchtenburg, "The Pertinence of Political History: Reflections on the Significance of the State in America," *Journal of American History* 73, no. 3 (1986): 585-600. For a good overview of the history and current direction of the APD school see Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek, *The Search for American Political Development* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Among the best examples of APD scholarship see Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capabilities, 1877-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Richard Bensel, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859-1877* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Belknap, Harvard University Press, 1992); William Novak, *The People's Welfare: Law and Regulation in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Elisabeth Clemens, *The People's Lobby: Organizational Innovation and the Rise of Interest Group Politics in the United States, 1890-1925* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

[37] At this point there is only one monograph length study of the development of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in this period. It is primarily an institutional history that does not thoroughly contextual its subject. See Paul Stuart, *The Indian Office: Growth and Development of an American Institution, 1865-1900* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Press, 1979). A recent dissertation by Cathleen Cahill seeks to broaden and deepen the scholarly understanding of this development, in particular by focusing on the role of women in the Indian Service. See Cathleen Cahill, "'Only the Home Can Found a State:' Gender, Labor, and the Federal Indian Service, 1869-1928," (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2004). Her introduction situates

evolution and recognizing how some state-centered social policymaking was modeled first in Indian policy suggests that recognizing the importance of the Native American experience in this era is critical to understanding mid- to late-nineteenth century United States history.

In order to begin understanding how an evolving and increasingly pervasive American colonialist ideology shaped nineteenth-century Indian affairs, the first part of this dissertation examines a local community controversy and the significance its legacy played in the development of national level Indian policy later in the nineteenth century. Chapter One examines Ely Parker's political socialization and education in the unique Western New York State political environment and argues that his early experiences there, particularly the cooperation between Native and non-Native people during the Ogden Land dispute, the significance of land speculators and business interests influencing state policy, and his growing interest in developing efficient and impartial bureaucratization as a reform strategy, shaped his policy agenda at the federal level, but also demonstrated the ways in which dispossession and threats of removal profoundly affected customary notions of power and authority within Indian communities. It was this experience that suggested to Parker the possibilities of compensatory legislation.

The next two chapters focus closely on Parker's experiences as an Indian leader within the social and cultural framework of nineteenth-century American society. Chapter Two examines the relationships that Parker formed with Lewis Henry Morgan in his early life, and Harriet Maxwell Converse after his term as Commissioner of Indian

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the BIA within these broader federal developments very clearly, and has been influential in my thinking. See pages 3-4.

Affairs, as well as the scholarly interpretations of his life. While many scholars, influenced by Arthur C. Parker's biography of his great-uncle Ely, have interpreted Parker as a man torn between Native and non-Native identities, his relationships with prominent ethnographers throughout the nineteenth century suggest otherwise. He maintained an active engagement with popular notions and depictions of Indians and while he highlighted certain characteristics or traits that reflected these notions as they shifted and evolved, he also demonstrated a consistent public persona as a Seneca man. Both Lewis Henry Morgan and Harriet Maxwell Converse supported Indian interests and in their research, writing, and activism, they opposed those who sought to dispossess and coercively assimilate Indian people. They shared in Parker's political ideals and through the information and insights he provided, they positioned themselves as experts on Indian history and culture in the nineteenth century. While Parker's relationships with these two ethnographers, separated by several decades, differed in subtle ways, they also revealed his consistent effort to associate with individuals who supported Indian people and Indian communities.

During his youth and later adulthood Parker found success and public acceptance, at least in part, through his connections to prominent ethnographers, in the interim though, as a young adult and a middle-aged man, his association with Union General U.S. Grant and his marriage to a young, white socialite shaped his career path and opportunities. Chapter Three uses the public spectacle of the Ely Parker / Minnie Sackett wedding as a lens for understanding public perceptions and the tensions present in instances of intermarriage in this period. In this interim period in the middle of the nineteenth-century, Parker continued to engage with popular notions of Indian people, at

times supporting mainstream depictions, while at other times challenging them through rhetoric, reform, and his own public persona. In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, Parker found, in Washington DC, much success and a public audience that was, though curious, willing to accept him. He and his young, white wife became fixtures in Washington DC society and Parker rose to become a significant federal policymaker. While to the DC public he came to epitomize the standards and ideals of middle-class Victorian manhood, he continued to understand himself as a Seneca leader.

In the final three chapters of this dissertation, the analytical scope is expanded significantly to examine how social policies came to shape colonial governance in the mid- to late- nineteenth century, as well as the position of Indian people within this process. Chapter Four examines the significant role Ely Parker, the first Native American Commissioner of Indian Affairs, played in the creation and development of the Peace Policy. It argues that although various scholars have attempted to characterize it as an exclusively religious, military or humanitarian movement, the one key element that united all of the disparate parts of the policy was its attempt to end corruption and mismanagement through bureaucratization, public oversight, and the development of compensatory legislation. These were strategies that Parker developed early in his political life, and he designed this agenda to address the place of Indian communities in an increasingly complex political, legal, and social nation within a context of federal reform.

Chapter Five argues that the early Peace Policy era represented a moment of possibility for radical change in the direction of Indian affairs - especially through the reform agenda of a significant Native American leader, and through public oversight of

policy administration. While the mechanisms of the policy appear disjointed and contradictory, it is clear that there were two overarching philosophies, one championed by Parker, the other by William Welsh and the Board of Indian Commissioners. These political philosophies, though part of the overarching project of reform in the nineteenth-century nation, differed from each other in subtle, yet significant ways. Ultimately and unfortunately, the contentiousness of the conflicting visions for the role and responsibilities of the Bureau of Indian Affairs that emerged in the creation and administration of this policy effectively ended this optimistic period for Indian communities and provided the foundation for the allotment program, the ultimate colonial policy that confined Indians spatially, politically, economically, and socially in the late-nineteenth century.

Finally, Chapter Six examines the generation of Indian policy reformers that followed Ely Parker and William Welsh. It argues that, by the late-nineteenth century, Indian policy reform evolved into conflicts over notions of state-centered social-policymaking and reformers, far from being like-minded activists as most scholars have constructed them, they clashed bitterly over several related issues. The most crucial disputes involved definitions of citizenship, especially the economic and social privileges and responsibilities that citizenship entailed, the role of the state as an active or passive institution, and the relationship between Indians and the government.

Chapter 1

Confining Tonawanda: The Ogden Land Dispute and the Political Education of an Indigenous Leader

[Our] positions are not now what was assumed by Chiefs 50 or 75 years ago, then they had time to consult one another but now we have to act the moment we think, or else our affairs must frequently suffer.

Ely S. Parker, 1852[1]

At the end of the American Revolution, western New York was contested territory. By 1790, many of the eastern nations of the Iroquois confederacy, particularly the Oneida and Onondaga sold their land to the state, but the Seneca still retained considerable tracts in the west. Simultaneously, both Massachusetts and New York also claimed this land, the former through the charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company, the latter through a royal grant to the Duke of York. When these two states met in Hartford, Connecticut in 1786, Massachusetts transferred their claim to political rights within the disputed ground to New York in exchange for the pre-emptive rights to the soil. Thus, the Seneca homeland fell into New York's political boundaries. If the Seneca chose to sell their lands, however, Massachusetts would profit from them. This pre-emptive right changed hands several times during the subsequent decades. Individual land speculators Oliver Phelps, Nathaniel Gorham, and Robert Morris first purchased the land rights from Massachusetts and, in 1797, members of the Morris family negotiated the Treaty of Big Tree, under which the Seneca sold all of their western New York territory except large

[1] Ely S. Parker to "Sir Isaac" Newton Parker, 22 June 1852, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS. See also Conable, "A Steady Enemy," 318.

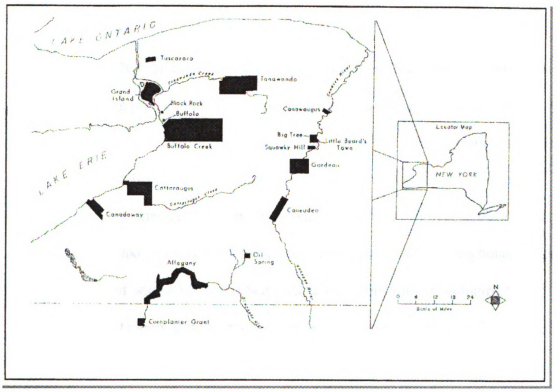

Figure 3: Seneca Lands Remaining after the Treaty of Big Tree (1797)
Source: Laurence Hauptman, *Conspiracy of Interests*, 93

reservations on the Buffalo Creek, Allegany River, Tonawanda Creek, Cattaraugus Creek, and Genesee River. Morris subsequently sold the pre-emptive right to the Holland Land Company. This company, in 1810, transferred these rights to David Ogden and the Ogden Land Company.[2]

By the late-1700s and the early-1800s, both New York State and the United States attempted to establish political and legal jurisdiction over the Seneca. The Albany Legislature passed laws to control the liquor trade and to punish white intruders on Indian land. Legislators also tried to extend New York criminal law over reservation inhabitants, especially after Tommy Jemmy, a Seneca chief and follower of the Seneca prophet Handsome Lake, ritually executed Caughquautaugh in 1821.[3] Caughquautaugh had been convicted of witchcraft by the Seneca and local non-Natives, outraged by the act, pressured the state legislature to impose state legal codes on the Indians.[4] Meanwhile, the United States established jurisdiction over the Seneca in the Treaty of 1794. In a significant break from tradition, this treaty dealt separately with each Iroquois nation, rather than as a whole confederacy.

In the early-nineteenth century, Quakers - both Hicksite and Orthodox - established missions and schools on the western New York reservations, while the Ogden Company struggled to profit from their land speculation by encouraging the Seneca to

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[2] Mary H. Conable, "A Steady Enemy: The Ogden Land Company and the Seneca Indians," (PhD diss., University of Rochester, 1994), Chap 1: "The Beginnings of the Struggle." For more on the Holland Land Company see William Chazanof, *Joseph Ellicott and the Holland Land Company: The Opening of Western New York* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1970), and William Wyckoff, *The Developer's Frontier: The Making of the Western New York Landscape* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

[3] For more on Handsome Lake, see Wallace, *Death and Rebirth* 1969).

[4] Laurence M. Hauptman, *A Conspiracy of Interests: Iroquois Dispossession and the Rise of New York State* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999), 115.

part with their remaining lands.[5] Thomas L. Ogden, suggested to Quaker missionaries, that all of the New York Seneca move onto the Allegany reservation.[6] The missionaries though, believed that Allegany land could not sustain the entire Seneca population and opposed the land speculators. Still trying to profit from their investment in 1819, the Ogden Company drafted a proposal to forcibly remove all the Seneca to Allegany, but the Indians, supported by Quaker missionaries resisted their efforts. Cities along the Erie Canal expanded in the 1820s and by the early-1830s land values had increased dramatically, especially those on the Buffalo Creek Reservation which bordered and essentially hemmed-in the city of Buffalo.[7]

The Ogden Company capitalized upon the population growth in Buffalo and appealed to legislators who supported the emerging national-level Indian removal policies. Red Jacket, Cornplanter, Handsome Lake, and Governor Blacksnake, as well as other prominent Seneca leaders rejected many offers to sell their remaining lands in New York; however, individualistic interests, factionalism, confusion, and occasional fatalism instigated by Ogden and the state commissioners, resulted in important land cession

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[5] For more on Quaker efforts to create schools see Mark A. Nicholas, "A Little School, A Reservation Divided: Quaker Education and the Allegany Seneca Leadership in the Early American Republic," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 30, no. 3 (2006):1-21; David Swalzer, *A Friend Among the Senecas: The Quaker Mission to Cornplanter's People* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2000); Lois Barton, *A Quaker Promise Kept: Philadelphia Friends' Work with the Allegany Senecas* (Eugene, OR: Spencer Butte Press, 1990).

[6] The Allegany Reservation was second smallest of the four major western New York reserves, covering roughly 30,500 acres. Cattaraugus was the smallest at 28,000 acres, while Tonawanda at 46,200 acres and Buffalo Creek consisting of 83,500 acres were the largest. See Conable, "A Steady Enemy," 9-10.

[7] See Conable, "A Stead Enemy," Chap. 2: "The First Attempt: Concentration, 1819." See also Hauptman, *A Conspiracy of Interests,* especially Part 2: "The Seneca Country."

treaties in 1826 and later in 1838.[8] In the 1826 treaty, the Seneca ceded all of their remaining lands in the Genesee Valley and agreed to a reduction of the Tonawanda, Cattaraugus, and Buffalo Creek reservations.[9] Indian leaders, most notably Red Jacket, argued that they never truly supported the treaty and without senate ratification, it held no power. Prominent Senecas later charged that United States commissioners, influenced by Ogden officials, coerced them to sign by threatening that federal legislation would remove them forcibly and would not provide compensation for their land.[10] Despite these problems, the 1826 treaty and its land cessions stood.[11]

The election of Andrew Jackson and his vice president, New Yorker Martin Van Buren, emboldened the Ogden Company after its 1826 "victory." By the early-1830s, Buffalo continued to flourish and became a center for both lake and canal shipping. Ogden Company trustees, Thomas L. Ogden and Joseph Fellows, planned to make additional Indian lands available for non-Native development. Historian Laurence Hauptman called the 1838 Buffalo Creek Treaty "one of the major frauds in American Indian history, ranking in notoriety with the Walking Purchase of 1737 with the Delaware, the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek of 1830 with the Choctaw, and the Treaty

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[8] For more on New York Seneca factionalism, see Thomas S. Abler, "Seneca Moieties and Heredity Chieftainships: The Early-Nineteenth-Century Political Organization of an Iroquois Nation," *Ethnohistory* 51, no. 3 (2004): 459-488; Thomas S. Abler, "Friends, Factions, and the Seneca Revolution of 1848," *Niagara Frontier* 21 (1974): 74-79; and Thomas S. Abler, "Factional Dispute and Party Conflict in the Political System of the Seneca Nation (1845-1895): An Ethnohistorical Analysis" (Ph.D diss., University of Toronto, 1969).

[9] The total land base reduction was 86,887 acres. See Hauptman, *A Conspiracy of Interests*, 155.

[10] For more on the campaign against the 1826 treaty, see Henry Manley, "Red Jacket's Last Campaign," *New York History* 31 (1950): 149-168.

[11] Hauptman, *A Conspiracy of Interests*, 154-161. See also Conable, "A Steady Enemy," Chap. 3: "Land for Peace, 1826."

of New Echota of 1835 with the Cherokee."[12] In the treaty negotiations three Ogden Company officials, James W. Stryker, Ransom H. Gillet, and John F. Shermerhorn, used alcohol, bribery, forgery, threats, misinformation, and a disregard for customary Seneca governmental practices to dispossess the Indians of all their remaining New York lands except the unoccupied, one square mile Oil Spring Reservation, as well as their rights to Wisconsin lands purchased for them by the United States. In return, the Ogden Company paid them $202,000 and the federal government provided a large reservation on lands west of Missouri, to be settled by all of the Iroquois nations.[13] Almost immediately Quakers in New York, Baltimore, and Philadelphia filed charges of fraud against the Ogden Land Company. Seneca groups claimed that most Iroquois did not support the treaty and that only a minority actually signed it.[14]

In 1842, after four years of intense protest, federal, state, and Ogden Company representatives once again met with the Seneca at Buffalo Creek. This time they drafted

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[12] Hauptman, *A Conspiracy of Interests*, 176. For a thorough discussion of Jacksonian Indian policy see Ronald Satz, *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975). For a more "apologetic" examination of Jackson and his legacy in Indian history see Robert Remini, *Andrew Jackson and His Indian Wars* (New York: Viking Publishers, 2001).

[13] All three of the Company officials were also Democratic Party loyalists and eastern New Yorkers. Stryker, a US Indian subagent, defrauded New York Indians, mostly the Seneca, of approximately $30,000 worth of annuity payments between the late-1830s and 1850. Schermerhorn aided Andrew Jackson's removal policies more than any other man, notably for the Cherokee of Georgia and Iroquois of New York. His skill in this arena stemmed from an ability to create internal chaos among Indian communities. Gillet, a one-time Democratic Congressman from Ogdenburg, secured the treaty, but when later allegations of fraud emerged, he escaped blame. For more see Kalman Goldstein, "The Albany Regency: The Failure of Practical Politics" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1969); James W. Van Hoeven, "Salvation and Indian Removal: The Career Biography of Rev. John Freeman Schermerhorn, Indian Commissioner" (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1972); and John Garraty, *Silas Wright* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949).

[14] Hauptman, *A Conspiracy of Interests*, 178-190. See also Conable, "A Steady Enemy," Chap. 5: "The Treaty of Buffalo Creek, 1838," and Henry Manley, "Buying Buffalo from the Indians," *New York History* 28 (July 1947): 313-329. For more on the city of Buffalo see David A. Gerber, *The Making of an American Pluralism: Buffalo, New York, 1825-1860* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989) and Mark Goldman, *High Hopes: The Rise and Decline of Buffalo* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983).

a compromise treaty that returned the Allegany and Cattaraugus reservations to the Indians, but did not return either Buffalo Creek or Tonawanda.[15] While the Ogden Company profited financially from the second treaty, New York Whigs and Hicksite Quakers, as the primary architects of the negotiations, created an alliance and reshaped state-level Indian policy. In the treaty they established themselves as the political, educational, and spiritual "fathers" of the Seneca. In fact, Laurence Hauptman has suggested that the treaty be called "the New York Whig-Hicksite Friend Compromise of 1842 that affected the Seneca."[16] As they had with the previous treaty, the Tonawanda Seneca refused to sign the 1842 compromise agreement. At critical moments during the negotiations prominent Tonawanda leaders spoke out against the proceedings and those Seneca who signed the document. In so doing, they separated themselves from the communities at Allegany and Cattaraugus, a political move that proved significant later in the 1840s and throughout the 1850s.[17]

Born in 1828, Ely Parker was too young to play a role in either the 1838 or 1842 treaty. In 1844, though, Tonawanda elders recognized Parker's talent for the English language and began to employ his services as an interpreter for petitions and protests, and he frequently accompanied them to Albany and Washington DC to meet with prominent

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[15] The 1842 treaty is most often referred to as the supplemental treaty or the compromise treaty. Throughout this chapter I use the term "compromise treaty."

[16] Hauptman, *A Conspiracy of Interests*, 212.

[17] See Conable, "A Steady Enemy," Chap 8: "Compromise, 1842," and Nicholas, Chap. 4 " The Full Emergence of the Seneca New Order." See also "Petition from the Tonawanda Women to President John Tyler," n.d., Box 2: Correspondence, Dec. 1817-Aug. 1845, Isaac and Amy Post Family Papers, Rare Books, Special Collections, and Preservation , Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York. (Subsequent citation RRL-UR).

Figure 4: Parker as a Youth, ca. 1840
Source: William Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 2

political leaders. Parker also descended from a politically powerful Tonawanda family and belonged to the Wolf Clan. As early as the mid-1840s he began to shape the Tonawanda resistance campaign against the Ogden Land Company.

Later in his life, a 32-year-old Ely Parker reflected on his youth and accomplishments. "I am...relieved of a great responsibility, which was shouldered upon me when yet a mere youth, the weight of which, I fear, has made me prematurely old," he wrote.[18] The "great responsibility" to which Parker referred was his role as the principle spokesperson for the Tonawanda Seneca in their land dispute with the Ogden Land Company. The dispute shaped Tonawanda history in profound ways, and although Parker may have felt "prematurely old" in its aftermath, this experience provided him with an important political education and motivated the young leader to develop concepts of Native-white relations and governance that, within a decade, shaped his national reform agenda.

This chapter examines the Ogden land dispute to illustrate how local controversies and dispossession could affect community-based notions of power and authority, and the role that Ely Parker played in representing Native interests at the private, state, and federal levels.[19] As he participated in the Tonawanda resistance campaign against the Ogden Land Company, Parker divided his time between the halls of government in Albany and Washington DC, and the council house at Tonawanda.

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[18] Ely S. Parker to Benjamin Wilcox, former teacher, Yates Academy, 10 September 1860, Folder 2 – Correspondence, 1855-1890, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1846-1924, RRL-UR.

[19] Removal efforts, as Mark A. Nicholas asserted in his recent dissertation, shaped Indian governance in significant ways that scholars have not yet fully recognized. Most of the scholarship in this direction has focused on Indians in the Southeast. See O'Brien, *Choctaws in a Revolutionary Age*; Saunt, *A New Order of Things;* and William G. McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renascence in the New Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). Nicholas completed his dissertation at Lehigh University in 2006, and although I have been unable to acquire a complete copy, his chapter entitled "The Full Emergence of the Seneca New Order," has influenced my thinking in this analysis.

During this period he developed theories of governance at the reservation and federal levels based upon a recognition and protection of Indian sovereignty, and a belief in the value of an efficient and impartial bureaucracy. He also developed a framework for his vision of the proper relationship between the federal government and Indian people in which the BIA would provide educational, employment, and economic development opportunities to Native communities to compensate for dispossession and the history of colonialism. In the post-Civil War period, these ideas provided the basis for Parker's reform agenda in the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The Ogden Company and the Disruption of an Indian Community

In the 1830s state, federal and private interests in the eastern United States banded together in a lethal alliance that skillfully dispossessed and removed many Indian groups to reserved lands in the west. By the time of the Buffalo Creek Treaty, however, Andrew Jackson no longer held the presidency and his successor, Martin Van Buren, struggled to control the Democratic Party in the face of the Panic of 1837 - especially in New York State.[20] In fact, the 1842 compromise treaty demonstrated New York Whigs' willingness to abandon the colonial policy of removal and replace it with a cost-effective "civilization" campaign led by Quaker missionaries.[21] First as an interpreter and later as a leader in his own right, Ely Parker recognized that it was the Ogden Company that posed the real and immediate danger to his community, while state and federal legal

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[20] For more on the political impact of the Panic of 1837 see Reeve Huston, *Land and Freedom: Rural Society, Popular Protest, and Party Politics in Antebellum New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Charles McCurdy, *The Anti-Rent Era in New York Law and Politics, 1839-1865* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); and Thomas Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent: Agrarianism in Nineteenth-Century New York* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005).

[21] Hauptman, *A Conspiracy of Interests*, 210-212.

doctrines coupled with sympathetic politicians provided some safeguards for Indian people. He shaped the Tonawanda resistance campaign with these ideas in mind. Simultaneously, he also began to realize the potential utility that state and federal bureaucratic agencies held for Indian communities.

Early in their resistance campaign Tonawanda leaders such as Two Guns and Jimmy Johnson appealed to prominent national statesmen, especially Whigs, asking them to support the Seneca. In a letter to Henry Clay, Two Guns asked, after acknowledging Clay's sympathies for the Indians, that the senator exert himself "powerfully" on their behalf so that they would not be "driven to the painful alternative of accepting the western country."[22] When Parker began to serve as an interpreter in 1844, he immediately addressed the enforcement of the Ogden treaties. He learned from Thomas Hartley Crawford, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, that neither the War Department nor the Office of Indian Affairs had the power to do so. Parker elatedly wrote to his father, "the United States say they have no power whatever to enforce this treaty."[23] Soon after, New York Governor, William Bouck, and Massachusetts Governor, George Briggs, both assured Tonawanda leaders that they had neither the power nor the interest to implement the treaty stipulations.[24] By the mid-1840s it was clear that government

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[22] Two Guns (Seneca) to Henry Clay, 1838(?), Box 1 - 1794-1845, Ely S. Parker Papers, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, PA. (Subsequent citation APS.)

[23] T. Hartley Crawford to Messrs. Cook and Love, 4 January 1844, Box 1 - 1794-1845, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and Ely S. Parker to William Parker, 29 January 1844, Box 1 - 1794-1845, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[24] W.C. Bouck to Chiefs Blacksmith and Jimmy Johnson, 17 June 1844, Box 1 - 1794-1845, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and John G. Paerpery [Palfrey] to John Blacksmith and others, 12 October 1844, Box 1 - 1794-1845, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS. Although Massachusetts sold its pre-emptive rights to the Seneca lands, it maintained a right to employ a commissioner to witness any proceedings between the Indians and future preemptors, such as the Ogden Company, to ensure the legality and fairness of the

officials would not forcibly remove the Seneca as they had the Cherokee, several years earlier. The Ogden Company, though, moved non-Native settlers onto the reservation lands, confiscated improvements such as saw mills, fenced lots, and fields, and continually sent or threatened to send appraisers to judge the value of the various lands, structures, and resources to comply with the treaty provisions.

The Ogden Company's threats of dispossession represented the most urgent and prominent concern for Parker and his community. In 1845 they sent an appeal to Silas Wright, the new governor of New York, alleging that the company sold their lands at a public auction and that settlers were moving onto the reserve en masse. The governor warned them to refrain from attacking the settlers, and to wait until the validity of the treaties had been determined, before taking other actions. Simultaneously, though, Joseph Fellows, the Ogden Trustee, wrote to Parker that "a great deal of money and much vexation will be saved by avoiding litigation in the Courts which must eventually result in disappointment to the Tonawandas."[25] Despite this warning, Seneca leaders again petitioned Governor Wright, this time asserting that the Ogden settlers "dispossess us of large quantities of our forest lands...[and] of improvements actually made by our own hands." And, citing the New York Constitution of 1821, they asked that the Genesee County District Attorney enter formal complaints against the intruders.[26] Based on these mid-1840s developments, Parker helped create a three-pronged resistance strategy for the

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transactions. In the Buffalo Creek Treaty Period General Henry Dearborn filled this role. For more see "Journals of Henry A.S. Dearborn" *Proceedings of the Buffalo Historical Society* VII (1904): 35-228.

[25] Tonawanda Chiefs to Governor Wright, 22 February 1845, Box 1 - 1794-1845, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; Silas Wright to Tonawanda Chiefs, 4 April 1846, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and Joseph Fellows to Ely S. Parker, 7 November 1845, Box 1 - 1794-1845, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[26] Petition from Tonawanda Leaders to the Governor of New York, 1846, Folder 12842, Ely S. Parker Papers, New York State Library, Albany, NY. (Subsequent citation NYSL).

Tonawanda that involved physically blocking additional attempts at settlement and appraisement, applying for judicial action to remove trespassers at the state level, and continuing his appeals to national level politicians to officially invalidate the treaties through the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

Articles four and five of the 1842 compromise treaty stated that prior to removal, two arbitrators had to survey and assign monetary values to all unsettled and improved lands on the Buffalo Creek and Tonawanda reserves.[27] Parker reasoned that if this process could not be carried out, provided that neither the state nor the federal government forced the Indians to assent, then the treaties could not be honored. He therefore counseled community members to resist the arbitrators, refuse any improvement moneys, and defend against any settlement by non-Natives. Allowing any of these things to take place, Parker recognized, could be constructed as an assent to the treaties. In a letter to his father from Yates Academy, Parker wrote that his advice "for the present would be for the Tonawandas to hold to their lands repelling every individual who should attempt by fraud and deceit to remove them."[28] Later, Parker's brother Nicholson and several other community members, following his advice, planted crops in a field cleared by a non-Native settler. The Genesee County sheriff arrested the Seneca men for trespassing and transported them to Batavia.[29] The settler eventually withdrew the charge. In 1849, Judge Thomas C. Love, one of the Ogden arbitrators, vacated his

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[27] Charles J. Kappler ed., *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Vol. II, Treaties (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), 539-540.

[28] Ely S. Parker to William Parker, 29 January 1844, Box 1 - 1794-1845, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[29] Isaac Shanks, Isaac Doctor, and Nicholson Parker to Ely S. Parker, 19 May 1846, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

position, and the company applied to replace him with J.S. Wadsworth. The new arbitrator proposed a different appraisal method. Rather than surveying the lands and improvements in person, he would rely on informants familiar with the reservation to describe and estimate the values. Following Parker's encouragement, the Tonawanda Chiefs presented a united front against this move and drafted an appeal to the War Department. In it they argued that, because the Indians had made many "very valuable and important improvements" since the 1842 treaty, it would be impossible to make an accurate appraisal of the reservation as it existed then, thus invalidating the treaty.[30] In this way, the landscape itself and the ways that Indian people changed it became a weapon for the Indians to use in their resistance effort. The Tonawanda community employed Parker's strategy successfully through the 1840s and 1850s allowing only trusted non-Native advisors and friends onto their reservation for fear that unknown whites might trick them.[31]

While Parker and the Seneca waited for the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs to review their case, they pursued legal recourse against non-Native settlers invading their reservation in an effort to stem the tide of dispossession. In 1846, Nicholson Parker

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[30] R.B. Warren to Ely S. Parker, 21 February 1849, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and Tonawanda Chiefs to William L. Marcy, Secretary of War, 12 March 1849, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS. It is important to note that this line of argumentation is very similar to that employed by squatters and other non-Native settlers in the Ohio Valley and further west. These men and women, who settled federal lands, argued that the federal government should not remove them because they had improved the land. The result of these arguments was the federal Preemption Act of 1841. For more see Paul Wallace Gates, *The Farmer's Age: Agriculture, 1815-1860* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1960); and Alan Taylor, *Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: The Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

[31] See Conable, "A Steady Enemy," 288-289. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft during this time noted the difficulty of entering the reservation, expressing appreciation to Ely Parker in a letter. He stated that was grateful for Parker's "friendly disposition" and that "I had hoped that my known character and friendship for the Red Race would have shielded me from some suspicion of unfriendliness...Men who come to get Indian lands by unfair means, or carry on any sinister object are not publickly [sic] announced." See Henry Rowe Schoolcraft to Ely S. Parker, 8 August 1845, Box 1 - 1794-1845, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

traveled to Albany with John Martindale, a non-Native lawyer who played an increasingly significant role in the Tonawanda resistance campaign throughout this period. There he requested from the Supreme Court a warrant of removal for the settlers claiming titles under the Ogden treaties. Although the judge refused, New York Indian Agent W.P. Angel suggested that the Seneca could prosecute any non-Native person who cut timber from Indian lands using an 1813 statute.[32] It appears they never used the 1813 law, but the Seneca did file several notable trespassing cases against settlers in New York State, the most significant of which was *Blacksmith v. Fellows*. In this case begun in 1846, Seneca Sachem John Blacksmith charged that Ogden officials Joseph Fellows and Robert Kendle trespassed upon his land, assaulted him, and claimed possession of his sawmill. Blacksmith won the initial trial and Fellows appealed the case all the way to the United States Supreme Court. In 1857, after the Tonawanda had already purchased title to some of their lands from the Ogden Company, the Supreme Court found in favor of Blacksmith on the grounds that the treaty of 1842 never authorized any sort of forced removal.[33] Although the ruling occurred after the land dispute had ended, it validated the long-held Seneca belief, that the treaties were unjust and fraudulent.

Dispossession was one of the most visible and practical dangers that unscrupulous land speculators and business interests such as the Ogden Company posed to Indian communities, but, as the Tonawanda experience demonstrated, threats of removal could

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[32] Nicholson Parker, "Memo on conference at Batavia and Albany with attorney Martindale, State Senator Clark, and the Governor, on course of legal action for removing white settlers," 12 June 1846, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and W.P. Angel to Ely S. Parker, 20 February 1848, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS

[33] Blacksmith v. Fellows, 7 N.Y. 401 (1852); and Fellows v. Blacksmith, 19 How. U.S., 761 (1857). See also Conable, "A Steady Enemy," 381-385.

also disrupt customary notions of power and authority. In their petitions and memorials to state and federal policymakers the Seneca community presented itself as "unitedly and unanimously" in agreement, however, the whirlwind of court cases, appraisal attempts, conflicted messages from government officials, and company threats clearly unsettled the reservation inhabitants.[34]

Letters sent between Ely Parker and his family in the 1840s and 1850s paint a picture of a community struggling to come to terms with an emerging younger generation of leaders who claimed power and authority based on their abilities to understand, balance, and negotiate through Native and non-Native legal and political concepts. In an 1846 letter to his brother Nicholson, Ely Parker acknowledged the problems developing among their people. "If ever the Tonawandas were required to be united in their plans and purposes, it is now...[t]he interests of future generations hang upon the course we pursue," he asserted. It appears that the primary factionalism there stemmed from a Seneca man named Stephen who did not support Parker's rise to prominence. "You say Stephen talks much about my being too young to attend to matters of such great importance," Parker wrote, "I do not envy his misery...nothing else troubles him more than the mere knowledge of the fact that a little boy has superseded him in wisdom and power, although he is old enough to be his grandfather."[35] Parker expressed regret over such factionalism at home, but he reminded Nicholson, "no matter what...let us try and

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[34] For example, see "Memorial of Tonawanda" in Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, *Report*, 29th Cong., 2d sess., 1847, S. Doc. 156, 113.

[35] Ely S. Parker to Nicholson Parker, 21 June, 1846, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

Figure 5: Nicholson Henry Parker, 1854
Source: Arthur C. Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 263

be united and hang on to our land as the fox hangs on to its prey."[36] Perhaps they heard Parker's concerns about factionalism and about the statements Stephen made questioning his abilities, because the Tonawanda leaders immediately drafted a letter reminding him of the confidence they held in their young spokesman, and to demonstrate this they sent him some additional funds for living expenses. "You may think toward us that we are not united, but we tell you that [we] are...the evidence is clearly shown in sending that sum of money to you for it passed through the Nation," they assured him.[37] Parker's youth, though, would continue to be an issue of contention and concern, especially as he began to play a larger role in the land dispute proceedings and within Tonawanda politics.

In 1851, after the death of Seneca Sachem John Blacksmith, the Grand Council of the Iroquois raised Ely Parker to Blacksmith's leadership position and bestowed upon him the hereditary name Do-ne-ho-ga-wa, or "Open Door."[38] It was unusual for an Iroquois man in his early twenties to be raised to such a revered position, but as a member of the powerful Wolf Clan, and because of his leadership in the resistance campaign, it appears that clan matrons made an exception.[39] Parker's ascension demonstrated the ways that

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[36] Ely S. Parker to Nicholson Parker, 15 July 1846, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[37] Tonawanda Chiefs to Ely S. Parker, 15 July 1846, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[38] *Buffalo Courier*, July [?], 1851, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; *Batavia (NY) Spirit of the Times* September 30, 1851; and Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 49. For more on the rights and responsibilities of Seneca Sachems, see William Fenton ed., *Parker on the Iroquois*, Book III: The Constitution of the Five Nations (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1968), 34-40.

[39] Spencer Cone to Ely S. Parker, 31 July 1851, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS. In this letter Spencer Cone revealed that there was some question as to whether Parker would actually be raised, Isaac Shanks and Jimmy Johnson may not have approved of it.

shifting notions of power and authority caused by controversies such as the Ogden land dispute disrupted cultural norms of kinship and intergenerational relationships. In 1852, Seneca leaders appointed George Cooper, Parker's maternal uncle, to serve as his "sub Sachem." Cooper then wrote to Parker asking him for advice, he wanted to know "exactly my duty, or the duty of my office under you." He also wanted an assurance that, if he spoke during a council, the young Sachem would support him.[40] Parker probably found this request an awkward one. In the Seneca matrilineal system, a young man's uncle held an important position as a role model and advisor, often even more significant than his father, but in this case the land dispute and shifting notions of power and authority inverted these roles.[41] Parker replied deferentially, perhaps hoping to maintain some appearance of customary kinship status. "I cannot dictate to Geo. Cooper what he shall say or do in council...[nor can I] dictate what his opinions shall be," he wrote to his brother Newton. Then, recognizing the changes that had taken place in Tonawanda society during his life, Parker asserted that their "positions are not now what was assumed by Chiefs 50 or 75 years ago...now we have to act the moment we think, or else our affairs must frequently suffer."[42]

The Ogden land dispute affected kinship relationships in other ways as well. The majority of the Tonawanda Seneca chose to remain in their homeland and fight against the company's efforts to dispossess them, but some believed that moving to the west

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[40] George Cooper to Ely S. Parker, 22 May 1852, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[41] For more on the Iroquois matrilineal system and kinship relationships see William Fenton, *The Great Law and the Longhouse: A Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 28-29.

[42] Ely S. Parker to "Sir Isaac" Newton Parker, 22 June 1852, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS. See also Conable, "A Steady Enemy," 318.

would provide opportunities otherwise unavailable in New York. These personal choices not only disrupted community solidarity, a significant issue on its own due to the value Seneca history placed on unanimity, but rifts also erupted within families. The case of Spencer Cone and the Parker family serves as a brief case study of these issues and demonstrates a final danger that land speculators and business interests posed to Indian communities.

Thirteen years older than Ely, Spencer Houghton Cone was the only member of the Parker family to support the Treaty of 1838. He took the name of the Baptist clergyman who helped facilitate his education, but it has also been suggested that because of his support for the treaty, William Parker, his father, forbade him from using the family surname. Cone may have even acted as an agent for the Ogden Company and for a time, he moved to Enterprise, Missouri.[43] Arthur C. Parker compared Cone to Nathaniel Thayer Strong, a young pro-removal advocate from the Cattaraugus Reservation, and described him as restless and temperamental.[44] Cone's actions caused a rift in the Parker family. He argued that the Tonawanda had been led by ignorant chiefs, but in a letter his father stated, "I respect my rights and love my lands," implying that Cone did not. Ely Parker told Cone that he supported the resistance campaign because the Indians had been unjustly treated by the "rascally white race." Later Cone even suggested that he knew of a document in which Tonawanda leaders agreed to the 1842 compromise treaty, a fact which would have been devastating to their resistance

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[43] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 8, 11, and 51.

[44] Arthur C. Parker, "Note Describing Cone" in William Parker to Spencer H. Cone, 13 October 1846, Box 2 - 1846-18548, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

campaign.[45] Cone was not simply the black sheep of the family though; it was his involvement with Ogden that caused the division. In fact, he later ended his association with the company, returned to the reservation, and seemingly rectified his family issues. He began to use the Parker name around 1850 and was raised to the position of war chief. He died in 1851 at the age of 36. The relationship between Cone and the rest of the Parker family typified the conflicts caused by the actions of land speculators, and this particular conflict, involving his own kin, revealed on a close personal level how disruptive these colonial actions could be for Native communities.[46]

Dispossession, threats of removal, shifting notions of power and authority, as well as a disruption of community and family solidarity, all characterized the Ogden land dispute period at the Tonawanda Reservation. As one element of his political education, these experiences ingrained in Ely Parker a distrust of business interests that operated outside the systems of bureaucratic governance but had the ability to shape policy, while the sympathy shown to the Tonawanda by various state and national politicians in this post-Removal Era, taught him that at least some bureaucrats could be trusted. These ideas, developed at a young age, would come to fruition during Parker's term as a federal policymaker, but they were not the only lessons he learned during the Ogden dispute. Throughout the period between 1846 and 1861, Parker and the Tonawanda established important relationships with non-Native citizens in New York and Washington DC, and

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[45] William Parker and James Williams to Spencer H. Cone, 30 August 1845, Box 1 - 1794-1845, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; Ely S. Parker to Spencer H. Cone, 8 June 1846, Box 2- 1846-18548, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and Spencer H. Cone to A.H.H. Stuart, Secretary of the Interior, 3 April 1851, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[46] Even though he ultimately returned and re-integrated himself, the rift caused by the Ogden dispute lasted for almost a decade and influenced Ely Parker's political education. See Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 51.

as the next section suggests, these experiences taught him that within specific contexts, especially when their interests ran parallel to or converged with those of the Indians, elements of the "rascally white race" could provide political assistance.

Indians and Citizens in Western New York

During the removal campaign in Georgia, local citizens, state and federal policymakers banded together in a strong political alliance against the Cherokee. The national political culture of the Jacksonian era, land settlement, development, and mining prospects, as well as the history of Georgia's state-level aggression towards its Native residents created an insurmountable obstacle that Cherokee leaders such as John Ross, could not overcome.[47] The situation was quite different in New York State in the years immediately following Andrew Jackson's presidency. There, the Democratic Party struggled to maintain its control as local citizens - farmers and laborers in the central and western parts of New York - joined with middle-class Whigs to oppose large landholders and pressure for land policy reform through a new state constitution. It was within this context that Parker and the Tonawanda Seneca found unlikely alliances with and political support from local non-Native citizens, middle-class lawyers and professionals, fraternal organizations, national politicians, and perhaps most importantly, public intellectuals. All of these individuals understood that population growth, transportation innovations, and market development had created a situation in western New York in which Native communities could not or would not continue to exist as they had in the past. To one

[47] Theda Perdue and Michael Green eds., *The Cherokee Removal: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 2005); Thurman Wilkins, *Cherokee Tragedy: The Ridge Family and the Decimation of a People* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986); and Gary E. Moulton, *John Ross, A Cherokee Chief* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978).

extent or another though, all of these men held interests that ran parallel to or converged with those of Native leaders.[48] Local farmers and citizens viewed the eastern New York land speculators with skepticism at best, but more often with disgust because the land barons sought to profit from the land without working the soil themselves. Local politicians, particularly Whigs, sought to challenge the Democratic Party and its costly removal policies, while local public intellectuals, many of whom studied local Indian history and culture, sought to sustain these nearby communities because of the data they could supply.

In 1844, sixteen-year-old Ely Parker traveled to Albany as an interpreter for Tonawanda leaders. During the trip he met Lewis Henry Morgan, the lawyer and founder of the Grand Order of the Iroquois in a bookstore. Morgan later stated, in his characteristic, racially patronizing way, that "[t]o sound the war whoop and seize the youth might have been dangerous." After Morgan approached the young man, he and Parker conversed for hours at the bookstore and later that night in the hotel rooms of the Tonawanda delegates.[49] Morgan saw Parker as a potential informant, a source of knowledge on Iroquois history and society that he could use in his ethnographic pursuits, especially because the young man commanded a fluency of both the English and Seneca languages, and, if he accepted this honorary membership, an individual who could lend

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[48] My understanding of the idea of convergence or collaboration between Native and non-Native people within a colonial context has been influenced heavily by Jurgen Osterhammel's theoretical overview of the concept of colonialism. In it he argued that when the interests of Native and non-Native people converged, structures within the process of colonialism often became less rigid. In these cases Native leaders might argue in favor of certain aspects of colonialism, or, as in this case, non-Native people might become critics of colonialism itself. See Osterhammel, *Colonialism*, 63-64.

[49] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 1-3. The quote is from "Copy of an Address Read by Scenandoah [Morgan] at the Monthly Council of the Cayugas April 17, 1844," Lewis H. Morgan Papers, RRL-UR.

validity and authenticity to the Grand Order. In Morgan, Parker found a potential ally, a public intellectual, a man of great legal expertise, and a conduit to larger networks of politicians, lawyers, and professionals. The relationship was symbiotic. Parker provided Morgan with the insight and knowledge necessary to complete his first ethnographic work, *The League of the Ho-de-no-sau-nee or Iroquois* in 1851.[50] Morgan, for his part, helped to shape and direct non-Native support for the Tonawanda throughout the land dispute period.

Early in 1846, after accepting his honorary membership into the Grand Order of the Iroquois, Parker traveled to Washington DC with Tonawanda leaders and met officials from the War Department, as well as the President.[51] Simultaneously, Morgan and other members of the Grand Order mobilized non-Native support in several New York State counties. While in DC, Parker wrote to Morgan stating that this support gave him and the delegates "additional strength" and that it made "a very strong impression upon the feelings of many of the citizens [in Washington] in favor of the poor Indians."

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[50] Morgan frequently asked Parker to take notes at Seneca council meetings, or spiritual rituals. See Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 26 September 1848, Folder 12 - Morgan Correspondence, 1848, Box 1 - Correspondence, 1839-1854, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, RRL-UR; Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 29 January 1850, Folder 15 - Morgan Correspondence, Box 1 - Correspondence, 1839-1854, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, RRL-UR; and Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 2 August 1850, Folder 15 - Morgan Correspondence, Box 1 - Correspondence, 1839-1854, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, RRL-UR. Parker usually responded with notes that Morgan included the *The League*. See "A translation of the speech made by Jimmy Johnson at the Grand Council of the Confederacy of Iroquois held at the Indian village of Tonawanda ... translated by Ely S. Parker," October 1845, Vault Box Ayer MS 451, Newberry Library, Chicago, IL. (subsequent citation NL); "Notes," no date, Folder 65 - Writings, [An Account of an Indian Council by Ely S Parker], Box 2, Arthur C. Parker Papers, NYSL; "Separation of the Senecas and Wyandottes," Folder 12843, Ely S. Parker Papers, NYSL. In his chapter entitled "The Purloined Indian," Ox Frankel suggested that the Parker/Morgan relationship had both practical and symbolic power for each man. Unfortunately, his discussion of this relationship is brief. See Oz Frankel, *States of Inquiry: Social Investigations and Print Culture in Nineteenth-Century Britain and the United States* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2006), 291-298.

[51] Lewis H. Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 8 May 1844, Folder 4 - Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker and his sister Caroline Parker, Photostats, 1844-1868, Box 1, Arthur C. Parker Papers, NYSL.

He also reminded Morgan that if the Grand Order continued in their support, they would "not be sorry for it."[52] In a show of appreciation, the Tonawanda Seneca, in the fall of 1846, formally adopted three Grand Order brothers, Lewis, H. Morgan, C.T. Porter, and Thomas Darling, into their community. They bestowed the honorary name Tah-yad-da-o-wo-kuh, or "Lying Across," upon Morgan, perhaps recognizing his ability to build support between Native and non-Native people. They named Porter Dah-ya-a-we, or "He is Bringing," and Darling became "Gah-e-we-yo, or "Glad Tidings," again perhaps acknowledging their work on behalf of the Indians.[53]

Lewis Henry Morgan was not the only public intellectual to support Parker and the Tonawanda. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft first visited the reservation in 1845 to complete his census of New York Indians.[54] In a letter to Parker, written shortly after his visit, Schoolcraft thanked the young Seneca for his "friendly disposition."[55] Parker used this opportunity to develop a friendship with the ethnographer and, the following May, asked if Schoolcraft would be willing to supply some information for the Tonawanda to present to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in their fight against the Ogden Company. Community leaders wanted to demonstrate that the Allegany and Cattaraugus reservation land could not support all the New York Seneca, and furthermore, that in the history of

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[52] Ely S. Parker to Lewis Henry Morgan, 2 April 1846, Folder 7 - Morgan Correspondence, January to April, 1846, Box 1 - Correspondence, 1839-1854, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, RRL-UR.

[53] "Albany or Rochester Newspaper Article," 29 March 1847, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[54] For more on the life of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft see Richard Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar: The Life of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft* (Mount Pleasant, MI: Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University, 1987).

[55] Henry Rowe Schoolcraft to Ely S. Parker, 8 August 1845, Box 1 - 1794-1845, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

the Seneca people, chiefs made all political decisions using the principle of unanimity, not a system of majority rule. Schoolcraft responded within a week and authorized the Seneca to use his expertise in their case. He stated that based on his "observation on those reservations [Allegany and Cattaraugus]...they are insufficient in extent to accommodate, permanently, the entire Seneca population." He also asserted, as Parker knew he would, that "in former times, the majority-principle was not known...Unanimity, appears to have been necessary, in the result of all important national questions."[56] Tonawanda leaders used this information from a non-Native public intellectual and known Indian "expert" to add credence to the petition Parker drafted and delivered to President Polk and the senate two months earlier.[57] Schoolcraft continued to support the Seneca case throughout the land dispute. In the late-1840s Congress paid him to conduct a lengthy study of Indian people and compile the information into a usable format.[58] During his time in DC, Schoolcraft monitored developments in the land dispute and, at a critical moment in 1849, informed Parker that the Ogden Company would employ a new appraiser.[59] This information allowed Tonawanda leaders time to react accordingly and to develop a successful petition to counter the Ogden maneuver. Henry

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[56] Ely S. Parker to Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, 2 May 1846, Folder 8 - Morgan Correspondence, May, 1846, Box 1 - Correspondence, 1839-1854, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, RRL-UR; and Henry Rowe Schoolcraft to Ely S. Parker, 7 May 1846, Folder 8 - Morgan Correspondence, May, 1846, Box 1 - Correspondence, 1839-1854, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, RRL-UR.

[57] "A Petition of the Tonawanda band of Seneca Indians..." 29th Cong., 1st sess., 2 April 1846, S. Doc. 273, 2-3.

[58] Schoolcraft's study resulted in a six volume work published between 1851 and 1857 entitled *Historical and Statistical Information Respecting the History, Condition, and Prospects on the Indian Tribes of the United States.*

[59] Ely S. Parker to Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, 23 January 1848, Folder 12 - Morgan Correspondence, May, 1848, Box 1 - Correspondence, 1839-1854, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, RRL-UR; and Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, 11 March 1849, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

Rowe Schoolcraft and Lewis Henry Morgan provided the Seneca with access to "expert" knowledge and with networks of support critical in their fight against the land company. His ability to move in "educated" circles allowed Parker to create friendships that were politically useful to the Seneca.

Non-Native New York farmers and laborers also played a key role in these events. In early 1847, Parker sent a letter to Lewis H. Morgan from Washington DC. "Petitions from western and central New York are almost daily presented in our behalf," he wrote, "and I have no doubt [these petitions] will have a great bearing in the final issue of the matter [the land dispute]."[60] The signers of these petitions held and worked the land in Genesee and the surrounding counties; they were farmers, laborers, and regular citizens. If these men had lived in Georgia a decade earlier, they would have supported Cherokee removal and one might have expected them to support the removal of the Tonawanda Seneca in the 1840s. That they did not can perhaps best be understood as a function of the history of land ownership and land policy in New York State.

In a hold-over from the colonial period, large land owners in New York such as Stephen Van Rensselear III used paternalist influence and a manor system of land distribution, which included inheritable life leases, to establish their political and social elite status. The Revolutionary generation of landholders and tenants appreciated this paternalist system, though, and saw it as mutually beneficial because it insulated both groups against market forces, but in the nineteenth century, their sons, swept up in the tensions of an emerging capitalist economy, fought bitter political battles over land policy reform and governmental representation. Tenant farmers viewed themselves as the

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[60] Ely S. Parker to Lewis Henry Morgan, 13 February 1847, Folder 11 - Morgan Correspondence, 1847, Box 1 - Correspondence, 1839-1854, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, RRL-UR.

inheritors of the Revolution and therefore, they deserved the right to own the land they worked. Furthermore, as small producers, they saw themselves as the most trustworthy and responsible candidates for political office. In the anti-rent wars of the 1830s and 1840s, these farmers used Indian imagery when they committed symbolic and real violence against the landholders. During the Ogden land dispute then, local farmers and citizens saw their interests as parallel to the sedentary and agriculturalist Seneca, rather than the private company of elite eastern business men who held vast tracts of land but did not work the soil.[61]

In petitions they submitted to the United States Senate, farmers and laborers employed language that revealed their connection to, appreciation and support for the Tonawanda community. One petition stated that the treaties gave Indians, "for their lands but one-tenth of their value, and nothing for one of the finest water privileges in the State." The signers asserted that the Tonawanda were "moral, industrious, honest people, rapidly improving in their condition, possessing good farms," and like the farmers themselves, they were "strongly attached to the homes of their fathers." Finally, petitioners assured the senate that the "people of the State of New York do not desire their removal, and have no sympathies with their spoilers."[62] In another petition, the

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[61] I am deeply indebted to Thomas Summerhill for his insights into the landholder/tenant relationship in early nineteenth-century New York. For more on the Revolutionary generation of New York farmers and landholders, as well as their sons, and the anti-rent wars, see Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent*, 7-88. For more on the farmers' use of Indian imagery, see *Harvest of Dissent,* 64-65; Thomas Summerhill, "The Farmer's Republic: Agrarian Protest and the Capitalist Transformation of Upstate New York, 1840-1900" (PhD., diss., University of California, San Diego, 1993), 38-70; and Henry Christman, *Tin Horns and Calico: A Decisive Episode in the Emergence of Democracy* (New York: Henry Holt, 1945), 91-93. For more on the significance of non-Natives using Indian symbolism in their political protests, see Deloria, *Playing Indian.*

[62] Petition to the Senate of the United States, Folder 109 - Seneca Indians at Tonawanda, Box 24 - Mss of Articles, etc., Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, RRL-UR.

residents of western New York argued that the treaties of 1838 and 1842 were "contrary to every principle of justice and humanity," and that "these Indians have been unmercifully defrauded."[63] Their support gave Tonawanda leaders strength and added weight to the arguments they presented in front of state and national policymakers.

There was, however, an alternate explanation for farmer and local citizen support. The young, pro-removal advocate at the Cattaraugus Reservation, Nathanial Thayer Strong, charged that non-Natives who opposed removal did so out of personal greed. In his *Appeal to the Christian Community on the Condition and Prospects of the New York Indians* he argued that these men sold liquor to the Indians, leased water rights, bought lumber, and held licenses to live on their lands.[64] They stood to profit in many ways from the Indians' continued presence in the state.[65] Strong's *Appeal,* can be read as a defense of his own actions – he not only signed the Treaty of 1838, but also served as an interpreter for the Seneca – and as a defense of the other pro-removal chiefs among the Indians. Because he so vociferously supported removal, Strong's argument represented the continued factionalism among the Seneca, but his argument cannot be taken at face value. The history of land policy and the relationships between large landholders and tenants in New York, suggests that the farmers' support for the Indians and the petition drive led by these citizens was an example of a circumstance in which the interests of non-Native and Native people ran parallel.

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[63] Petition to the Senate of the United States, Folder 110 - Seneca Indians at Tonawanda, Petitions on their behalf, Box 24 - Mss of Articles, etc., Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, RRL-UR.

[64] See Nathaniel Thayer Strong, *Appeal to the Christian Community on the Condition and Prospects of the New York Indians* (New York: E.B. Clayton, Printer, 1841).

[65] Daniel F. Littlefield, Jr., "'They Ought to Enjoy the Home of their Fathers': The Treaty of 1838, Seneca Intellectuals, and Literary Genesis" in *Early Native American Writing: New Critical Essays* ed. Helen Jaskoski, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 94.

While non-Native farmers and small producers conducted their petition drive, other citizens in western and central New York - lawyers, merchants, and businessmen - met and drafted lengthy memorials to the president and senate to express their support for the Indians and outrage at the conduct of the land company. Some of these individuals, such as Frederick Follett, a well-known politician and newspaper owner in Batavia, Isaac Verplanck, and John H. Martindale, Batavia and Rochester lawyers, offered continual support throughout the land dispute period, the latter served as one of the principle lawyers for the Seneca. In 1846, a "large convention of the citizens of Genesee county" assembled in Batavia to discuss the land dispute at the behest of the Genesee grand jury. Once there, the men organized committees and drafted resolutions and memorials to be delivered to Washington DC. They wanted to make it known that "the public feeling of the people...is greatly shocked at the threatened perpetration of this wrong [Seneca removal]." In their memorials they outlined various Ogden Company frauds, including the use of liquor and bribes to obtain signatures. They characterized these practices as "revolting, reprehensible, and barbarous."[66] Because the treaties did not honestly represent the free and voluntary assent of the Tonawanda people - none of their leaders actually signed either treaty - convention delegates argued that it was the responsibility of the federal government to ensure that they would not be removed. Furthermore, they believed that if there was no other solution, the federal government should purchase the lands from the Ogden Company and transfer title to the Tonawanda people. After reading aloud their memorial, convention delegates accepted the statements and

[66] "Mass Meeting for the Indians" in Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, *Report*, 29th Cong., 2d sess., 1847, S. Doc. 156, 119, 121.

resolutions by a majority vote and named Lewis H. Morgan as their special messenger to deliver their statements to the president and senate in Washington DC.[67]

Later, when a rumor circulated that the federal government would appoint a commissioner, dispense treaty payments, and hasten the removal process, several notable western New York citizens, many of whom had been involved in the earlier convention, voiced their support for the Tonawanda people. Marcus H. Johnson, an Indian agent from Randolph, N.E. Paine from Rochester, Isaac Verplanck, the lawyer, and Frederick Follett, a leading citizen from Batavia, all wrote to President Pierce, Secretary of State William L. Marcy, and Secretary of the Interior Robert McClelland, in protest of the rumored action.[68] Paine stated that his protest represented "the almost universal opinion of this community." Follett, one of the most outspoken of the Tonawanda supporters, used the strongest language in his letter. "We all know in this region that the Treaty in question is a fraud," he wrote. He also estimated that "99 out of every 100 of the inhabitants of this region" agreed with his protest. The rumor proved to be false, probably started by the Ogden Company to confuse and frustrate the Indians.[69] The continued support of local, non-Native citizens, though, strengthened the Seneca's, and especially Ely Parker's, resolve.

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[67] "Mass Meeting for the Indians," 122-125. Thirty-three different non-Native men signed these documents, although many more may have been involved in their creation.

[68] Marcus Johnson to President Franklin Pierce, 8 October 1856, Box 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; N.E. Paine to President Franklin Pierce,10 October 1856, Box 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; I.A. Verplanck to William L. Marcy, 10 October 1856, Box 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; Frederick Follett to President Franklin Pierce, 13 October 1856, Box 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and Frederick Follett to Robert McClelland, 13 October 1856, Box 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[69] Ely S. Parker to George Manypenny, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 25 September 1856, Box 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and George Manypenny, Commissioner of Indian Affairs to Ely S. Parker, 29 September 1856, Box 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

Some local, non-Native citizens, like Lewis H. Morgan, provided more active support than just drafting memorials and letters. Batavia lawyer, John H. Martindale, took a leading role as legal council for the Tonawanda Seneca on the state and occasionally national level. Martindale graduated from West Point Academy and would later serve as a brigadier general for the Union Army in the Civil War, but from the early-1840s through the conclusion of the Ogden land dispute in 1857, he sympathized with and provided critical legal knowledge for the Indians. Following Martindale's advice, Parker and the Tonawanda leaders pursued reservation trespassers using an 1821 law.[70] It was Martindale who argued the successful Blacksmith case, both in New York State and in front of the United States Supreme Court.[71] He along with Frederick Follett, also visited Washington DC at a critical moment in the land dispute, and in 1857 helped facilitate its ultimate conclusion, persuading President Buchanan and others to allow the Tonawanda to use removal funds to purchase their land title from the Ogden Company.[72] When Parker decided to reform Tonawanda governance in the aftermath of the land dispute, it was Martindale, again, who provided guidance and helped lobby for necessary

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[70] Nicholson Parker to Ely S. Parker, 11 June 1846, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; Memo by Nicholson Parker, 12 June 1846, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; W.P. Angel to Ely S. Parker, 20 February 1848, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; Ely S. Parker to William Parker, 14 April 1852, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and Ely S. Parker to Tonawanda Chiefs, 23 February 1853, Box 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS. See also Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 21, 42-43.

[71] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 35, 58.

[72] Tonawanda Chiefs, "Power of Attorney for John H. Martindale and Others," 16 June 1857, Box 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and Ely S. Parker, John H. Martindale, William G. Bryan and FrederickFollett to J.W. Dewer, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 30 June 1857, Box 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; *New York Herald*, 6 July 1857; Ely S. Parker, Nicholson H. Parker, J.H. Martindale, William G. Bryan and Frederick Follett to Charles E. Mix, 1 November 1857, Box 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and Nicholson Parker to Ely S. Parker, 17 May, 1860, Box 5 - 1859-1885, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS. See also Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 64-66.

legislation in New York State.[73] The lawyer's efforts proved crucial to the Tonawanda fight against the Ogden Company, and in him Parker found a friend and ally.[74] Experiences such as these on the local level, unlikely as one might assume, demonstrated to the young Seneca leader that the Indians were not alone in their struggles and later in his career he expected, much to his demise, to see similar Native/non-Native cooperation in other arenas. Perhaps also unlikely, was the positive experience he and the Tonawanda had with national, non-Native politicians.

When Parker and the Seneca delegates traveled to Washington DC, they often met and interacted with prominent national politicians. These politicians believed that, in the Ogden land dispute, company officials committed great frauds, but that the federal government did not have the power and authority to invalidate the treaties. Several of the most revered statesmen in this era of American history sympathized with and pledged support for the Tonawanda. During one trip to the capital, Parker remarked that "Calhoun and Crittenden are with us, as well as other able and heavy men."[75] Later, in his diary, the young Seneca described a Sunday evening meeting with Henry Clay. During their discussion Clay stated that he supported the Tonawanda case, and that he even once considered submitting an application to try their claim before the Supreme Court of the United States.[76] These national politicians could do little but sympathize

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[73] William Parker to Ely S. Parker, 11 January 1860, Box 5 - 1859-1885, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[74] Tonawanda Chiefs to John H. Martindale, 9 November 1852, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[75] Ely S. Parker to Lewis H. Morgan, 13 February 1847, Folder 11 - Morgan Correspondence, 1847, Box 1 - Correpondence, 1839-1854, Lewis H. Morgan Papers, RRL-UR.

[76] "Diary Entry Written by Ely Parker," 16 January 1848, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

with Parker and his community, and the lack of legislative action led Parker to refer to his efforts as "a miserable work."[77] Nevertheless, the politicians provided the encouragement that helped sustain the Seneca leaders during this lengthy dispute. Furthermore, their support indicated to Parker that if bureaucratic structures and legal doctrines could be reformed, perhaps, federal policymakers could serve as a buffer for Indian people against unscrupulous land speculators and state-level legislators.

Non-Native farmers, small producers, middle-class lawyers, businessmen, fraternal organizations, national politicians, and public intellectuals all provided unlikely alliances with and political support for the Tonawanda Seneca in western New York. The petitions and memorials they drafted and signed, as well as the ethnographic and legal expertise they supplied to Indian delegates bolstered the Seneca's collective resolve and contributed to the resistance campaign in important ways. In the aftermath of the land dispute, but before he rose to national prominence, Parker helped reform governmental structures in his Tonawanda community.

Reforming Tonawanda Governance

After almost two decades of struggle, the Ogden land dispute concluded in 1857. In June and July of that year, Ely Parker, John Martindale, Frederick Follett, and William G. Bryan met with federal officials and President Buchanan to protest a rumor that the executive would immediately remove the Tonawanda Seneca from New York State. Instead, these men negotiated a new program by which the Indians would relinquish their rights to federal lands in the Kansas Territory and use federal funds to purchase title to all or part of their reservation from the Ogden Land Company. In late-1857, Indian and

[77] Ely S. Parker to Lewis H. Morgan, 13 February 1847, Folder 11 - Morgan Correspondence, 1847, Box 1 - Correpondence, 1839-1854, Lewis H. Morgan Papers, RRL-UR.

Ogden leaders met with BIA representative Charles E. Mix and signed a new treaty based on the recently negotiated program.[78] Under this plan, the Seneca purchased from the Company, about three-fifths of the land they had held prior to the Treaty of 1838.[79] While they have lamented the land loss, most scholars assert that the Tonawanda Seneca fared as well or better than any of the other Seneca communities. The Buffalo Creek Reservation no longer existed, its people were scattered across lands to the west and in the Allegany and Cattaraugus communities. In 1848, social instability followed a political revolution and a constitutional convention at the latter two reservations. Throughout the 1850s chaos ensued. "[T]he Tonawandas' government remained unchanged," asserted Mary Conable, they "maintained an identity based on their geographic location and their adherence to traditional forms of government."[80] Historian Mark A. Nicholas suggested too, that the Tonawanda Seneca created a public image of their community as the last true embodiment of traditional Seneca culture.[81] With its

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[78] From the late-1700s through 1822, Indian affairs were managed at the federal level by the Secretary of War's office and the Office of Indian Trade. Congress abolished the Office of Indian Trade in 1822 and in 1824, John Calhoun, acting in his capacity as the Secretary of War, established the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the War Department. Congress informally recognized the BIA in 1832, when it authorized the president to appoint a commissioner. In 1849, Congress moved the BIA to the Department of the Interior where it currently remains. For most of the nineteenth century the BIA was referred to as the "Indian Office" or the "Office of Indian Affairs." The name "Bureau of Indian Affairs" was adopted officially in 1947. For more see Robert M. Kvasnicka and Herman J. Viola, eds., *The Commissioners of Indian Affairs, 1824-1977* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979); and Stuart, *The Indian Office.*

[79] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 64-66. See also "Notes regarding a meeting with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs about Ogden Co." 26 June 1857, Folder 4: Non-Correspondence Legal and Financial Business, Ely S. Parker Papers, UR-RRL; "Notes regarding a meeting with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs about Ogden Co." 29 June 1857, Folder 4: Non-Correspondence Legal and Financial Business, Ely S. Parker Papers, UR-RRL; "Notes regarding a meeting with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs about Ogden Co." 30 June 1857, Folder 4: Non-Correspondence Legal and Financial Business, Ely S. Parker Papers, UR-RRL.

[80] Conable, "A Steady Enemy," 324.

[81] Nicholas, dissertation, 248-249.

customary chiefs still in power in the late-1850s, these statements adequately described the situation in the immediate wake of the land dispute; however, events in the early-1860s demonstrated that the land dispute crisis had fundamentally unsettled Tonawanda society and politics.

After ratifying the new treaty, leaders of the Tonawanda community hoped to encourage land improvements and agricultural development among their residents. These two activities had not received particular attention during the land dispute because people feared that they would lose their lands and the value of their work. Anxious to make a profit though, many Indians cut timber and extracted other resources from newly secured common lands, against the wishes of the chiefs, and sold them cheaply to non-Natives. The land dispute had once again disrupted customary notions of power and authority, and in the post-dispute political environment chiefs fought against each other and struggled to control events and actions within the community. Common Seneca residents had witnessed the struggles of the land dispute, during which time their leaders seemed weak. As William Parker wrote to his son in 1860, "[t]he Chiefs in a great measure have lost their power, for in their annals, whatever they may pass, has no affect in the least." He asked Ely "to take some course of legal proceedings to clothe the Chiefs with an additional power with which to rule the band."[82] For the Tonawanda leaders these problems proved embarrassing.[83]

The land dispute created factionalism and political instability among the other Seneca communities as well and in many ways the developments at Allegany and

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[82] William Parker to Ely S. Parker, 11 January 1860, Box 4 - 1859-1885, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[83] Tonawanda Chiefs to Ely S. Parker, 15 February 1860, Folder 1 - 1860-1909, Box 1 - Correspondence, 1860-1952, Arthur C. Parker Papers, 1860-1952, RRL-UR.

Cattaraugus set the stage for Parker's 1861 political reforms at Tonawanda. Frustrated by the proceedings of the Buffalo Creek Treaty of 1838 and the compromise treaty of 1842, and suspicious of the process by which customary chiefs distributed treaty annuities to individual families, a Seneca faction at Allegany and Cattaraugus, called a convention and restructured governance at these reservations in 1848. The New Government Party, as the revolutionaries became known, created an alliance with Hicksite Quakers and successfully instituted a system of government based on annual elections rather than hereditary and life-long leadership positions. The Old Chiefs Party allied itself with Orthodox Quakers, but was unable to stem the revolutionary tide. Young Seneca men and Hicksite Quakers appealed to federal officials - men much more likely to support a system of government based on the democratic principles of the United States over ancient Seneca traditions - and argued that a firm majority of the Seneca supported the changes. Tonawanda, as it had done since the 1842 treaty, maintained its autonomy as factionalism intensified at the other two Seneca reservations.[84]

When the Allegany and Cattaraugus reservations declared themselves the "Seneca Nation" and drafted an official constitution led by the revolutionaries in 1848, they modeled their government very closely on that of the United States.[85] They likened the powers of chiefs to the power held by the British aristocracy at the time of the American Revolution and replaced them with a three-branch, democratically-elected government.

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[84] Abler, "Friends, Factions, and the Seneca Revolution," 75-78.

[85] See "Declaration of the Seneca Nation of Indian Changing their Form of Government and Adopting a Constitutional Character," 4 December 1848. In this way, the Seneca Nation political revolution and its new governmental structure resembled similar events among the Cherokee as they fought against removal. See Nicholas, dissertation, 222 and Mary E. Young, " The Cherokee Nation: Mirror of the Republic," *American Quarterly* 33 (1981):502-524.

It included a legislative council chosen annually, a president, treasurer, and clerk as executive officers, with a group of peacemakers serving as a judiciary. Any adult in the general population could be elected to these positions. When Parker returned to Tonawanda at the behest of his father and the other leaders on the reservation he carefully distinguished his governmental reform plan from the sweeping changes at the Allegany and Cattaraugus reservations and it is important to recognize these differences.

Parker, who at this point lived in Galena, Illinois and worked as an engineer for the Treasury Department, returned to New York with a governmental reform agenda designed to alleviate the problems at Tonawanda. Like his father, he also recognized that the land dispute had upset Tonawanda notions of power and authority, and his plan for reservation governance demonstrated his political acumen. Parker's new government designated six elective offices: three peacemakers, a treasurer, a clerk, and a marshal. These officers would be elected exclusively from the ranks of the customary chiefs and warriors of the Seneca, and all male residents, over the age of twenty, were eligible to vote. The peacemakers held powers and responsibilities similar to justices of the peace in non-Native society. They could pass judgment on any civil suit or property case up to one hundred dollars. The clerk was responsible for keeping records of all elections as well as the proceedings of councils held by chiefs and peacemakers. The treasurer would keep and disburse Band monies, and the marshal served as a constable.

In addition to these elective offices, the new Tonawanda governmental plan outlined several legislative mandates. First, it prohibited Indians from selling to non-Native people, timber and other natural resources held in common by the Tonawanda. Second, it allowed Indians to select and occupy specific tracts of reservation land as long

as they obtained the consent of the chiefs. It also gave chiefs the power to plot and build roads and fences throughout the reservation. Finally, it prohibited Indians from leasing their lands to non-Native people or from allowing non-Natives to work Indian lands in shares.[86] Parker, again with the aid of John Martindale, traveled to Albany and had this program officially ratified by the state legislature in early-1861.

As a customary chief himself, it was not Parker's goal to usurp power and authority from the traditional leadership of the community; rather, he sought to provide a legal framework through which customary leaders could validate their policies in the face of a changing social and political landscape on the reservation. "There were times in the history of the [land] struggle," he wrote, "when we seemed to be enveloped in utter darkness, and our wise men were lost in doubt what to do." The government at Tonawanda had "no power to enforce or execute its will." He reassured the community that the new system did not abolish ancient Seneca governing structures, but that it simply added vitality, efficiency, and impartiality so that the community could continue to "exist and prosper."[87] Although Parker's goals involved ending factionalism on the reservation, his new system of governance bore a striking resemblance to non-Native governmental ideals. He claimed that this system did not usurp the power of customary chiefs, but it did create a series of elections that would empower a small number of chiefs over the other leaders, an idea that ran counter to the customary notions of Seneca authority under which all leaders held an equal position within a system based on unanimity. Whether he recognized it or not, the system of reform that Parker instituted

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[86] Ely S. Parker to Tonawanda Chiefs, 2 March 1861, reproduced as an appendix in Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 287-288.

[87] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 289-290, 292.

on the Tonawanda Reservation did represent an important political transformation. It was not, though, the same as the political revolution that had occurred earlier at the other Seneca reservations.

Parker's reforms differed from the political revolution at Allegany and Cattaraugus in several important ways. First, Parker, as a customary chief, reformed rather than replaced the structures of Tonawanda governance. Aided by Quakers, the Allegany and Cattaraugus revolutionaries such as Peter Wilson existed outside customary roles of power and authority. In fact, Wilson was not even a Seneca, but a Cayuga living in the Seneca community.[88] These men removed customary leaders or at least created the legal and political means by which they could be removed. More importantly, Parker's reforms sought to end factionalism on the Tonawanda reservation, while the revolution at Allegany and Cattaraugus intensified factional struggles. Throughout the 1850s the New Government and Old Chiefs parties staged political battles, protested reservation events to state and federal officials, and traded electoral victories and defeats. It was a complex and chaotic period, during which the political future of the newly formed "Seneca Nation" seemed in flux. The Old Chiefs won elections in 1851, 1852, and 1854, and after each victory, they attempted to abolish the new constitution, but were never successful.[89]

Parker recognized the intense factionalism caused by this political revolution. In 1858 he wrote to the Seneca President that the Indians' land claims in the west were in jeopardy, but if the Indians could "unite and agree upon some course," Congress would

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[88] Abler, "Friends, Factions, and the Seneca Revolution," 75-78. Nicholas suggested that the men most closely associated with the Seneca Declaration were not significant property holders in any way. See Nicholas, dissertation, 222.

[89] Abler, "Friends, Factions, and the Seneca Revolution," 78-79.

assist them in receiving proper compensation. Revealing deep concerns over political instability, though, he reiterated that "the concerted action of the N.Y. Indians is necessary."[90] In an earlier letter to Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, Parker stated his concerns more directly. "[T]he old system should be restored [at Allegheny and Cattaraugus]," he wrote, the "new has made so much trouble, caused so much bitter and hard feeling among our leading men...that by all measures the old should be restored and sustained." A drastic political revolution was not necessary for the future of the Seneca people, Parker argued: "when the masses shall be properly educated the transposition of one state of Gov[ernment] to another would hardly be noticed."[91] Between the political revolution and his own reform efforts at Tonawanda, Parker learned that while customary notions of power and authority had been permanently disrupted by the land dispute, a focus on education and limited political change could be much more effective and he therefore modeled his governmental reforms at Tonawanda around these ideas. He would later employ these lessons on the national level.

Although Parker restructured Tonawanda governance in an effort to help combat factionalism – a direct function of the Ogden/Tonawanda land dispute - his work in this period was also significant because it represented the first moment he put the lessons he learned during the dispute into practice through governmental reform. His program of reform revealed a hybrid framework, one that drew from non-Native governmental ideals and structures, but also maintained a focus on Indian sovereignty and an awareness of customary social and cultural practices among Indian communities. Parker staked his

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[90] Ely S. Parker to "The President of the Seneca Nation of N.Y," 13 September 1858, Folder 6 - Seneca Indian Papers, 1836-1858, Parker Family Papers, BECHS.

[91] Ely S. Parker to Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, 25 March 1853, Folder 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

claim to power and authority in Seneca society on his education in the non-Native settings of the Yates and Cayuga academies, his command of the English language, and his ability to understand and negotiate non-Native political and legal doctrines. He recognized non-Native governmental structures, such as democratically-elected offices and the ease with which such leaders were able to exercise power and authority, as innovations that could aid the Tonawanda significantly. The realities of dispossession and removal threats in early-nineteenth-century New York, especially at the hands of unscrupulous land speculators, made some customary Seneca leadership practices, such as the principle of unanimity, impractical or worse - perhaps even dangerous. Factionalism, coupled with divergent individual interests, and an incomplete knowledge of non-Native contract and treaty law slowed the pace of decision-making and, according to Parker, threatened the Seneca future in the state. By instituting structures that more closely resembled county government, while at the same time maintaining some elements of customary Seneca practices, Parker's Tonawanda reforms foreshadowed his work on the national level.

Ely Parker rose to prominence in Tonawanda society as he attempted to shape a resistance campaign that eventually led to a permanent title to their homeland on the Tonawanda Creek. On many levels this outcome can be considered a success; however, it came at a severe cost. Parker's actions ultimately confined the Tonawanda to a significantly smaller land base. He acknowledged that the Indians' "happiness, security, and probably their continued existence [were] powerful motives to them to cling to their present homes," but in doing so, they paid $165,000 for 7,540 acres of an original 12,800

acre tract, a significant price to pay for one's own land.[92] At the beginning of the Buffalo Creek Treaty period, the New York Seneca had occupied roughly 110,000 acres, by the controversy's conclusion they were confined to 60,547 acres.[93] They expended a significant amount of political and actual capital to conclude the land dispute, and they would not play a significant political, economic, or social role again in New York State until the late-twentieth century.

The Ogden land dispute also exposed shifting notions of power and authority at the Tonawanda Reservation. Customary chiefs, who were frustrated and unable to negotiate increasingly complex Euro-American legal and political doctrines, lost their influence among the reservation inhabitants. Young leaders, such as Ely Parker, educated at Euro-American institutions, demonstrated a command of the English language and a knowledge of non-Native society. These men claimed power and authority based on these abilities, even though, according to Seneca cultural norms, they were too young and inexperienced to occupy such positions. These developments culminated in the 1848 political revolution at Allegany and Cattaraugus, and in Parker's government reform at Tonawanda in 1861. At Tonawanda, Parker helped impose a democratic framework over the ancient governmental structures. In so doing, he did not fully usurp the power of customary chiefs, but he did acknowledge their weaknesses and reveal his own belief in the efficiency of non-Native governmental structures. He also

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[92] Ely S. Parker, John Martindale, William G. Bryan, and Frederick Follett to J.W. Denver, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 30 June 1857, Folder 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and Conable, "A Steady Enemy," 315-316. See also *New York Herald*, "The Tonawanda Indians of New York, 6 July 1857; "Draft of an agreement between the Tonawanda Band of Senecas and the Ogden Land Company," 1 November 1857, Folder 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; *New York Evening Express*, "New Treaty with the Senecas," 5 November 1857; and Ely S, Parker to N.B. Matthews, 20 August 1858, Folder 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[93] See Hauptman, *A Conspiracy of Interests*, 147, 155; and Conable, "A Steady Enemy," 316.

called into question the customary Seneca notion of leadership authority through unanimity by providing for the selection of a small number of chiefs to elective office. Finally, by helping to create a government that more closely resembled Euro-American structures, while at the same time honored some customary Seneca ideals, he began to act as an innovative thinker and political reformer.

The Ogden land dispute provided a foundational political education for Ely Parker and the lessons he learned would form the basis for his reform campaign on the national level in the late-1860s and early-1870s. From this early experience he learned that land speculators and business interests posed significant threats to Indian communities. The Ogden Land Company used bribery, fraud, alcohol, threats, misinformation, and a complete disregard of customary Indian political practices in an attempt to divest the Seneca of their land. While Parker interacted with and appealed to sympathetic politicians, he came to realize that these leaders could do little to protect them unless bureaucratic structures of the federal government could be reformed. He learned that dispossession and threats of removal disrupted customary notions of power and authority as well as clan and kin solidarity within local communities. He also learned, though, that within specific contexts, especially when their interests converged with those of Indian leaders, non-Native people could be trusted and relied upon for help and support. Local non-Native farmers, middle-class lawyers and professionals, fraternal brothers, national politicians, and public intellectuals supported the Tonawanda in their resistance campaign against the Ogden Company. This support proved to be very significant in the land dispute, but it emerged from a very specific historical context in western and central New York. This experience conditioned Parker to expect some level of outside cooperation

and he made this a component of his later reform campaigns, without understanding the drastic differences between the New York context and history, and that of the western territories and states. Finally, the Ogden land dispute and the impact it had on the Tonawanda community taught Parker that, if Native groups were to exist and succeed in nineteenth-century America, they could not do so with political and social structures that were insufficiently equipped to deal with increasingly complex Euro-American legal and political doctrines. To combat this he helped restructure Tonawanda governance and argued in support of education as a pathway to ease future governmental developments. These would become two important features of his national level reform campaign.

Chapter 2

Donehogawa, Schenandoah, and the Little Snipe: Ethnographers, Informants, and Nineteenth-Century Notions of Indianness

[Ely Parker] never really knew or thought much about his real self.
Arthur C. Parker, 1919[1]

In an 1887 letter to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 59-year-old Ely Parker (or *Donehogawa the Wolf* as he signed it) wrote that "There are so many sides to my nature that...I sometimes fancy myself like a chameleon, ever changing color in thought with every varying circumstance."[2] This statement might be easily discounted as a fanciful self-observation by a man of declining years. What it reveals, though, is more significant. The aging Parker came to understand that throughout his life he had been able to maintain a keen engagement with popular notions and depictions of Indian people and at various moments throughout the nineteenth century, he highlighted certain traits that conveyed powerful meanings and directly related to his leadership skills in both Native and non-Native societies. Perhaps more importantly, Parker's statement calls into question the common scholarly interpretations that "the stamp of the white world on him was unmistakable," or that he often questioned "whether he had done the right thing in abandoning his Indian ways."[3] If Parker likened himself to a chameleon, then like the chameleon he could impact the ways that other beings saw him, but he could not, and it is

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[1] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 162.

[2] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 11 January 1887, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, Huntington Library, San Marino, California (Subsequent citation HL).

[3] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Worlds*, 174. This interpretation is often applied to other Indian leaders who chose to work within non-Native contexts. Charles Eastman, Elias Boudinot, George Hunt are other examples.

clear from his writings and actions that he did not wish, to fundamentally change who he was. This chapter questions the interpretation that as Parker worked to reform Indian policy and shape mainstream notions of Indian people and communities he suffered from a conflicted identity through an examination of his friendships with two significant ethnographers of the period.

Scholars, politicians, and other interested parties often politicize the lives and representations of prominent and public leaders, and this has been particularly true of Indian leaders from the period of encounter through the present-day.[4] Beginning early in his life, as an interpreter and spokesperson for his Tonawanda community, and increasingly as he aged, Parker was a well-known public figure. Examining how he engaged with popular notions and depictions of Indians is particularly important because, as a public figure whose actions were chronicled in newspapers across the nation, he was particularly vulnerable to misrepresentations from members of mainstream society. His life then, provides a lens through which to understand public articulations of the appropriate roles for Indian people in the nineteenth-century United States. Simultaneously, because he was a public figure, Parker was able to shape and highlight particular traits that at various moments coalesced or conflicted with those projected by the mainstream culture.

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[4] The list of Indian leaders whose lives were and continue to be politicized for various reasons is long, but a few well-known examples includes Pocahontas, Metacom, Tecumseh, Blackhawk, Sitting Bull, Red Cloud, Chief Joseph, Geronimo, and even Ward Churchill. For an example of a scholarly examination of this phenomenon see Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: Images of American Indian Women in American Culture," *The Massachussetts Review* 16 (Autumn): 698-714, reprinted in Susan Lobo and Steve Talbot, eds., *Native American Voices: A Reader* (New York: Longman, 1998). For an example of political commentary on a more current example see Kirk Johnson, "Incendiary in Academia May Now Find Himself Burned," *The New York Times* 11 February 2005, 13.

While many scholars have interpreted Parker as a man torn between Native and non-Native identities, this chapter examines the two relationships that bookended his life – his friendship with Lewis Henry Morgan during his youth, and with Harriet Maxwell Converse in his later years – to show how Parker established himself as a talented and educated Indian man in nineteenth-century America. Parker was particularly attracted to these ethnographers, because in their research, writings, and activism, they supported Indian interests and opposed those who sought to dispossess and coercively assimilate Native peoples. While these friendships framed his youth and old age, they differed in subtle ways.

As a youth Parker met, befriended, and developed a long-term mentorship with the lawyer and ethnographer, Lewis Henry Morgan. Their relationship was both productive and symbiotic as each provided the other with access to information and social networks. While Parker served as an informant in Morgan's study of New York Indian history and culture, as well as an entrée into Seneca society, Morgan provided Parker with access to educational opportunities, an entrée into the emerging middle-class intelligentsia in the state, and an opportunity to engage with the developing "scientific image" of the Indian. For several Indian men in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, scientific pursuits seemingly offered opportunities for public acceptance and respect due to the objective nature of the discipline, and although he did not pursue a career in this field, Parker used his connection to the prominent scientist to participate in this larger network of scholars as an informant and purveyor of knowledge about Indian people. Following his tenure as a policymaker in Washington DC, an episode that ended in controversy, Parker settled in New York City where he met and developed a close

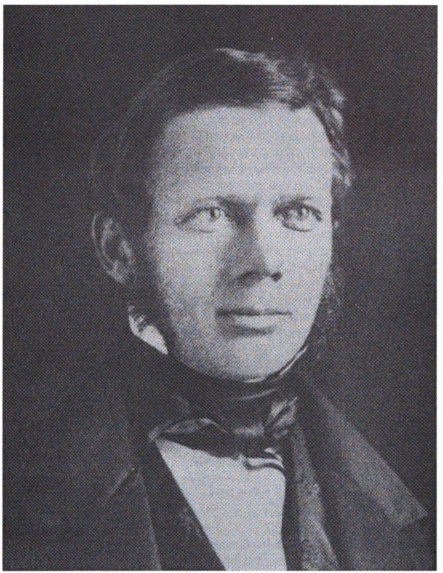

Figure 6: Lewis Henry Morgan, (1818-1881)
Source: William Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 40

Figure 7: Harriet Maxwell Converse, (1836-1903)
Source: William Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 175

friendship with Harriet Maxwell Converse, a poet, ethnographer, political activist, and supporter of New York Indian issues. By this period, the fledgling field of anthropology had begun a split between Morganian cultural evolution and the beginnings of what would become Boasian cultural determinism - a split that that would culminate in the ascendance of universities over museums as the driving forces behind the field.[5] Converse and Parker favored the older paradigm because the newer anthropologists, for a variety of reasons, allied themselves with coercive assimilationist reformers. In his twilight years, a self-reflective Parker served as an informant to Converse and introduced her to prominent New York Indian leaders. Through Converse, Parker met and interacted with writers and activists in New York City literary circles, there he drew upon the "literary image" of the Indian and highlighted elements of his public persona that were both nostalgic for a simpler premodern life, yet "civilized," and voluntarily assimilated to mainstream society. This relationship helped Parker maintain a connection to both elite New York City society and a wide network of Native people from the state.[6]

Studying processes of representation, not simply representations themselves, is a relatively new analytical concept in the field of American Indian studies. Earlier scholarship focused on white images and stereotypes of Indian people in literature, popular culture, and in the public mindset. For these scholars, such representations were

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[5] Regna Darnell, *Invisible Genealogies: A History of Americanist Anthropology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 33-39.

[6] For both the "scientific" and "literary" image, see Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). Berkhofer outlined how ethnographers and writers constructed varying images of Native people and his text has influenced my thoughts in this chapter.

significant for the impact they had on policy-making and in the social sciences.[7] More recent work, influenced by postcolonial critiques of ethnography, anthropology, and history, focuses on the processes of representation in which Native people could and did play significant roles.[8] It is important to note, however, that the process of representation does not refer to the manufacture of identity, an idea which carries the negative connotation of dishonesty; rather it is simply the process of "making present" to other people, components of one's identity.[9] Morgan and Converse relied upon their connection with Parker to present themselves as experts on Indian culture and society. This allowed Parker simultaneously to acquire educational opportunities, political influence, and social acceptance in white society. It also provided the opportunity to shape how the public understood him and Indian people. Parker was undoubtedly aware

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[7] For some of the most significant examples of this scholarship see Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967); Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*; Hugh Honour, *The New Golden Land: European Images of America from the Discoveries to the Present Time* (New York: Pantheon, 1975); William Sturtevant, "First Visual Images of Native America," in *First Images of America*, vol. 1, ed. F. Chiapelli, M.J. Allen, and R.L. Benson (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1976); and Brian Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1982).

[8] Current scholarship on Indian representation has been heavily influenced by post-structuralist thinkers, postmodern literary critics, and post-colonial theorists, especially Foucault, Gramsci, Said, Spivak, and Bakhtin. These studies differentiate between hegemonic and oppositional representations, and focus on the power dynamics and representations of "otherness." For examples of this current scholarship, see Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996); Kerwin L. Klein, *Frontiers of Historical Imagination: Narrating the European Conquest of Native America, 1890-1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Pauline T. Strong, *Captive Selves, Captivating Others: The Politics and Poetics of Colonial American Captivity Narratives* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999); Peter Whiteley, *Rethinking Hopi Ethnography* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998); Mick Gidley, *Edward S. Curtis and the North American Indian, Incorporated* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Deloria, *Playing Indian*; and Deloria, *Indian in Unexpected Places*.

[9] In her contribution to *A Companion to the Anthropology of American Indians*, Pauline Turner Strong argued that current scholarship involving the concept of representation distinguishes itself from earlier work that focused on the "image" of Indians by examining the relationships between relationship among power, signification, and representation. She also asserted that the concept of representational practices denoted "making present," "standing for," and "speaking for." See Pauline Turner Strong, "Representational Practices," in *A Companion to the Anthropology of American Indians* ed. Thomas Biolsi (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2004), 345.

of popular misrepresentations of Native Americans that had been developed through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. To find public acceptance though, Parker often confined his public persona to that which was expected or understood as appropriate for an Indian man in nineteenth-century society, for example serving as an informant to social scientists and visibly participating in middle-class society. However, he used these opportunities to work on behalf of Indian people and Indian communities.[10]

The "Warrior in Two Worlds"

Ely Parker's life became a subject of popular interest in the early-1900s, a scant few years beyond his death. In 1919, Arthur C. Parker published a biography of his great-uncle, entitled *The Life of General Ely S. Parker: Last Grand Sachem of the Iroquois and General Grant's Military Secretary*. The biography framed Ely as an Indian hero who suffered from a tragic crisis of identity stemming from his attempt to seek success and adulation in two worlds – one Indian and one white. This narrative shaped the subsequent interpretations of Ely's life. Unfortunately, the underlying tension between a Native and non-Native identity was the story of Arthur's life, not his great-uncle's. Arthur Parker was the son of Frederick Parker, Ely's nephew, and the grandson of Ely's brother Nicholson. Arthur's mother was Geneva Griswold, a Scots-English woman and Nicholson had married a non-Native woman as well, thus making Arthur

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[10] There is evidence of what might happen to an Indian leader of leader of mixed ancestry who failed to understand and situate themselves within popular notions of Indian people. For example, both Joseph Renville and Augustine Hamlin suffered from public presentations of their identities that made the public skeptical and failed to account for the existence of colonial categories see Gary Anderson, "Joseph Renville and the Ethos of Biculturalism," in *Being and Becoming Indian: Biographical Studies of North American Frontiers* ed. James A. Clifton (Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1989): 59-81; and James M. McClurken, "Augustin Hamlin, jr.: Ottawa Identity and Politics of Ottawa Persistence" in *Being and Becoming Indian: Biographical Studies of North American Frontiers* ed. James A. Clifton (Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1989): 82-111.

Figure 8: Frederick Ely Parker, 1912 (left); Arthur C. Parker, 1918
Source: Arthur C. Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 201

only one quarter Seneca on his father's side. Following the Seneca matrilineal system, he was not eligible for full enrollment in the nation and lacked the kin and clan affiliations that descended through the mother.[11] As his own biographer wrote, throughout his life Arthur "worked to reconcile and manipulate the multiple loyalties and conflicting forces that surrounded his plural heritage."[12] One of the ways that Parker tried to understand his own identity was through the biography he constructed of his great-uncle.

In his professional life Arthur Parker found great success among non-Native and Native people alike. As a youth he studied in reservation schools and then, the Dickinson Seminary. Later he trained with Frederic Putnam at the American Museum in New York City, and served as a State Archeologist of New York when he wrote *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*. His work brought the New York State Museum and the Rochester Museum and Science Center to national prominence. He served formally as the New York commissioner on Indian Affairs, advised presidents Theodore Roosevelt, Coolidge, Taft, and Wilson on Indian policy as a member of the Interior Department's Committee of One Hundred, and was an executive committee member, secretary-treasurer, and president of the Society of American Indians. He was also a freemason, a Republican, and proponent of both democracy and citizenship for Indian peoples.[13] Arthur Parker saw many similarities between his life and that of his great-uncle. For the younger

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[11] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, viii-ix.

[12] Porter, *To Be Indian*, 4. Porter's biographical study draws heavily from Philip Deloria's *Playing Indian*. She argued that Arthur Parker believed that to be taken seriously as a modern Indian in twentieth century America, he would have to balance both a modern and stereotypical image.

[13] Porter, *To Be Indian*, 3. See also Maddox, *Citizen Indians*.

Parker, "Ely was an inspiring model of the successful, educated Indian, respected by powerful and significant whites and Indians alike."[14]

Arthur Parker selectively quoted from his uncle's correspondence and depicted Ely as a man who, "never really knew or thought much about his real self." [15] He was particularly interested in the ways that Ely's acceptance into and efforts to succeed within mainstream society affected his identity. Arthur wrote:

> The matter-of-fact world of civilization has a tendency to drive from the mind the memories, the theories and longings of long ago, and it was in the matter-of-fact world where General Parker lived, toiling day by day for a livelihood...The mind of the Indian had been turned into the channels of the white man and the Indian thought of himself not as much, but simply as a man among a million fellow-toilers, struggling for bread and dollars.

According to the Arthur Parker, it was not until he developed a friendship with Harriet Maxwell Converse that Ely "felt himself an Indian again... [and] remembered his boyhood."[16] Converse's interest in and admiration for Ely Parker, wrote Arthur Parker, inspired the aging sachem to re-explore his lost Indian heritage and through her, he was redeemed. Converse also served as Arthur Parker's mentor during his youth and early adulthood, and his portrayal of her redemptive role was influenced by his own admiration. In fact, Ely Parker's work with and connection to Converse resembled his earlier friendship with Lewis Henry Morgan in many significant ways.

Arthur Parker's portrayal of Ely Parker as a man torn between two worlds has influenced many later scholars. In 1974, when William Armstrong published a second biography entitled *Warrior in Two Camps: Ely S. Parker, Union General and Seneca*

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[14] Porter, *To Be Indian*, 46.

[15] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 162.

[16] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 163.

Chief, it drew heavily upon the foundation Arthur Parker laid several decades earlier. His biography began with a dream Ely's mother had some months before his birth. According to Armstrong's text, Parker's mother learned that her son would live his life as "a white man as well as an Indian."[17] Armstrong followed this trope throughout the text, describing the ways that he struggled with his identity through various stages of his life. His success in mainstream society came at a severe cost according to this biographer and he related one poignant tale in which a young Seneca girl saw Parker later in his life and "thought he was a white man." Armstrong, like Arthur Parker before him, also focused on the relationship between Ely and Converse. The Parker he presented felt guilty for abandoning his culture and heritage, but through Converse, the poet-ethnographer, he was able to reclaim this lost identity just before he died. [18]

In 2004, PBS released a documentary program about Ely Parker that also built upon this trope, entitled *Ely S. Parker: A Warrior in Two Worlds.* In it, prominent scholars and Native American leaders presented their thoughts and interpretations of Parker's life. Their comments make clear the power of Arthur Parker's interpretation. G. Peter Jemison, a Seneca man of the Heron clan and public historian, stated that "[Parker] had the ability to do so many different things, but perhaps, in the end, the seductiveness of the white mainstream drew him in." Jare Cardinal, an historian and archivist at the Rochester Museum and Science Center warned that Parker's life reminds students "to be careful when going out to be a bridge between two worlds, because if you don't step carefully, you lose who you are, you lose who you can become." Historian John

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[17] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 14.

[18] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 174, 176-177.

Mohawk believed that Parker's ambitions in non-Native society "cost him in a sense...his identity." And finally, historian and Tuscarora Beaver clan member Rick Hill Sr., stated that Parker "was a traitor, because there was a betrayal to his people" and he saw in a picture of Parker just before his death, "a guy with a broken heart."[19]

This fundamental error in interpretation occurred with Arthur Parker. "Writing Ely's biography," Joy Porter wrote, "offered [Arthur] Parker a unique chance to explore the phenomenon of a dual heritage and the angst of assimilation."[20] As he researched, selected archival materials, and drafted the biography, Arthur Parker projected the anxieties, fears, and emotions from his own life onto his great-uncle. As a mixed ancestry man who fought for Indian rights in the late-allotment period, he viewed himself as a "progressive Indian," but he understood that most Americans in this period thought of Native people in the most stereotypical ways. He often lamented that to be recognized as an Indian in mainstream society, one had to dress and act like the Plains Indian image people had become familiar with through Wild West shows.[21] Arthur's personal dilemmas problematized his depiction of Ely Parker and reflected his own anxieties with having a bi-cultural heritage. Ely though, was not a man of mixed ancestry and while he sought success within and was admired by mainstream society, it is clear from his

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[19] *Ely S. Parker: A Warrior in Two Camps*, VHS, produced by Ann Spurling, directed by Richard Young (Arlington, VA: Public Broadcasting Service, 2004). For complete transcripts of the historians' comments see: http://www.pbs.org/warrior/noflash/index.html.

[20] Porter, *To Be Indian*, 46.

[21] On the back of a picture of himself dressed in Plains Indian garb at the 500th anniversary of the founding the Iroquois confederacy, Arthur Parker wrote that for "Indians to be recognized as such must 'play' Indian." See Porter, *To Be Indian*, 242. For more on Wild West shows and ways in which they shaped popular understandings of Indian people see L.G. Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883-1933* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996); Paul Reddin, *Wild West Shows* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999); Larry McMurty, *The Colonel and Little Missie: Buffalo Bill, Annie Oakley, and the Beginnings of Superstardom in America* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 2005).

writings that he always identified himself as a Seneca Indian and member of the Wolf Clan. In fact, even though Parker ceased to play an active role in Indian policy after the 1870s, his correspondence reveals that he maintained a strong interest in the plight of the Seneca and in policy decisions on the national level. No matter how sincerely Arthur Parker may have believed that he and his great-uncle faced similar identity issues, the evidence is insufficient to support such a conclusion.

Some scholars have interpreted individual statements Parker made within specific contexts as evidence that he attempted to disassociate himself from the Indians, that he presented contradictory feelings, or perhaps believed that he occupied a position somewhere between Native and non-Native societies due to his command of the languages, norms, and intricacies of both societies. For example, some look to Parker's early letters and suggest that he wished to remove himself from Tonawanda, or that he had conflicted emotions about his Indian heritage. What these letters reveal, however, is a young man who was tired, angry, depressed, or fatigued, especially in the letters and journal entries he wrote during the Ogden Land dispute. As a Tonawanda spokesperson who spent weeks at a time away from his home, factionalism and uneasiness weighed heavily on Parker. In these moments he sometimes wrote melodramatic prose about the fondness he felt for Tonawanda, as he did in a diary entry from 1846. "O how I do long for my native woods," he wrote, "[t]his place [Washington DC] has no charms for me."[22] At other times though, he expressed frustration and disdain for the contentious Seneca. In a letter to Morgan, Parker revealed that he felt a general lack of support from his community and had almost concluded to give up the fight on their behalf. He wanted to

[22] "Notes written by Ely S. Parker," 9 February 1846, Folder 3: Writings of Ely S. Parker, 1842-1847, and undated, BECHS.

"go home and tell the people to mind nothing about the Treaty, the law and the Company, but to remain until driven out of their houses by force."[23] Later, but struggling from the same kind of frustration, he advised his brother Nicholson that it was not necessary for him to remain among the Indians at Tonawanda. "I have positively been made poor in serving them so faithfully...they have abused our family enough."[24] When these statements are understood within the larger context in which he wrote them though, they simply indicate moments of frustration, depression, or a brief loss of conviction, rather than a deeper crisis of identity or betrayal of his indigenous heritage.

Before he died in 1895, Ely Parker perhaps anticipated some of the myths about his life and, at least in his correspondence with Harriet Maxwell Converse, denied any faith in the emerging tales. In particular he took issue with the idea that his mother had a dream prior to his birth that foretold his destiny. In the dream, as the Parker biographers related it, Elizabeth Parker saw a rainbow that stretched from Tonawanda to the city of Buffalo. When she sought out an Iroquois dream interpreter, he said that she would give birth to a son who would "become a white man as well as an Indian... [and that] His sun will rise on Indian land and set on the white man's land."[25] Parker was more than skeptical though and in a letter to Converse he wrote, "I must...right here, disclaim all knowledge of my dear Mother's dream, or vision." He continued,

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[23] Ely S. Parker to Lewis Henry Morgan, 5 May 1846, Box 1: Correspondence, 1839-1854, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, 1839-1885, RRL-UR.

[24] Ely S. Parker to Nicholson Parker, 21 June, 1846, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[25] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps,* 14-15.

> The 'rainbow' business was rather an indiscreet interjection at so early a period of my affairs, and its influences and effects cannot with any degree of positiveness be explained or interpreted... The vision was beautiful and heavenly divine, but the romance ...put into my life and attainments in consequence is too incongruous and unhallowed...I mean no reflection on you or on your convictions and beliefs for I only wish to express in the most emphatic manner my disbelief in the doctrines of fatalism.[26]

It is interesting to note that even though Parker was so skeptical of the power or significance of this dream, Converse waited until after his death and then published the story in the *Buffalo Express*.[27] Perhaps this story was so compelling that the poet-ethnographer could not help but publicize it. It is possible as well, that because she also worked as an activist for New York Indian issues, she believed that her connection to this prominent and "prophesized" leader further legitimated her position among the Indians as well as policymakers.

Studying Parker's statements and actions within the larger context of his life, suggests that he did not question his identity or place within Native and non-Native society, nor was he contradictory in his public persona. The rest of this chapter addresses Parker's relationships in his early and later life. The similarities and parallels between these relationships and his involvement with the social networks they provided suggests that, rather than being inconsistent or betraying his heritage, throughout his life, Parker consistently maintained an engagement with popular depictions and notions about Indians and simultaneously presented himself, depending upon the circumstances, as either the embodiment of, or a challenge to these notions.

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[26] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 11 January 1887, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL.

[27] Harriet Maxwell Converse first published this tale in a *Buffalo Express* article in 1897, two years after Parker's death. See Harriet Maxwell Converse, "A Prophecy Fulfilled," *Buffalo Express*, 24 January 1897, Box 6 - 1886-1946 and (n.d.), Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

Parker and Morgan in the Early-Nineteenth Century

After their initial encounter in 1844, Ely Parker and Lewis Henry Morgan began a working relationship and friendship that spanned several decades. During this time Parker became a Seneca sachem, civil engineer, Civil War leader, and federal policymaker, and Morgan rose to prominence as one of the nation's foremost experts on Native American culture and society. Through their relationship both men articulated public personas that were accepted in both Native and non-Native societies.

After 1844, Parker's meteoric rise to prominence among the Seneca, as well as in mainstream society, benefitted greatly from Morgan's support. Parker had been pursuing an education at Yates Academy in Orleans County, New York, but shortly after his initial meeting with Morgan, the budding ethnographer helped Parker enroll in Cayuga Academy in Aurora to prepare for college. The Grand Order of the Iroquois, Morgan's fraternal organization, contributed funds for the young man's education.[28] His honorary membership into the Grand Order also gave Parker access to an extended network of public intellectuals and business leaders, which he used to gain admission into other fraternal organizations, for support in the Tonawanda/Ogden Land Company dispute, and for employment opportunities. Morgan once reminded Parker, as he transitioned into a career, that he had "a good many friends, especially among the members of our Society, who would be glad to aid you and keep you up." In fact, in many of Morgan's letters to the Seneca youth, he followed his questions and directions for collecting ethnographic data with promises of employment. "I asked him [Mr. Pomeroy, one of Morgan's friends] if he could not make a place for you with him in the employ of the State," Morgan wrote in 1848. Knowing that Parker was most interested in working in Indian Affairs though,

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[28] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 18-22.

he added that this position might "help you to an appointment to a clerkship in the Indian Department."[29]

Morgan simultaneously maintained an intense interest in the education of both Ely Parker and his siblings, especially in their use of the English language and their penmanship. "I am glad to hear that you are attending diligently to your studies," he wrote to Ely.[30] At another point he wrote to Caroline Parker, Ely's younger sister, encouraging her to continue her studies because "writing will be of great service to you as it will enable you to use our language."[31] He later praised her for her progress. Over the course of several years, Morgan secured enrollment at the State Normal School in Albany for three of the Parker children, Carrie, Nicholson, and Newton.[32]

It is clear that Morgan cared for the Parker family, especially the children, but in his letters about educational and employment opportunities he never failed to request additional services from them, usually translating Iroquois place names, stories, speeches, and legends, or collecting and sending material artifacts. In the earlier correspondence Morgan's requests were gently worded and provided little direction, leaving room for the Parker children to decide which materials were most important. In the same letter that he

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[29] Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 14 December 1848, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[30] Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 14 November 1846, Box 1-Folder 4 - Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker and his sister Caroline Parker, Photostats, 1844-1868, Arthur C. Parker Papers, NYSL.

[31] Lewis Henry Morgan to Caroline Parker, 28 May 1846, Box 1-Folder 4 - Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker and his sister Caroline Parker, Photostats, 1844-1868, Arthur C. Parker Papers, NYSL. For other examples of Morgan's interest in the Parker children's education see Lewis Henry Morgan to Caroline Parker, 13 November 1849, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; Lewis Henry Morgan to Newton Parker, 19 December 1849, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and Lewis Henry Morgan to Newton Parker, 4 November 1851, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[32] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 48.

Figure 9: Caroline G. Parker
Source: Arthur C. Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 89

encouraged Caroline Parker to work on her writing, Morgan wrote, "You may send me the Indian names of some of our western villages, if you please, also of any river or creek or lake which you are familiar with."[33] As his research progressed though, Morgan began to take a more active role in shaping the creation of the texts the young Seneca provided. In 1848, when he could not travel to an upcoming Iroquois council, he told Ely Parker to provide him "the entire speech of the wise man who officiates at the ceremony of Raising up Sachems." And in an effort to control the amount of materials generated, Morgan wrote that he would take at least ten pages of notes if he could attend, but from Parker he would expect "at least 3 sheets." He also suggested that Parker should set up a meeting for him with Jimmy Johnson, Handsome Lake's successor, so that he could obtain complete accounts of other rituals. "One of these days," he reminded Parker, "I will do you justice for your aid."[34] Two years later, just prior to the publication of *The League*, Morgan again wrote to Parker asking for materials. This time the ethnographer laid out six specific questions concerning such Iroquois rituals as the maple dance, the strawberry feast, and the green corn ceremony, as well as several corollary questions. He told Parker, "give me full answers to all these inquiries," and he added "[w]hen you have finished your answer I wish you would then read over this letter again and see if any questions are passed over in your answer."[35]

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[33] Lewis Henry Morgan to Caroline Parker, 28 May 1846, Box 1-Folder 4 - Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker and his sister Caroline Parker, Photostats, 1844-1868, Arthur C. Parker Papers, NYSL.

[34] Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 26 September 1848, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[35] Letter transcribed in full in Fenton, "Tonawanda Longhouse Ceremonies," 151-153. For other examples of Morgan dictating the terms of Parker's ethnographic research, see Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 30 October 1848, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 29 December 1848, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS; and Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 2 August 1850, Box 3 - 1849-1852, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

A comparison between the Morgan/Parker siblings relationship and those of other nineteenth-century ethnographers/anthropologists with their Indian informants reveals several important similarities. While there were many such relationships, two stand out. Beginning in 1882 and continuing through the end of her life in 1923, ethnologist Alice Fletcher worked closely with Francis La Flesche, an Omaha man, whom she eventually adopted. Almost simultaneously, anthropologist Franz Boas established a relationship with George Hunt, a Tlingit man and an expert on Kwakwaka'wakw ceremonies, which lasted into the twentieth century. Comparing these relationships to the Parker/Morgan collaboration reveals the ways that, through their ethnographic work, non-Native social scientists actively sought to portray their work as "authentic" and themselves as authority figures in the study of culture and society.

In the same way that Morgan, who was interested in presenting Iroquois stories and speeches in English, had to encourage the Parker children to read and write the language, Boas, who was interested in Kwakwaka'wakw texts written in the native language, had to teach Hunt how to write Kwakw'ala. In both cases the ethnographer, by controlling the method of communication, imposed upon their informants' "stylistic, rhetorical, lexical, and semantic constraints" that effectively shaped the texts that they created. Boas, also like Morgan, exchanged a lengthy correspondence with his informant and plied him with "requests and specific questions" that affected which texts he generated, in what order, and at what speed.[36] While Morgan provided educational opportunities for the Parkers, Boas provided Hunt with money and the work heightened

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[36] Charles Briggs and Richard Bauman, "'The Foundation of All Future Researches': Franz Boas, George Hunt, Native American Texts, and the Construction of Modernity" *American Quarterly* 51, no. 3 (1999): 479-528, 490.

his status among the Kwakwaka'wakw. In return for his service as field assistant and interpreter, Alice Fletcher provided Francis La Flesche with preferential treatment in the allotment process, an entrée into the Bureau of American Ethnology, and when she died, she left him "a substantial estate."[37] While Ely Parker used his connection to Morgan to engage with a larger network of public intellectuals and social scientists, but never pursued a career in ethnography, La Flesche actually became the first American Indian professional anthropologist, contributed to several Smithsonian volumes, and published *The Middle Five* (1900).[38]

Just as Morgan implored Parker to be methodical to make sure that he did not pass over any of his questions, Boas wrote to Hunt, "I hope you are reading over my letters, and that you will try to answer one after another all the different questions. It would be best if you scratched them out...after they have been answered, then we shall know just where we are."[39] As anthropologists Charles Briggs and Richard Bauman argued, in the Boas/Hunt collaboration, the ethnographer sought not only to present the Kwakwaka'wakw texts, but also to represent them as so authoritative as to be "the foundation of all future researches," and himself as the nation's foremost expert on Indian culture.[40] Her work with La Flesche earned Alice Fletcher the reputation of "the best

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[37] Tom Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 107.

[38] There is no lengthy biography of Francis La Flesche. For more on his life and work see Margot Liberty, "Francis La Flesche: The Osage Odyssey" in *American Indian Intellectuals* ed. Margot Liberty (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Co., 1978): 45-60.

[39] Franz Boas to George Hunt, 23 January 1918, APS, quoted in Briggs and Bauman, "The Foundation of All Future Researches," 490.

[40] Briggs and Bauman, "The Foundation of All Future Researches," 489.

ethnologist in the United States," in 1903.[41] Through his work with Parker several decades earlier, Morgan worked to accomplish the same goals.

While he was still a student at the prestigious Cayuga Academy, a benefit of his connection to Morgan, Parker worked hard to challenge misrepresentations of Indian people and demonstrate the pride he held in his indigenous heritage. There, his great-grandnephew wrote, Parker sought "to live up to all the higher ideals men had of the red race and to disprove all the current tales that the Indian was lazy, drunken, and inferior in intellect."[42] In an 1845 public debate that spanned more than a day, Parker and a non-Native student discussed the ideals of savagery and civilization. In one reply Parker stated that he "advocated the supremacy of the happiness of the savage in his wild state in the deep, dense forest to that of the civilized in all his refinement, pomp, and power." He affirmed that he was "one of the remnants of that race of beings generally denominated savages," and although he was seeking "the cultivation of the liberal arts and sciences and the powers of the mind" if it proved true that there was more happiness to be found among the Indians, then he would be happily "resume savage life in all its wildness."[43] It is clear that, even in a white world he would not abandon his heritage or attempt to portray himself as something more or different than what he was. He was also willing to concede to his opponent the potential truth of the common wisdom of the time, that held, "do what you will an Indian will still be an Indian," and in so doing, revealed his pride in his heritage. Parker did ultimately find happiness at school and one former classmate,

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[41] *Twenty-First Annual Lake Mohonk Conference of the Friends of the Indian*, 1903, 79, quoted in Holm, *The Great Confusion*, 107.

[42] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 76.

[43] Ely S. Parker, "A Composition Read at Cayuga Academy..." 18 November 1845, Box 1 - 1794-1845, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

Louise Bacheldor, later remembered that "No young man in school could compete with him in oratory...He was truly a prodigy, springing from such a slow, indolent race."[44] As a young man, Parker excelled in writing, rhetoric, and oration, but in his public debate he presented himself as an Indian who saw in Indian life, a level of happiness perhaps unattainable in white society.

His education in non-Native society also led to success among the Tonawanda. The lengthy and intense Ogden land dispute caused many profound changes within that Seneca community. Significantly, it led many at Tonawanda to question their customary chiefs. Lacking a command of the English language or Euro-American legal and political doctrines, customary leaders struggled to maintain community solidarity as the Ogden Company sold land plots and resource rights to non-Native settlers. Parker though, on the basis of his ability to communicate with and negotiate between various non-Native politicians, jurists, and businessmen, claimed positions of power and authority previously unavailable to young men within Seneca society. While his community struggled to come to terms with the emerging younger generation of leaders, Parker's influence as a figure of authority among the Tonawanda and within non-Native society continued to grow.[45]

Morgan also provided Parker with an entrée into a larger network of writers and public intellectuals whose work and subject matter included Indian history and culture. On the first page of *The League*, Lewis Henry Morgan made a very public display of Parker's importance to his work. "To Ha-so-no-an-da (Ely S. Parker), A Seneca Indian,"

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[44] Mrs. Louise Bacheldor, letter to the editor, *Buffalo Express*, March 24, 1915, Box 6 - 1886-1946 and n.d., Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[45] For more, see Chapter One of this dissertation.

he wrote, "This Work, The Materials of which are the fruit of our joint researches, Is inscribed; In Acknowledgement of the Obligations and In Testimony of the Friendship of The Author."[46] In the time period around the publication of Morgan's text, non-Native citizens and writers from New York as well as other states began to send letters to Parker asking a wide variety of questions relating to Indian culture, language, history, and society. The poet Alfred B. Street, in an effort to complete his epic poem entitled "Frontenac," wrote to Parker asking for clarification on many issues relating to Iroquois language and identity, including the significance of the term *Atotarho* and whether or not it was appropriate to pluralize Hodenosaunee.[47] In another letter, a woman named Mrs. Pearsall asked if Parker knew some place names in the Uncowa language, a group native to the Connecticut region.[48] As he answered these inquiries Parker re-affirmed and solidified his authority and knowledge base, and the fact that the requests for information continued to arrive was a testament to his success.

Lewis Henry Morgan's position as a public intellectual emerged in the early-1840s after he completed his degree at Union College and passed the New York State bar. He founded a secret fraternal organization called the Gordian Knot with the purpose of bringing together bright, young, literary minds to create a native American literature that could help define a national identity.[49] Indian imagery and imagined Indians figured

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[46] Lewis Henry Morgan, *The League of the Ho-De-No-Sau-Nee, or Iroquois* (New York: Mark H. Newman & Co., 1851).

[47] Alfred Billings Street to Ely S. Parker, 5 November 1847, Alfred B. Street Letters, NYSL. See also Alfred B. Street, *Frontenac, A Poem* (London: R. Bentley, 1849).

[48] Ely S. Parker to Mrs. Pearsall, Folder 6, Vault Box, Ayer MS 674, Ely S. Parker Papers, NL.

[49] Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 72.

heavily into this project and with his interest in this subject piqued, Morgan soon reshaped the organization based on the ideas that since they lived in the area once predominated by the now vanishing Iroquois (according to contemporary belief), he and his compatriots should seek to understand and chronicle Indian history, culture, and society, before it became impossible to do so. Drawing from a tradition that emerged during the American Revolution, specifically that "Indians represented quintessential American identities," Morgan believed that as citizens of the young American nation, he and his colleagues were heirs to the country's indigenous heritage.[50] He changed the name of his organization to the Grand Order of the Iroquois in an effort to reflect its evolving orientation.

Members of the restyled fraternity participated in "Inindianation" ceremonies in which they came to embody deceased Cayuga warriors. Morgan represented himself as "Schenandoah" and became, at least in his mind, a "modern" Iroquois. Upon encountering Parker in the Albany bookstore, though, Morgan confronted an actual modern Iroquois and in doing so rethought his literary approach the study of Indians. With Parker's help, he adopted a more rigorous and methodical scientific approach based on first-hand observation and information supplied by informants from within the subject culture.[51] Morgan immediately admitted Parker into his Grand Order because he recognized the authenticity, legitimacy, and authority Indian members provided. In Morgan's quest to become a recognized public intellectual, notions of authenticity and

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[50] Deloria, *Playing Indian,* 94.

[51] Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 76-78, 83-85. For more on Lewis Henry Morgan's early life see Resek, *Lewis Henry Morgan*; Stern, *Lewis Henry Morgan: Social Evolutionist*; Thomas Trautmann, *Lewis Henry Morgan and the Invention of Kinship* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); and Elisabeth Tooker, *Lewis H. Morgan on Iroquois Material Culture* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1994).

authority held profound import. In the same 1844 letter that he congratulated Parker on admission into the group, he also asked him to send a list of Seneca words for various leadership positions such as "treasurer," "general council," and "head-warrior or general." It was clear from this early point, that Morgan would use his connection to Parker to advance his own and his organization's public presentation. "We [the Grand Order] intend to adopt the Seneca tongue," he told the young Indian, "because through you we can have the benefit of it." He also asked if Parker had any Indian friends "of intelligence and character," because he wanted to incorporate them into the fraternity as well. He added that he would "prefer young men at or about your age and educated."[52] Morgan's search for authenticity and authority through Parker would not end with social organizations, though, and he began to envision writing a scientific treatment of Indian society and culture.[53]

Morgan was remarkably successful in articulating a public portrayal of himself as an authority on Indian culture through his work and relationship with Ely Parker. Even prior to the publication of the *The League*, Morgan wrote, "I have more in manuscript in relation to the League of the Iroquois and the principles by which it was governed than anyone else."[54] After the book was published Parker wrote to other people suggesting that they consult it to answer the questions they had about Indian cultures. He once wrote that in *The League*, one could find the "most complete and exhaustive analysis of the

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[52] Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 8 May 1844, Box 1-Folder 4 - Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker and his sister Caroline Parker, Photostats, 1844-1868, Arthur C. Parker Papers, NYSL.

[53] In a letter to Parker, Morgan wrote, "I shall at some future time publish a book on your government and institutions..." See Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 26 September 1848, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[54] Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, 26 September 1848, Box 2 - 1846-1848, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

Indian clan or totemic system and from which one can obtain as clear and correct a conception of Indian political and domestic economy, including heritable rights, as can possibly be given."[55] When Morgan sought appointment as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs under Abraham Lincoln, Parker even sent a letter of recommendation on his behalf. Parker, writing as "A Seneca Sachem of the Iroquois Confederacy," told the president that through his relationship with Morgan he knew that "his intimate knowledge of the Indian Affairs of this country, and the wants and interests of the Indians, eminently qualify him for the position of Commissioner of Indian Affairs of these United States."[56]

Parker and Morgan developed a symbiotic relationship in the early nineteenth century and through it, both men found success in Native and non-Native societies. In particular, this relationship provided Parker with opportunities to engage with popular notions and depictions of Indian people. Parker's writings and actions from the period suggest that while he sought a career and social acceptance in mainstream society, he maintained an active interest in his Indian heritage and in shaping how Indian history, culture, and communities were perceived by non-Native people. His meteoric rise in Native and non-Native societies and widespread public acceptance culminated in a prominent position as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in the post-Civil War era, but he ran into controversies that ended with his ouster from federal policymaking and from Washington society altogether. Following this period, which is the focus of the second half of this dissertation, Parker settled first in Fairfield, Connecticut and then, in 1876, in

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[55] Ely S. Parker, " Draft for a lecture on Indian clans and naming practices, Oct. 10, 1885," Folder 3, Vault Box, Ayer MS 674, Ely S. Parker Papers, NL. This file is mislabeled. It is not a draft of a lecture, but rather a draft of a letter to an unknown recipient.

[56] Ely S. Parker to Abraham Lincoln, 21 February 1861, Folder 19 - Morgan Correspondence, Feb. 21-28, 1861, Box 2 - Correspondence, 1855-1861, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, 1839-1885, UR-RRL.

New York City. There he worked as a clerk for the police department and purchased a house on Mulberry Street, only a few blocks from the residence of Harriet Maxwell Converse.[57]

Parker and Converse in the Late-Nineteenth Century

Despite his personal and public struggles in the 1870s, Parker remained actively engaged in Indian political issues, he frequently corresponded with Seneca leaders, and he traveled to Tonawanda as often as his health and other responsibilities would allow. He was no longer a public official and lived a quieter, more modest existence as a clerk for the New York Police Department, but attended lectures and consulted political activists whenever possible. During the 1880s and 1890s Parker developed a relationship with Harriet Maxwell Converse that aided his continued engagement with popular notions and depictions of Indian people. As these notions shifted in the late nineteenth century, her literary talents influenced Parker to push at the boundaries of nineteenth-century Indianness and in his public persona he highlighted traits that appealed to the dual obsessions of popular society. To them he was simultaneously "authentic" and "modern."

Parker's relationship with Converse proved beneficial on many levels. First, their correspondence and her interest in Iroquois history, culture, and society as a creative

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[57] In Fairfield, Connecticut, Parker engaged in business opportunities and stock market speculation. He was quite successful at first and amassed a small fortune. The Fairfield community embraced Parker and his young, non-Native wife Minnie, as they bred horses, hosted parties, and built a wine cellar "unparalleled" in the region. They also employed a footman, a coachman, a "bodyguard and a retinue of servants from the south." This success would not last, however, and by the end of the 1870s he had lost money on many of his investments, especially after the failure of Jay Cooke and Company, and the collapse of the Freedman's Bank in 1873 and 1874. In 1876 he moved to New York City to work as a clerk for the police department and purchased a house on Mulberry Street, only a few blocks from the residence of Harriet Maxwell and Franklin Converse. See Miscellaneous notes of James E. Kelly, and Ely S. Parker to James E. Kelly, 4 November 1891, James E. Kelly Papers, New York Historical Society, New York, NY, quoted in Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 164.

writer as well as an ethnographer, allowed Parker to play with representations of Indianness. His letters to her revealed a playful, self-deprecating, and occasionally sarcastic tone as he wrote about himself and his life. This tone, however, also revealed a keen awareness of the ways popular expectations of Indians shifted in the late-nineteenth century. In this time period, members of mainstream culture, responding to the rapidly industrializing society, began to yearn for representations of a simpler, more natural, premodern life and within this context became obsessed with "authentic" Indians. Second, their relationship allowed him to maintain a connection to the elite social circles to which he had become accustomed in Washington and Fairfield. Converse was a wealthy woman and hosted salons, dinner parties, and other events to which Parker certainly attended. Parker seized these opportunities to represent himself within the confines of the other increasingly pervasive expectation of Indianness, as a "civilized" and assimilated man who had a stake in the future of the nation.[58] Finally, because she was also a activist who shared Parker's political agenda, Converse represented a sounding-board as he expressed his ideas about Indian policy and reform. Even though he had been pushed out of Washington DC, through Converse, Parker could once again find acceptance as an astute policy critic.

Born in 1836, in Elmira, New York, Harriet Maxwell Converse learned about Indian culture and society first from her father and grandfather. Both men held intense interest in New York Indians and both had been adopted by the Seneca, who named her

[58] For more on this emerging expectation of Indianness and these ways that Native intellectuals, especially the Society of American Indians responded to it, see Maddox, *Citizen Indians,* 8-10. See also Porter, *To Be Indian.*

grandfather, Guy Maxwell, *Ta-se-wa-ya-ee*, which meant, "Honest Trader."[59] Following the death of her first husband, Harriet married Franklin Converse, an experimental musician who became known as the "father of the banjo" for his innovations to that instrument.[60] When she and Parker met, probably in 1881, Converse was an established poet and writer, and although she had some interest in Indian history and folklore, she had yet to explore these at length. From 1881 through the end of his life in 1895 their friendship provided Parker with many tangible benefits. Similar to the earlier friendship he maintained with Morgan though, Parker provided for Converse a source of information about and a connection to New York Indians that inspired her literary pursuits and her work as a political activist throughout the last decades of her life.

Although Converse had already established herself as a poet and writer by the time she and Parker met, the "knowledge he gave her brought with it the inspiration for a deeper study of Indian life."[61] She sought to follow in her grandfather's and father's footsteps and become an authority on Indian life. Parker provided her with the information necessary to do so. In 1885 and 1886 Converse worked hard in her literary pursuits and maintained a steady correspondence with Parker, who thoroughly answered her questions on Indian matters. In one letter he sent her a list of Seneca words for the main characters in a story she had composed. He told her that it was "not possible in the Indian language to combine in one name or word all the elements of character you

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[59] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps,* 174. See also, William Fenton, "Harriet Maxwell Converse," *Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary*, vol. I (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971): 375-377.

[60] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps,* 174-175.

[61] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 162. She had published several poems and essays in 1870s. In 1882, shortly after meeting Parker she published *Sheaves*, a book of poetry. Fenton, "Harriet Maxwell Converse," 375.

require," but he did make some suggestions for three characters, an "old man," a "rising young man," and a "promising woman."[62] A few weeks later Converse wrote to Parker that she had begun to revise her book, but needed some additional information about wampum. Parker sent her a rough draft of a legend he transcribed that contained all she needed to know "relating to wampum."[63] In early January 1886, Converse became curious about the idea of a New Year celebration among the Seneca and asked Parker to elaborate. He wrote to her that he did not believe there was such a thing within his community, but instead provided a lengthy description of the Iroquois purification rituals from the midwinter ceremony.[64] A year later she sent him a rough draft of an introductory "Ode" to a piece on Iroquois festivals and finding it to his liking, Parker wrote that it "met his hearty and unqualified approval" and that because it was so well done, "further comment is superfluous"[65]

Throughout the 1880s and early-1890s Converse published poems, stories, and studies of Iroquois life, most significantly "The Ho-den-no-sau-nee: the Confederacy of the Iroquois," an ode written in the same meter as Longfellow's *Hiawatha,* in 1884.[66]

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[62] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 7 July 1885, Box 5 - 1859-1885, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS. In a later letter he sent her a Seneca word for "big eagle" and included a phonetic pronunciation so that she would be able to pronounce the word "as readily and correctly as any other Seneca." See Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 3 January 1893, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL.

[63] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 31 July 1885, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL.

[64] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 8 January 1886, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL.

[65] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 22 January 1887, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL.

[66] Fenton, "Harriet Maxwell Converse," 376. For more on the divergent trends in anthropology during this time period, see Ralph W. Dexter, "Putnam's Problems Popularizing Anthropology," *American Scientist* 54, no. 3 (September, 1966): 315-332.

Aided in no small part by Ely Parker, Converse positioned herself as an authority on Indians. Converse fit within the divergent trends in the history of the field of anthropology as a proponent of the older, Morganian school of cultural evolution, but as a creative writer as well as ethnographer she reflected the dual popular obsessions with authentic Indianness and assimilated Indians. As Philip Deloria asserted in *Playing Indian*, in the late-nineteenth century, "a new, modernist tradition" emerged that was "characterized by an obsessive desire for authentic Indians far outside the temporal bounds of modern society."[67] Parker found her approach to ethnography more appealing than the newer anthropologists who allied with and supported coercive assimilationist reformers. He not only aided Converse as an informant, he supported her overtly and publicly. In an 1894 letter, Parker noted that even though the Iroquois had not yet "been understood or fully comprehended," she had become "the best posted woman on Indian lore in America."[68] Just prior to his death in 1895, Parker declared this publicly in a letter published in the *Buffalo Express*. In it he wrote that he enjoyed reading the articles she wrote about Indian people because she had "been among them," and because she knew "their political beliefs and social organizations...their civil polity and religious beliefs and customs." He then reiterated that this knowledge gave "authority to her statements" which "no other writer" could match.[69] Parker not only supplied her with information,

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[67] Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 94.

[68] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 10 July 1894, Box 6 - 1886-1946 and (n.d.), Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

[69] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 18 January 1895, published in *Buffalo Express*, Folder A00-449, BECHS.

but served as a conduit to a wide network of Native contacts in New York which greatly helped Converse's public persona.

Throughout the 1880s Native people visited Parker in New York City, but as he was a busy police department clerk, he often encouraged them to meet and interact with Harriet Maxwell Converse. For her part, Converse developed these relationships and a rapport with Indian people that resulted in an entrée and acceptance into Indian communities, especially among the Seneca. In one letter Parker wrote that he was so busy that every night he was "only too glad to enjoy a little rest." Due to his schedule he sent a visiting delegation of "quite intelligent" Mohawks to the Converse residence and was pleased to learn that she enjoyed the visit.[70] These visits occurred so frequently that some in New York City began to refer to the "colony" of Indian people headed by Parker and Converse. They took it as their personal responsibility, according to one newspaper article, to look after all "the Indians who come to New York and who are confused and bewildered by the hurly-burly and the great city." "By these good people," the reporter continued, "the wants of the visitors are understood, their needs are supplied and they are sent on their way rejoicing."[71] These connections not only provided Converse with additional informants and contacts for her work, but also contributed to her public persona of a legitimate authority on Indian society and culture because she had "been among them."

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[70] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 11 March 1887, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL.

[71] "Indians of New York City, A Colony with Two Interesting People at its Head," Unnamed Newspaper Article, Ely S. Parker Scrapbook, vol. 1, Box 44, William Beauchamp Papers, NYSL.

In the 1880s and 1890s, Converse traveled to and through Iroquois communities in New York and Canada. Like her father and grandfather before her, the Seneca at Cattaraugas adopted Converse as an honorary member of the Snipe clan in 1885. In 1888 she went to Onondaga to witness the midwinter ceremony in person and although Parker offered his blessing for her travels, he also jokingly warned, "Don't do any dancing...It will lower your dignity among the Indians."[72] In the 1890s, Converse became increasingly involved in political activism for the New York Indians. She protested against the 1891 Whipple Bill, an amendment to the allotment program which proposed to break up and allot Seneca reservations in the state. Her effort to help defeat this bill clearly demonstrated Parker's influence, like him, she believed that Indian communities should be protected as distinct entities until they could assimilate on their own terms. The Whipple Bill failed. Between 1902 and 1904, she also helped defeat a federal bill introduced by Representative Edward B. Vreeland. This bill would have forced the Seneca to pay a considerable sum of money to the Ogden Land Company in an effort to finally extinguish the company's claims to Tonawanda land and allow for the federal government to include the Seneca reservations in the allotment program. Christian organizations, the Board of Indian Commissioners, and reformers of the Lake Mohonk Conference supported the measure. Converse's efforts once again revealed Parker's influence. She wrote many letters opposing the bill. Several of these letters were published in newspapers across the nation and raised awareness about the action. With the help of several savvy politicians and the public support create by Converse's letters, theVreeland Bill was defeated in 1904. In return for her work on their behalf, the Seneca

[72] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 13 January 1888, Folder 13 - Parker, Ely S., Box 5 - Subject File - Parker Family, Arthur C. Parker Papers, 1860-1952, UR-RRL.

Nation formally voted to adopt Converse and gave her the name, *Gaiiwanoh*, which meant "The Watcher." In 1892 they raised her to a sachemship in the Iroquois confederacy, a very unusual honor for a non-Native woman to receive. The Seneca also initiated her into the secret Little Water Medicine Society and entrusted her with a sacred bundle.[73] This was a particularly great distinction, historically uncommon, and revealed the success of her public persona.

Through his correspondence with Converse, Parker maintained his engagement with popular depictions of Indian people, but this personal relationship provided latitudes previously unavailable to him. With Converse, Parker played with notions of Indianness in a fanciful and occasionally sarcastic manner, but his letters also revealed an awareness of the shifting desires of mainstream society for "traditional" Indian identities. After her adoption into the Snipe Clan, Parker always addressed her as *Gayaneshaoh*, which meant the "Little Snipe," or "Dear Cousin," referring to the connection between the Wolf and Snipe clans. In one letter he poked fun at her using Indian imagery. He wrote, "I know well that the snipe is a restless, harmless little bird," while "the wolf, real and mythological...is yet a noble animal." He promised though, that "the restless, flighty, prodigal, but good little snipe, should receive nothing but kindness and protection from the wild and ferocious, untamable wolf of North America, for it is very probable that the two are cousins."[74] Later he expressed pleasure in the fact that "the drooping spirits of the restful snipe has [sic] been revived, and that the smoldering embers of her lodge fire

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[73] Fenton, "Harriet Maxwell Converse," 376; and Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 323-324.

[74] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 24 December 1885, Folder 13 - Parker, Ely S., Box 5 - Subject File - Parker Family, Arthur C. Parker Papers, 1860-1952, UR-RRL.

has [sic] been revivified into a cheerful blaze by the fitful glimpse of a prowling wolf 'down the distant valley.'"[75] When he planned a trip to western New York with his family he told Converse that his "tribe will take up their march for the setting sun."[76]

Keenly aware of popular misrepresentations of Indian people, but perhaps hoping to disempower them through sarcasm, Parker often referred, in his letters, to his "untutored mind," his "nomadic, ethereal brain," and his "lack of education, refinement, and imagination." He also stated that he was a "poor, miserable sinner," and an "uncivilized, unchristian, benighted savage."[77] It is clear that Parker did not believe these descriptions to be true, but Converse's literary influence and his own awareness of shifting cultural expectations of Indianness allowed Parker to explore these stereotypes in ways that were not possible in his previous positions within the federal government or within the cultural frameworks of the earlier nineteenth century.

One of the most frequent topics of conversation in their correspondence, after Indian matters of course, was the practice of receiving guests. Among elite society in the late-nineteenth century, families opened their houses for several hours per week and sat to chat with visitors or "callers." As an elite woman, Converse participated in this practice and she incorporated Parker into her social circles. After one visit Converse sent

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[75] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 7 December 1886, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL.

[76] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 6 July 1886, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL.

[77] See Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 7 December 1886, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL; Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 11 January 1887, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL; Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 5 December 1887, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL; Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 1 January 1891, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL; and Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, ca. 1885, Folder 5, Ely S. Parker Papers, Ayer MS 674, NL.

Parker a letter "written in a spirit of vexation." He wondered if she was angry "[b]ecause callers interfered with or interrupted the pleasant chat" they were having. He reminded her though, that it "was all right and proper, for society has its demands upon its votaries which cannot be avoided or evaded without offense."[78] At Converse's salons Parker had the opportunity to meet and interact with New York artists and intellectuals such as Mark Raymond Harrington, future curator of the Southwest Museum, and Joseph Keppler, a cartoonist and founder of *Puck* magazine.[79] When Parker became ill in 1890, Converse introduced him to Dr. J.H. Salisbury, another of her friends. After seeing the patient, Salisbury wrote to Converse that "General Parker has Diabetes...I have requested him to come in and see me often as a social patient - without charge."[80] As he had in DC and Fairfield, Parker situated himself firmly in elite society.

Parker used these opportunities to portray himself as a man who was both "civilized" and voluntarily assimilated but was also the authentic Indian who yearned for simpler times. The men and women he met through Converse responded with interest, curiosity, and acceptance. Arthur Parker wrote that he was "ever sought by cultured men for his charming manner and interesting conversational ability."[81] But that was not the only reason elite society members sought out Parker's company. "[I]t was the fact that he was an Indian that first attracted me to him," wrote Parker's friend and New York City

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[78] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 27 August 1886, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL.

[79] See Porter, *To Be Indian*, 22, 59-60. For the best treatment of Keppler, see Richard West, *Satire on Stone: The Political Cartoons of Joseph Keppler* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988).

[80] J.H. Salisbury to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 8 March 1890, Box 6 - 1886-1946 and (n.d.), Ely S. Parker Papers, APS. Salisbury invented a treatment for arthritis that involved eating a high protein diet of shredded meat, cooked rare in patties. It would eventually become known as "Salisbury Steak."

[81] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 221.

police photographer, Jacob Riis. He also nostalgically revealed that it "was not General Parker, however, but Donehogawa, Chief of the Senecas and the remnant of the once powerful Six Nations, and guardian of the western door of the council lodge, that appealed to me, who in my boyhood had lived with Leather-Stocking and with *Uncas* and *Chingachgook.*" Riis, like many other society members in New York, concluded from Parker's persona that he was both an elite member of society and "a true son of the forest."[82]

Parker's relationship with Converse also provided an outlet for his ideas about Indian policy and reform. Converse, an emerging political activist, followed state and federal Indian issues, maintained connections with other local and national reformers, and often queried Parker for his thoughts on policies and reform agendas. She provided open ears and an interested intellect for the aging ex-policymaker. "Our wise legislators at Washington, the Indian Aid and the Indian Rights Associations are all advocating with a red hot zeal, the allotment and civilization schemes," he once responded to her in an 1885 letter. "Misguided Indian philanthropists," he continued, "tell us that absorption of the aboriginal race into the great body politic is their only hope of salvation." He concluded, though, that he saw "nothing in the experiment but an accelerated motor for the absorption of the Indian race back into the bosom of the Mother Earth."[83] He also believed that Indian Affairs were no longer characterized by humanitarian efforts, but that politics had invaded to a large degree. "[A]ll interested persons must treat and look

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[82] Jacob Riis, *The Making of an American* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1966, rep. 1901), 157-158.

[83] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, ca. 1885, Folder 5, Ely S. Parker Papers, Ayer MS 674, NL.

at it as such," he warned.[84] In these letters he often criticized efforts to "Christianize" Indian peoples and instead argued that education should be the first goal of federal policy-makers.[85] Demonstrating his continued and consistent pride in his Seneca heritage Parker once asserted that "[m]y sympathies, feelings, and every fibre of my soul is for my people."[86] His relationship with Converse allowed Parker to continue expressing his opinions on Indian policy and through these discussions he once again found acceptance as an astute policy critic. There is no doubt that political debates dominated the salons in the Converse residence.

While many scholars, influenced by Arthur Parker's biography, have interpreted Parker as a man torn between Native and non-Native identities, his relationships with prominent ethnographers throughout the nineteenth century suggest otherwise. He maintained an active engagement with popular notions and depictions of Indians and while he highlighted certain characteristics or traits that reflected these notions as they shifted and evolved, he also demonstrated a consistent public persona as a Seneca man. Both Lewis Henry Morgan and Harriet Maxwell Converse supported Indian interests and in their research, writing, and activism, they opposed those who sought to dispossess and coercively assimilate Indian people. They shared in Parker's political ideals and through

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[84] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 12 March 1886, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL.

[85] See Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 12 January 1886, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL; Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 4 October 1887, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL; and Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, ca. 1885, Folder 5, Ely S. Parker Papers, Ayer MS 674, NL.

[86] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, 12 March 1886, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1803-1894, MSS PA 1-126, HL.

the information and insights he provided, they positioned themselves as experts on Indian history and culture in the nineteenth century. While Parker's relationships with these two ethnographers, separated by several decades, differed in subtle ways, they also revealed his consistent effort to associate with individuals who supported Indian people and Indian communities.

During his youth and later adulthood Parker found success and public acceptance, at least in part, through his connections to prominent ethnographers, in the interim though, as a young adult and a middle-aged man, his association with Union General U.S. Grant and his marriage to a young, white socialite shaped his career path and opportunities. In this interim period in the middle of the nineteenth-century, Parker continued to engage with popular notions of Indian people, at times supporting mainstream depictions, while at other times challenging them through rhetoric, reform, and his own public persona. In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, Parker found, in Washington DC, much success and a public audience that was, though curious, willing to accept him. Controversies that surrounded his marriage, however, revealed the prevalence and pervasiveness of evolving notions of Indianness within a society influenced by evolving and shifting state structures focused on geographical expansion and indigenous dispossession. Nonetheless, Parker and his young, white wife became fixtures in Washington DC society and he rose to become a significant federal policymaker. While to the DC public he came to epitomize the standards and ideals of middle-class Victorian manhood, he continued to understand himself as a Seneca leader.

Chapter 3

"[A]ll intent on seeing the white woman married to the red man:" The Parker/Sackett Affair and the Public Spectacle of Intermarriage

"Some people thought I married the General because he was an Indian. Now I don't care for Indians – I married the General because I loved him."
Minnie O. Parker, 1904[1]

On December 17, 1867, Ely Parker disappeared. The Seneca Sachem and aide-de-camp to General U.S. Grant planned to wed a young, white, Washington DC socialite named Minnie O. Sackett that morning, but his absence postponed the ceremony. Parker reappeared on December 20 amidst a firestorm of public scrutiny, and over the course of the next four days rumors and speculation about this curious and potentially controversial union reached a fever pitch in some of the nation's most significant newspapers. Not only were the events surrounding this wedding inherently fascinating, but they also raise important questions about Indian/white intermarriage and nineteenth-century notions of Indianness. In her foundational article on the subject, historian Peggy Pascoe postulated that for "scholars interested in the social construction of race, gender, and culture, few subjects are as potentially revealing as the history of interracial marriage."[2] More

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[1] Minnie made this comment to New York artist, James E. Kelly, nine years after Ely's death. Miscellaneous notes of James E. Kelly, Kelly Papers, New York Historical Society, New York, New York, quoted in Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps,* 132.

[2] Peggy Pascoe, "Race, Gender, and Intercultural Relations: The Case of Interracial Marriage," *Frontiers* 12, no. 1 (1991): 5-18, 5. Historian Nancy Cott has argued persuasively that, rather than simply representing private choices, marriage was a public institution that reflected public perceptions about race, class, and gender. Furthermore she argued that marriages laws, established the regulate labor and property ownership, ultimately came to regulate race, gender, and citizenship, and as such defined the nation. See Nancy F. Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000); and Nancy F. Cott, "Giving Character to our Whole Civil Polity: Marriage and the Public Order in the Late Nineteenth Century" in *U.S. History as Women's History: New Feminist Essays*, ed. Linda Kerber, Alice Kessler-Harris, and Kathryn Kish Sklar (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina

recently, Katherine Ellinghaus noted that, while most historians have ignored intermarriages involving white women and men of color, "a small number of scholars have begun to study [them]...as relationships in which issues of race, gender, and class intersect in revealing ways."[3] This chapter uses the Parker/Sackett affair in post-Civil War Washington DC as a case study to explore this discursive intersectionality, as well as the contradictions apparent in it. It takes as its underlying assumption, the recent contention of historian Linda Gordon, that although "gender is a vital analytic concept, in real time the boundaries between it and class, race, or sexual identity are not fixed or given but always in every context interflowing."[4]

By 1867, his thirty-ninth year, Parker had constructed a hybrid public identity that both utilized and transcended notions of race, class, and gender. In the 1840s and 1850s he aided his Tonawanda, New York community in their legal struggle against the Ogden Land Company, he became one of the fifty sachems of the Iroquois confederacy, and he worked as a civil engineer for the United States Treasury department. More recently he served General U.S. Grant as military secretary and drafted the surrender agreement at

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Press, 1995), 107-124. For more general histories of the significance of marriage and divorce in American history see Candice Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own: Women, Marriage, and the Law of Citizenship* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Norma Basch, *Framing American Divorce: From the Revolutionary Generation to the Victorians* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); and Hendrick Hartog, *Man and Wife in America: A History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

[3] Katherine Ellinghaus, "Reading the Personal as Political: The Assimilationist Views of a White Woman Married to a Native American Man, 1880s-1940s," *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 19, no. 2 (1999): 23-42, 24. Patricia Collins also argued the family was a rich source for studying the intersections of discourses on race, class, gender, and nation in her article. See Patricia Collins, "It's All in the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation," *Hypatia* 13, no. 3 (1998): 62-82.

[4] Linda Gordon, "Internal Colonialism and Gender," in *Haunted by Empire: Geographies on Intimacy in North American History*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 427-451, 430.

Appomattox.[5] Less is known about his bride. Minnie Sackett was two years old when Parker became a Seneca sachem in 1851, he was 23. Her stepfather, Lieutenant Colonel William H. Sackett, was the commanding officer of the Ninth New York Cavalry under General Sheridan, and suffered a serious wound at Trevilian Station, Virginia, in 1864. He died shortly after the battle. She was known in Washington DC as "gay and lively...friendly and vivacious" as well as "a very beautiful, modest and accomplished woman." Ely and Minnie most likely met in 1866 at one of the many social events they both attended in the capital that year.[6]

On the morning of December 17, Minnie was at the Church of the Epiphany on G Street along with many guests and dignitaries, most notably U.S. Grant, who would give the bride away in place of her late stepfather. The guests and participants were prepared to begin, but Parker never appeared. The initial newspaper reports stated that a few days earlier he visited his soon-to-be mother-in-law outside the capital city and "exposure to the severe weather brought on a violent cold."[7] They also reported that the bride was inconsolable and her "mother in a passion."[8] However, the very reasonable explanation of an illness soon gave way to wild speculation and rumors. The newspapers reported

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[5] For more on Parker's life leading up to his marriage see Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker,* and Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps.*

[6] J.H. Wilson to S.H. Beckwith, 24 August 1904, Miscellaneous Correspondence of J.H. Wilson, Bender Collection, Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department, quoted in Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 132.

[7] "Illness of Col. Parker," *Washington DC Evening Star*, December 18, 1867.

[8] Horace Porter to J.H. Wilson, 18 December 1867, Bender Collection, Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department, Cheyenne, WY, quoted in Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 132.

that Parker was seen in Baltimore on December 18th, "that his body had been found under the ice in the Potomac" or "that he was married to another person in Buffalo."[9]

On December 18th, the *New York Daily Tribune* informed their readers that the "great topic of conversation in Washington...to the exclusion of everything else in politics, finance, reconstruction, or impeachment, is the disappointment of a fashionable young lady who was to have been wedded this morning in the presence of the *crème de la crème* of Washington society." This reporter described the bride as "one of the most beautiful women in the District, a bright blonde [meaning fair-skinned], with dark brown hair." In the same article he wrote that, it "may not generally be known that Col. Parker is a full-blooded Indian; a near relative to the famous Red Jacket...He is about 5 feet 10 inches in hicht [sic], of strong, manly build, and of pure Indian complexion." The author also revealed that they would have married much sooner "had it not been for the objections of Miss Sackett's friends."[10] Two days later, the newspapers reported that Parker had been found. They claimed that an Indian assailant, sent by the Six Nations, drugged the bridegroom and held him captive for several days in an effort to stop the marriage,

> Parker's friends think the Six Nations are opposed to his marrying a white lady...A bride chosen for him among his subjects, the Six Nations, stands ready to marry him, and the tribes prefer that he should take her, and remain more closely allied to his people than he would be if he took a wife from another race.[11]

Amidst all of these rumors Ely and Minnie rescheduled the ceremony.

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[9] "Mysterious Disappearance," *New York Times*, December 18, 1867.

[10] "A Wedding in High Life Unexpectedly Postponed," *New York Daily Tribune*, December 18, 1867.

[11] *New York Daily Tribune*, December 20, 1867, p. 1.

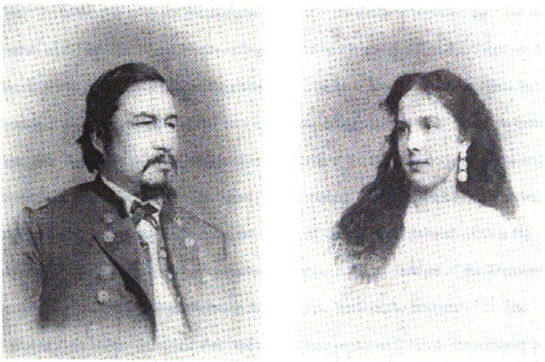

Figure 10: General Ely S. Parker and Minnie O. Sackett
at the time of their wedding
Source: Arthur C. Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 147

On December 23rd, the Washington DC *Evening Star* published a short announcement that, for Parker and Sackett, "the knot will undoubtedly be firmly tied on to-morrow noon." It added that "the wedding affair creates great interest among the elite."[12] On the day after the rescheduled ceremony the *Tribune* reported that "the female portion of the community were exceedingly interested in the event, and . . . that not less than 5,000 of the fair sex visited the church."[13] The *New York Herald* described the scene as, "a very promiscuous and very silly assemblage...[including] misses in their teens and youths with downy moustaches, to petrified old maidenhood and grave and reverend masculinity." When the doors finally opened, the "ladies, all rosy, and smiling with nervous expectation, jostled the gentlemen in the vestibule [while]...Great big whiskered swells of the foreign legations and dapper looking dandies of the Treasury Department were sandwiched between the fair expectants in the best seats."[14] The *National Republican* estimated that "the church was pretty well filled, the majority being ladies." "There was a great desire to get front seats," the reporter added.[15] Word quickly spread through the crowd though, that the wedding was conducted privately the night before. "The disappointment to the ladies cannot be described in words," reported the *Herald.* The article continued, "A repetition of the grand matrimonial and spectacular drama of 'Pocahontas,' with the sexes reversed...Eli Parker, with his warrior's sash, plume and tribal trappings, leading his fair Caucasian bride to the alter, was a picture so

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[12] For this quote and the previous, see "To Be Married To-Morrow," *Washington DC Evening Star*, December 23, 1867.

[13] *The New York Daily Tribune,* December 25, 1867, pg 1.

[14] "The Parker-Sackett Nuptials," *New York Herald*, December 25, 1867.

[15] "Married at Last," *Washington DC National Republican*, December 25, 1867, pg 3.

seldom presented in these prosaic days that no wonder if sentimental fair ones in Washington flocked to witness the romantic event."[16]

Among the many intriguing facets to this case, Parker's disappearance on the eve of the first ceremony, the public's fascination with the intermarriage itself, and the rhetoric used by various newspapers to describe these events, provide the best opportunities to examine the complex interplay of discourses across the fluid boundaries of race, class, and gender. Although Parker never explained his disappearance and it is unlikely that we will ever know exactly what happened during those few days in December, this chapter interrogates the existing narratives by examining the newspaper coverage as well as similar experiences of other Native people.[17] Perhaps more importantly, this disappearance provides a lens through which historians can examine the extent of community and public pressures, motivated by notions of race, when individuals chose to marry across racial boundaries. This event also allows for a broader discussion of the significance of Indian/white intermarriage in United States history and the ways that this particular event reflected public notions of Indianness within the fluid and shifting nineteenth-century society.

While interpreting the public fascination with the union is almost as vexing as trying to understand the disappearance itself, this intermarriage clearly represented important issues for members of Washington DC society, as well for the readers of the republic's most important newspapers. This chapter draws on the work of anthropologist

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[16] "The Parker-Sackett Nuptials," *New York Herald*, December 25, 1867.

[17] Arthur C. Parker and William Armstrong both addressed the wedding controversies in their studies, but neither fully addressed the significance of the context in which these events occurred. Their interpretations will be examined later in this essay.

and historian Ann Stoler who has suggested in *Haunted by Empire* that United States history emerged within the context of global colonialisms and should be studied through the prism of theoretical foundations in colonial/postcolonial studies. This case is particularly illustrative of the ways race served "as a central colonial sorting technique" and a mechanism of social and cultural confinement for those designated as existing outside of the dominant society.[18] While the Parker/Sackett union was not directly affected by anti-miscegenation laws, it allowed the members of the DC community and the journalists who commented upon it to operate within the context of a "consolidation of colonial power" in the immediate post-Civil War era that began with Reconstruction policies in the South and moved west across the continent, stretching across the Pacific Ocean to the Islands of Hawaii and to the Philippines by the end of the nineteenth century.[19] The rhetoric associated with the marriage reveals both the existence of confining colonial racial taxonomies and the permeability of those racial classifications during this dynamic time period. That these boundaries of confinement could be

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[18] Stoler, "Intimidations of Empire," 2. Students of colonialism recognize this technique as illustrative of the colonial project of distinguishing or categorizing people in an effort to either provide or deny access to certain rights and privileges. In the case of Native American history these racial taxonomies were significant on several levels, from citizenship status and voting rights, to sovereignty and land rights, and even to access to white women's bodies. The latter of course, was laden with cultural and social notions of symbolic racial purity and superiority.

[19] Stoler noted that "matters of the intimate are critical sites for the consolidation of colonial power, that management of those domains provides a strong impulse on how relations of empire are exercised, and that affairs of the intimate are strategic for empire-driven states." Furthermore, she suggested that "locating the boundaries [of race, class, gender, sexual identity, etc.]," was "not an abstract administrative task," but rather, that it involved local communities and knowledge. See Stoler, "Intimidations of Empire," 4 and 13 respectively. To the best of my knowledge, Washington DC never passed an anti-miscegenation law restricting interracial marriages of any configuration. If there was, though, it certainly was not enforced. There were prominent marriages between African Americans and whites in the late-nineteenth century, most notably between Frederick Douglass and Helen Pitts in 1884. In 1915, Representatives from Texas, Georgia, Mississippi, and Florida proposed a set of "Anti-Intermarriage Bills," but these died in committee. Maryland and Virginia, however, enforced such legislation through the middle of the twentieth century. For more see Sister M. Annella, "Some Aspects of Interracial Marriage in Washington D.C.," *Journal of Negro Education* 25, no. 4 (1956): 380-391. With appreciation to Dr. Edward Jocque for pointing me in this direction.

transcended did not demonstrate the failure of colonial categories, but rather, it suggests an alternate conception of empire that puts, "movement and oscillation at the center... [and portrays] polities with protean rather than fixed taxonomies." As Stoler asserted, the "United States is not a phantom empire just because it was a flexible one."[20] Furthermore, this case suggests an interesting twist on the concept of white male "colonial desire" for indigenous women. Although white women's sexuality was often closely policed in the colonial context, in mid-nineteenth-century Washington DC it was white women, rather than white men, who obsessed over and expressed colonial desire toward an indigenous man. Elite white men seemingly allowed these actions to take place, however, that this was exceptional or "out of the ordinary" indicates the pervasiveness of colonial power dynamics.

This chapter reveals several assumptions gleaned from colonization/post-colonial studies. First, the Parker/Sackett affair - understood as an example of colonial statecraft through the "microphysics of daily lives" - calls attention to the interpretive significance of "minor" events in the historical record. In the past, an event like the Parker/Sackett affair, which does not easily fit with current historiographic assumptions, would have been ignored as an anomaly. In a postcolonial framework its potential as a rich site of analysis is fully realized. Second, it suggests, by engaging speculations and "potential truths" in the newspaper rhetoric, that "uncertainties are not conceptual liabilities but

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[20] Stoler, "Intimidations of Empire," 4-10. Colonial desire is a concept employed by colonization studies scholars to explain the ways in which colonists, primarily white men, resolved the contradictions between discourses of superiority/inferiority and the opportunity for sexual interaction with indigenous women. While different scholars describe this phenomenon in different ways, I use Robert Young's term, "colonial desire" for its brevity, but also because it accurately summarizes the thoughts and actions I describe. See Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race* (New York: Routledge, 1995). The reversal I allude to is that, in the Parker/Sackett affair, it was white women, a group whose sexuality was most thoroughly policed in colonial relations, who expressed colonial desire openly and passionately in this case.

entry points for analysis." And finally, as many scholars have come to understand, studying intimate relations is not an effort to ignore broader structures of dominance; but rather, it asks us to resituate the locations and forces of its production.[21]

The Washington DC public obsessed over the marriage of Ely Parker, and the young Minnie Sackett. Even though this was a very public interracial marriage, at a particularly tense historic moment, that could have motivated outrage and even violence in the nation's capital, this chapter argues that it was Parker's public representation as a war hero who personified middle-class ideals and standards of Victorian manhood that made him an acceptable husband for a white woman. Furthermore, this chapter also argues that through interwoven and competing public perceptions, Parker represented the embodiment of a racialized, primitive masculinity, as an Indian man, and yet through visible markers of class and gender, he was a non-threatening object of public fascination for a sentimentalized, feminized, middle-class audience. Although the newspaper reporters focused on the sensational and romanticized the union, they also demonstrated a quiet acceptance of the marriage. The acceptance Parker found in Washington society, as a product of his public persona, helps to explain how he, an Indian man, received the opportunity to serve as federal policymaker in the mid-nineteenth century.

The majority of historical studies that focus on interracial marriage concern African American and white unions, but a slowly developing and significant body of

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[21] Stoler, "Intimidations of Empire," 7-13. Martha Hodes among others has demonstrated the far-reaching significance of the intimate in her study of illicit sex in the American South. See Martha Hodes, *White Women and Black Men: Illicit Sex in the 19th-Century South* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997). For more examples see Martha Hodes ed., *Sex, Love and Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History* (New York: New York University Press, 1999).

literature has emerged that focuses attention on Native Americans and Caucasians.[22] This literature has generally fallen into two interpretive schools. In the first, scholars examined Native American intermarriage in the seventeenth through early-nineteenth centuries and focused on unions between European or Euro-American explorers, settlers, and traders in borderland regions where the influence of the state remained minimal and was frequently unstable.[23] More recently scholars of Indian/white intermarriage have begun to focus on the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and have examined

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[22] Margaret Jacobs, "The Eastmans and the Luhans: Interracial Marriage between White Women and Native American Men, 1875-1935," *Frontiers* 23, no. 3 (2002): 30. Among the works that focus on African American-white intermarriage and influenced much of the literature on Indian/white intermarriage, see David Fowler, *Northern Attitudes Towards Interracial Marriage: Legislation and Public Opinion in the Middle Atlantic and the States of the Old Northwest, 1780-1930* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1987); Robyn Wiegman, *American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Martha Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*; Rachel Moran, *Interracial Intimacy: The Regulation of Race and Romance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Elise Lemire, *"Miscegenation": Making Race in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002); and Charles F. Robinson, *Dangerous Liaisons: Sex and Love in the Segregated South* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2003).

[23] See Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 3-8; and Jennifer S.H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980). Van Kirk's and Brown's innovative studies suggested new ways for scholars to approach issues of interracial acceptance and the mixing of cultural values and expectations. That these books were published first in Canada and closely associated with Canadian historiography, English colonialism, and the northern fur trade, limited their immediate impact on scholarship in the United States. For more recent work see Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches*; Ann Marie Plane, *Colonial Intimacies: Indian Marriage in Early New England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000); and Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001). Jill Lepore made arguments, similar to Brown, about the importance of Anglo-Indian interactions in the formation of English and later American identity and Jennifer Spear, like Sleeper-Smith, also examined French-Indian relations in a frontier region and made similar arguments about intermarriage in places lacking well-defined state authority.. For more see Jill Lepore, *In the Name of War: King Phillip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998); and Jennifer Spear, "'They Need Wives': Metissage and the Regulation of Sexuality in French Louisiana, 1699-1730" in *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History*, ed. Martha Hodes (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 35-59. A recent dissertation also demonstrates an innovative approach to the study of Indian/white intermarriage in the revolutionary and early republic periods. It examines white women writer's portrayals of intermarriage as an alternative framework for race and gender relationships. In it Deborah Evans argued that white women writers in the early-nineteenth century used the idea of Indian/white interracial marriage as a vehicle for challenging white male supremacy, for developing notions of racial tolerance, and for white women's empowerment more generally. See Deborah Evans, "The 'Revolting' Union: White/Indian Intermarriage in Nineteenth Century American Women's Fiction" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2003).

the unions within the context of established federal assimilation policies.[24] These approaches, while interesting and important, do not help to explain Indian/white intermarriage in the mid-nineteenth century. An examination of the Parker/Sackett marriage demonstrates that class status played an important role in the public acceptance or rejection of intermarriage.[25] It also recognizes the discursive work that perceptions of

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[24] See David Smits, "'Squaw Men,' Half-Breeds,' and Amalgamators: Late Nineteenth-Century Anglo-American Attitudes Toward Indian-White Race Mixing," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 15, no. 3 (1991): 29-61; Margaret Jacobs, "The Eastmans and the Luhans"; and Katherine Ellinghaus, "Assimilation by Marriage: White Women and Native American Men at Hampton Institute, 1878-1923," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 108, no. 3 (2000): 279-303. See also Katherine Ellinghaus, "Margins of Acceptability: Class, Education, and Interracial Marriage in Australia and North America," *Frontiers* 23, no. 3 (2002): 55-75; and Katherine Ellinghaus, "Reading the Personal." Cathleen Cahill, in her recent dissertation, suggested arguments very similar to Ellinghaus's. See Cathleen Cahill, "'Only the Home Can Found a State." Sylvia Van Kirk also recognized the changes in perceptions and practices of intermarriage in the nineteenth century as well. She argued that, as the settler society in Canada solidified, Indians "married-out" and lost their Indian status as part of an assimilation program. See Sylvia Van Kirk, "From 'Marrying-In' to 'Marrying-Out': Changing Patterns of Aboriginal /Non-Aboriginal Marriage in Colonial Canada," *Frontiers* 23, no. 3 (2002): 1-11. One other recent study is worthy of note. In her Ph.D dissertation, Tamara Jo Berg examined three late-nineteenth-century white women writers and argued that they used imaginative or literal connections to the "Native American Other" to make socially acceptable critiques of racial prejudice as well as to transgress and question the "socially-constructed hierarchies of gender and sexuality" (8). While this is an interesting assertion, it would seem that her actors, rather than representing the majority of women in this period were exceptional in their thoughts and actions. See Tamara Jo Berg, "White Women Writing for their Lives: Ann Stephens, Elaine Goodale Eastman, and Ruth Benedict vis-à-vis the Native American Other," (PhD diss., Indiana University at Bloomington, 2002).

[25] In her new book, Katherine Ellinghaus argued that the "predominant focus in the United States on cultural assimilation created a system of assimilation that allowed some Native Americans to obtain a kind of middle-class status" and that this status made Native American men acceptable husbands for white wives. Although Ellinghaus's conclusions are important, her focus on the significance of assimilation policies perhaps obscures the importance of class status itself. This phenomenon existed in marriages like Parker's well before the official institution of assimilation programs and is examined fully in the following sections. See Katherine Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart: Marriages of White Women and Indigenous Men in the United States an Australia, 1887-1937* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), xxxi. Also, in his recent study of cultural expectations pertaining to Indianness, Phil Deloria questioned the portrayal of Indian man / white woman marriages in early twentieth century films and asserted that there were "in fact, readily visible examples of Indian people who had proceeded through the educational system and who participated in contemporary middle-class life." However, he concluded that while affairs of this kind might be alluring, these films ultimately represented Indian man / white woman intermarriages as inherently flawed because "even the most acculturated Indian had the potential to hear the call of the wild . . . and leave the contemporary world for a return to the racialist blanket." The following sections question Deloria's conclusion and demonstrate the ways in which some Indian man / white woman marriages could defy this cultural expectation and be deemed acceptable by mainstream society. See Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*, 84-87.

colonial power dynamics performed as the role of the state shifted and evolved following the conclusion of the Civil War.

The location or geographical context of this marriage may also have played a role in the way events transpired. In her study of post-Civil War Washington DC society, entitled *Capital Elites*, Kathryn A. Jacob argued that perhaps more than in any other city, capital-dwellers had a democratized conception of social class in which one could rise to an elite level quite fluidly. Several powerful forces shaped this situation, she asserted, including the loss of the Southern aristocratic presence, which provided opportunities for a newer "official elite." This structure was "based on specific elected and appointed offices, regardless of the pedigree or affluence of their occupants." While it would be impossible to prove decisively, this development could have aided in Parker's acceptance into elite society and the public perception of his marriage.[26]

Finally, there is one additional layer of analysis in understanding why the Parker/Sackett marriage failed to elicit public violence or outrage. At this historic moment, in the early-Reconstruction era in Washington DC, as intellectuals and policy-makers sought to re-articulate race-based legislation, the possibility for alternate racial reconfigurations was perhaps stronger than at any other moment in the nineteenth century. In her recent study of Cherokee intermarriage, historian Tiya Miles has suggested that "the processes of family making and the state regulation of family units can illuminate the values and dictates of the communities and nations in which families live." Therefore, the family "can thus be read as a barometer for society, tracing and

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[26] Kathryn A. Jacobs, *Capital Elites: High Society in Washington, D.C., after the Civil War* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 3.

reflecting the atmospherics of social life and social change."[27] Following this logic, the Parker/Sackett affair and the public acceptance of and even fascination with the union can be read as a reflection not only of the complexities of colonialism and racialization, but also of the significance of this moment as one of optimism and opportunity for racial politics in which boundaries of confinement could be transcended. Ultimately and unfortunately, as several scholars note, this moment would not last.[28]

A "Mysterious Disappearance"...

Although Ely Parker never publicly explained his absence from the first wedding ceremony, it is possible to use the newspaper reports to interrogate much of the racially and historically charged rhetoric and to reach some tentative conclusions about the event itself and the significance of the reporters' descriptions. Wading through the rumors and speculations in the newspaper reports is no simple task, but, by discounting the obviously false reports, it becomes clear that the newspaper coverage included varying levels of truth or exaggeration.[29] First, it is obvious that Parker did not die in the icy Potomac, nor

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[27] Tiya Miles, *Ties that Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 3.

[28] See Eric Foner, *Reconstruction,* among others.

[29] In this section of analysis I have examined the rumors and speculations in the newspapers, not simply as miscommunications, haphazard constructions, or baseless conjectures easily distinguishable from "real news," but rather as a body of evidence with the potential to indicate how members of the DC community and the nation more broadly understood colonial racial taxonomies. By taking this approach, the actual "truth" of the events becomes less significant than the "potential truths" or "truth claims" found in the media. In other words, these reports serve as a critical (and perhaps otherwise non-existent) window into the collective mindset of individuals and communities as they voiced, accepted, or, in various ways, responded to opinions and aspirations related to race, class, gender, and colonialism. For more on this approach see Steven Hahn, "'Extravagant Expectations' of Freedom: Rumour, Political Struggle, and the Christmas Insurrection Scare of 1865 in the American South," *Past & Present* 157 (1997): 122-158, particularly 123-125.

did he marry another woman in Buffalo, as the *Times* reported.[30] Although U.S. Army Captain B.M. Reed and General Grant both conducted searches, Parker was not found under the care of any doctors, nor had he escaped to nearby Baltimore.[31] The other two primary suggestions in the papers - that Minnie's friends and family disapproved of the union, or that members of the Six Nations attempted to stop the marriage - provide more significant interpretive material.

Many historians have argued that while marriages between white men and Native women were often encouraged or at least tolerated in border regions, in part due to small populations of white women, but more importantly perhaps, for the socioeconomic capital the Indian women brought to the unions, the same cannot be said for marriages between men of color and white women in metropolitan regions.[32] These marriages tended to upset patriarchal standards of order and racialized hierarchies, and many territories and states ultimately codified these social mores into law.[33] During the seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries many of the arguments against Native men/white women unions focused on ideas of difference in terms of religion or culture, and oftentimes non-Native people assumed that such relations were the result of capture

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[30] "Mysterious Disappearance," *New York Times*, December 18, 1867.

[31] "Failed to Put in His Appearance," *Washington DC National Republican,* December 18, 1867, and *New York Tribune,* December 20, 1867.

[32] See Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*; Jennifer S.H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood*; Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men*; and Jennifer Spear, "'They Need Wives'".

[33] Peter Bardaglio has argued quite effectively, that in the nineteenth century the prevailing attitude in mainstream society was that only white men had the privilege to legitimately marry white women. See Peter Bardaglio, "'Shamefull Matches': The Regulation of Interracial Sex and Marriage in the South before 1900," in *Sex, Love, and Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History*, Martha Hodes ed. (New York: New York University Press, 1999): 112-138.

and force by Indian villains.[34] However, by the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, new arguments emerged that were based solely on constructions of biological and racial difference.[35] While the Parker/Sackett marriage did not take place until 1867, it is possible, since newspapers reported that the couple would have married much sooner "had it not been for the objections of Miss Sackett's friends," that these racial constructions which confined men of color to a pool of potential marriage partners that did not include white women continued to inform opinions about Indian/white intermarriage.[36]

Parker may not have been entirely unfamiliar with this sort of reaction to intimate relations across racial boundaries though, as revealed in a letter to the editor of the *Buffalo Express* several years after Parker's death. The writer, Louise Bacheldor, was a schoolmate of Parker's in 1845 and commented that although he "possessed many traits that were commendable, he showed a lack of discretion by falling in love with one of his fairest schoolmates, who, strange to say, seemed to reciprocate his feelings." "This caused quite a stir, furnishing food for gossiping ones," Bacheldor stated. "In time it was rumored that Parker was to take the young lady in question for a drive on the Fourth of July," and while some believed the rumor to be true, many "thought she, belonging to one

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[34] Jacobs, "The Eastmans and the Luhans," 33. See also Dippie, *The Vanishing American*, 257-258.

[35] For the hardening of racial ideologies see Robert Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indian, 1820-1880: The Early Years of American Ethnology* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986); John Haller, *Outcasts from Evolution: Scientific Attitudes of Racial Inferiority, 1859-1900* (Carbondale: University of Southern Illinois Press, 1995); Curtis Hinsley, *Savages and Scientists: The Smithsonian Institution and the Development of American Anthropology*, 1846-1910 (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981); and Curtis Hinsley, *The Smithsonian and the American Indian: Making a Moral Anthropology of in Victorian American* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994).

[36] "A Wedding in High Life Unexpectedly Postponed," *New York Daily Tribune*, December 18, 1867.

of the most aristocratic families, would not disgrace her and her friends by riding out with an Indian." Of course, after prying eyes spotted the young couple on their controversial, yet patriotic, carriage ride, the "young lady soon went abroad for a long vacation."[37]

If Minnie's friends and family objected to their union based upon confining notions of race, and Parker felt particularly pressured by their opinions, perhaps even remembering this earlier controversy, his absence seems less mysterious. A close friend of Parker's from Galena, Illinois, William Rowley, questioned the newspaper explanation for the disappearance though, when he inquired to another friend, "Have you caught and *bottled up* the Indians that captured Parker [?]," insinuating that it was alcohol rather than Indian captors that kept him from the ceremony. Horace Porter, a fellow army officer, stated very blatantly that, "Parker has disgraced us more than usual. He was to have been married to Miss Minnie Sackett yesterday morning, but instead of appearing he went on his habitual four days drunk, and has not yet turned up."[38] These statements reveal the prevalent cultural expectation of Indian drunkenness in the nineteenth century, but perhaps alcohol and absence were an effective way for Parker to deal with racial prejudice.[39]

A comparison between the Parker/Sackett affair and other prominent nineteenth-century intermarriages reveals several striking similarities. In the 1820s, two educated, Christian, Cherokee men, Elias Boudinot and John Ridge, who studied at the American

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[37] Mrs. Louise Bacheldor, letter to the editor, *Buffalo Express*, March 24, 1915, Box 6 - 1886-1946 and n.d., Ely S. Parker Papers, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, PA.

[38] Horace Porter to J.H. Wilson, 18 December 1867, Bender Collection, Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department, Cheyenne, WY; and W.R. Rowley to Adam Badeau, 30 December 1867, Rowley Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Il., quoted in Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 133.

[39] On "expectations," see Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*.

Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions school in Cornwall, Connecticut, met and married two young, white women. In the earlier case, John Ridge and Sarah Bird Northrup, the daughter of Foreign Mission school steward, John Northrup, wed in 1824. Like the Parker/Sackett affair 40 years later, this union caught the attention of newspaper reporters, who described Northrup using terms remarkably similar to those used later to describe Sackett. Around the time of the wedding, the *Cartersville Courant* referred to her as "a beautiful blond [meaning fair-skinned] with blue eyes and auburn hair."[40] Newspaper reporters also noted several rumors surrounding this intermarriage. Many commented that Mrs. Northrup had "an abnormal interest in mixed marriages" and "wooed the young Indian for her daughter."[41] There were also rumors that the wedding had been held in secret and that Mr. Northrup lost his sanity and left his family.[42]

Other similarities abound. When they first announced their engagement, both Ridge's and Northrup's families and friends objected.[43] Such was also the case in the 1891 marriage of Wahpeton Dakota, Charles Eastman, to the white teacher, Elaine Goodale. In this union Goodale's mother, uncle, aunt, and sister all disapproved. Her biographer wrote that "Elaine ascribed her mother's disapproval to the sacrifice of literary aspirations that any marriage would entail. But there was much more to it than

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[40] *Cartersville Courant* (GA), March 19, 1885, pg 1, quoted in Wilkins, *Cherokee Tragedy*, 132.

[41] Ralph Gabriel, *Elias Boudinot, Cherokee & His America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), 73, and Wilkins, *Cherokee Tragedy*, 149.

[42] Wilkins, *Cherokee Tragedy*, 149.

[43] Wilkins, *Cherokee Tragedy*, 132-134.

that...it was blatantly racist."[44] Elias Boudinot, the other Cherokee student in Cornwall in the 1820s, and his bride-to-be, Harriet Gold faced even more extreme objections. After they announced their engagement in 1825, Gold's brother threatened her life and led a group of townspeople in a public demonstration that burned the betrothed in effigy. The Foreign Missions school closed because of the controversy.[45]

Significantly, during his wedding controversy, Elias Boudinot experienced a personal "crisis" very similar to Parker's. Although Boudinot did not disappear like Parker did, the objections expressed by the Cornwall community and his fiancé's family caused him to become sullen and distraught. Jeremiah Evarts, the corresponding secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions stated that Boudinot "was very wretched & did not care what became of him."[46] In fact, Cherokee historian Theda Perdue concluded that these events effected Boudinot on such a deep level that he no longer blindly accepted the doctrines of assimilation that his northern, Christian education represented. He instead began formulating ideas of Cherokee equality through racial distinctiveness from mainstream society.[47] The similarities between the Parker/Sackett affair and other prominent nineteenth-century intermarriages suggest that confining racial constructions played a crucial role in the Seneca sachem's

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[44] Theodore Sargent, *The Life of Elaine Goodale Eastman* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 47.

[45] Theresa Gaul, ed., *To Marry an Indian: The Marriage of Harriet Gold and Elias Boudinot in Letters, 1823-1839* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 14. See also Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Editor: The Writings of Elias Boudinot* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), Marion Starkey, *The Cherokee Nation* (North Dighton, MA: JG Press, 1995), and Gabriel, 66-92.

[46] Jeremiah Evarts Letter, February 1826, quoted in Gaul, *To Marry an Indian*, 20.

[47] Perdue, *Cherokee Editor*, 10-11.

disappearance on the eve of his wedding, and that members of DC elite society understood and responded to colonial racial taxonomies.

The other rumor, that the Six Nations were "opposed to...[Parker] marrying a white lady, and that they sent an envoy to take care that the wedding should not take place, or even to deprive him of his life" was perhaps more revealing yet.[48] In the late-1860s, Parker was a well-known leader among the Seneca, and felt, in the pre-Civil War era, that members of his community no longer appreciated his work on their behalf. Parker wrote, however, that his commission in the Union Army "revived among the poor Indians the idea that...[he] was after all a genius and great and powerful."[49] Parker acknowledged that the Indians at Tonawanda respected his leadership and pleaded with him not to leave, "but to remain as their counselor, adviser, and chief, and that they would be powerless and lost without" his presence.[50] This position of prominence and esteem may have played a crucial role in Parker's disappearance and provides some insight into the often overlooked racialized notions held by this Indian community.

Handsome Lake, half-brother of esteemed Seneca sachem Cornplanter, was born in a village along the Genesee River in 1735. He lived a rather unremarkable life, distinguished only by his severe alcoholism. In 1799, he experienced a series of spiritual visions, and between 1800 and 1815 Handsome Lake established a religious doctrine that, according to Seneca scholar Arthur C. Parker, "did much to crystallize the Iroquois as a

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[48] *New York Daily Tribune*, December 20, 1867, p. 1.

[49] "Writings of General Parker," *Proceedings of the Buffalo Historical Society* VIII (1905): 520-536, 525-526.

[50] "Writings of General Parker," 526.

distinct social group."[51] Handsome Lake developed a "social gospel" for his adherents to follow that included among other things, temperance, prohibitions against divorce, promiscuity, and domestic abuse, instructions for land retention, peace and unity, as well as cautions about acculturation, intermarriage, and interactions with non-Native people.[52] Although Handsome Lake's code revitalized many older Iroquois spiritual traditions, it also tolerated and even incorporated elements of Christianity. This development divided the Iroquois community between those who followed older ways and those who followed Handsome Lake, and eventually individuals in the older group split to follow either Christian teachings or the Handsome Lake code. By the 1860s, these were the two main religious factions among the Seneca.[53]

Although the *Tribune* reporter did not mention Handsome Lake specifically, if his assessment was accurate, the Seneca envoy that allegedly drugged and kidnapped Parker may well have been a Handsome Lake follower. In his *League of the Ho-De-No-Sau-Nee or Iroquois*, Lewis Henry Morgan summarized one of Handsome Lake's maxims in this way,

> Listen further to what the Great Spirit has been pleased to communicate to us: - He has made us, as a race, separate and distinct from the pale-face. It is a great sin to intermarry, and intermingle the blood of the two races. Let none be guilty of this transgression.[54]

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[51] Arthur C. Parker, "Book Two: The Code of Handsome Lake, the Seneca Prophet," in *Parker on the Iroquois*, ed. William Fenton (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1968), 10.

[52] Wallace, *Death and Rebirth*, 277-285.

[53] Parker, "Book Two," 13. Some of Ely Parker's siblings, though Christian, also accepted some of Handsome Lake's teaching. Arthur Parker stated that when it came to alcohol, Nicholson, Ely's brother, was "a true 'son of the prophet.'" See Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 191.

[54] Lewis Henry Morgan, *The League of the Ho-De-No-Sau-Nee or Iroquois* vol. 1 (Rochester, NY: Sage, 1851; New York: Burt Franklin, 1966), 241. Citations are to the Burt Franklin edition.

As ethnohistorian Anthony Wallace wrote, Handsome Lake wanted the Iroquois "ethnic identity...to remain Indian."[55] Parker's Indian assailant may have been motivated by these racialized notions.[56]

The alleged assailant may have found additional motivation in the social systems that structured Iroquois society. The matrilineal focus of the Seneca meant that kin and clan affiliations descended through women. As one Seneca man testified before a legislative committee, "we go by the mother's side of the old custom; the mother's side carries the day – she rules; my children are not related to me...they are her children, and the children are of the same clan with the mother."[57] If Parker, a significant and well-respected leader married a non-Native woman, their children would lack any Seneca connection according to this worldview. Technically they would not be Seneca. Morgan recognized some of these problems and wrote that the "case of white women married to Indians and of their offspring is a particularly hard one, for after the death of the husband and father the widow and children have no rights in his property, or even to remain on the

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[55] Wallace, *The League of the Ho-De-No-Sau-Nee*, 282.

[56] There is an interesting irony in this evidence that emerges from debates among historians and literary scholars about the role that Ely Parker played in the construction of the Morgan's *League of the Ho-De-No-Sau-Nee or Iroquois*. Arthur C. Parker and William Armstrong both noted that Ely Parker contributed substantially to the creation of the text, Armstrong even suggested that Morgan used Parker's writings verbatim. Morgan himself dedicated the book to Parker stating "This Work, the materials of which are the fruit of our joint researches, is inscribed in acknowledgement of the obligations, and in testimony of the friendship of the author." However, Morgan's biographers, Carl Resek and Bernhard Stern both downplayed his role. Literary scholars Scott Michaelsen and Maureen Konkle both assert that Parker played a significant role, especially in the translations he provided of Jimmy Johnson's speeches relating Handsome Lake's code. Essentially, it is very possible that Parker actually translated and wrote the passages that could have motivated his assailants. For more on the Parker-Morgan collaboration see Scott Michaelsen, *The Limits of Multiculturalism: Interrogating the Origins of American Anthropology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 86-87; and Maureen Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827-1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 259-260.

[57] Morgan, *The League* vol. 2, 275.

reservation."[58] These factors may have motivated Tonawanda community members to take the drastic actions outlined in the newspaper report.

It is useful once again, to return to the comparisons between this case and that of the prominent Cherokee intermarriages of the 1820s. Like the Seneca, Cherokee kinship and clan relations descended through the mother's line. It makes sense then, that when John Ridge and Elias Boudinot married Sarah Northrup and Harriet Gold in Cornwall, many in the Cherokee community worried that their children would have "no clan affiliations and thus no standing within the nation."[59] Rules of descent clearly played a significant role in creating these anxieties. However, rather than kidnap, and attempted murder, as was alleged in the Seneca case, the Cherokee passed a law in 1825 granting citizenship to children born of Cherokee men and white women. Much like Parker's 1861 governmental reform campaign at Tonawanda, this Cherokee law can be seen as an element of indirect colonialism as well. It undercut older Cherokee practices of matrilineality, disrupted the social order and clan system, and sanctioned the development of patriarchal family structures.[60]

It is also possible though, that the *Tribune* reporter projected colonial notions of racial difference and pre-existing aversion to intermarriage from mainstream society onto the Six Nations. In this sense he could have applied the potential anxieties of the DC

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[58] Morgan, *The League* vol. 2, 271.

[59] Gaul, *To Marry an Indian*, 16.

[60] Gaul, *To Marry an Indian*, 16. See also Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 147.

elite onto the Seneca leaders to fabricate this story.[61] In his interesting and persuasive book *The Newspaper Indian*, historian John Coward argued that the issue of Indian man/white woman intermarriage revealed contradictions in public discourse. In this case, while many reporters propagated the stereotype of the noble savage, newspaper coverage of Indian/white intermarriage demonstrated that it "was one thing to praise an Indian in nature or in the abstract, but it was quite another to actually accept an Indian as a marriage partner, in effect admitting Indian equality with whites."[62] Though the *Tribune* reporter did not overtly state there was a fundamental problem with marriage across racial boundaries, if he was projecting these anxieties onto the DC community, perhaps he was suggesting just that.

There was one additional explanation for Parker's disappearance. It was not commented on in the newspapers, but passed down through Parker family lore. Arthur C. Parker, Ely's great-grandnephew, wrote that Ely was, in fact, drugged on December 17, but his assailant was not a member of the Six Nations. Rather, "one of his friends was his rival" and he acted "in hopes that it would not only spoil the wedding, but change the mind of the bride." In an even more shocking revelation Arthur Parker suggested that there were threats of violence if the rescheduled ceremony took place. "Then later came

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[61] In "Lacan and Narration," literary scholar Robert Davis demonstrated that in a Lacanian textual analysis, "manifest content id a product of the unconscious discourse that is both the precondition of of narration and the site of its appearance." In other words, "the Lacanian text is definitely *there*, but it is exclusively text-as-textual-production. See Robert Davis, "Introduction: Lacan and Narration," *Comparative Literature* vol. 98, no. 5 (1983): 848-859. See also Gayatri Spivak, "The Letter as Cutting Edge," *Yale French Studies* vol. 55/56 (1977): 208-226.

[62] John Coward, *The Newspaper Indian: Native American Identity in the Press, 1820-1890* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 51. In *Indians in Unexpected Places,* Philip Deloria also noted that in the cases of Indian man/white woman marriages, there was a prevalent underlying concern that "even the most acculturated Indian had the potential to hear the call of the wild and ...leave the contemporary world for a return to the racialist blanket." (87)

a more sinister threat neatly veiled," he wrote, "[n]o one knows what might have happened if there had been a wedding at the Church of the Epiphany."[63] This fanciful yet intriguing explanation reminds us of the human drama of historical phenomena. It is also very possible, however, that this story was created within the Parker family, perhaps by Ely himself, to mask the significant role prevailing notions of Indianness played in the events surrounding the wedding.

. . . and a Public Obsession

Despite the highly derogatory comments by contemporary standards, the newspaper coverage generally indicated a tacit approval of the marriage. There were no riots, threats of violence, or other scenes of outrage like those surrounding the Cherokee men in Cornwall. Some scholars have argued there was a shift in attitudes about Indian/white intermarriage in the second half of the nineteenth century as reform groups like the Women's National Indian Association championed the idea that marriage between white women and Indian men could serve as a positive influence in the assimilation process. Furthermore, by condoning these marriages, reformers rewarded or recognized individual Indian men for their progress toward assimilation.[64] As a civil engineer and Civil War leader, Ely Parker distinguished himself in mainstream society. Thus, he may have ultimately seemed tolerable, to some, as a husband to a white wife, and perhaps a forerunner to the later trend.[65]

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[63] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 146.

[64] See Jacobs, "The Eastmans and the Luhans;" Ellinghaus, "Assimilation by Marriage;" and "Reading the Personal as Political;" and Cahill, "Only the Home can Found a State."

[65] Martha Hodes suggested the concept of "toleration" as a way to understand the perceptions, among whites, of sexual liaisons between white women and black men in the slave South. She defined this

Although none of the newspaper reporters condemned the marriage, the more intriguing fact was that, according to published reports, several thousand strangers appeared at the church for the second wedding ceremony.[66] An examination of the public fascination with this marriage demonstrates that Parker's fame as an associate of General Grant and his public presence at elite social events shaped the public perceptions of the Seneca sachem in such a way that essentially neutralized anxieties about any threat he might pose to the racial order. By examining Parker as a product of the complex and shifting mid-nineteenth-century society and calling attention to several features of his life and work, it becomes clear that the Seneca leader, consciously or not, situated himself as middle class. While still an "elusive" social group, a consensus does exist among scholars that middle class identity cannot be described through a one dimensional analysis of occupation or profession, wealth and/or income, education, behavior and/or manners, religious affiliation, or consumerism.[67]

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concept as "forbearance for that which is not approved." This is a very useful analytical construct for her argument; however, it does not work as well here. The evidence in this case demonstrates that the Washington DC public, although perhaps hesitant or at least tacitly suspicious of the Parker/Sackett union, gave no real indication that it did not approve of this marriage.

[66] *New York Daily Tribune*, December 25, 1867, p. 1.

[67] For a discussion of the problems in defining an emerging middle class see Burton Bledstein, "Introduction: Storytellers of the Middle Class," in *The Middling Sorts: Explorations in the History of the American Middle Class*, eds. Burton Bledstein and Robert Johnston (New York: Routledge, 2001), 1-27. It would be impossible to note all of the relevant texts in the lengthy historiography of middle class emergence, but several of the most important include C. Wright Mills, *White Collar: The American Middle Classes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951); Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought Since the Revolution* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1955); Burton Bledstein, *The Culture of Professionalism: The Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in America* (New York: Norton, 1976); Paul Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978); Paul Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America: 1820-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978); Mary Ryan, *The Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle Class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982); Christine Stansall, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860* (New York: Knopf, 1986); and Stuart

At the time of his marriage Parker was a relatively well-known public figure in Washington DC. As a Seneca representative he made several trips to meet with prominent senators, like John Calhoun and Henry Clay, as well as various presidents. Polk was especially impressed with the young leader.[68] Parker's role as an elite Seneca statesman may have played a role in the perceptions of his public persona in the capital, but other factors also contributed significantly as well. When the Civil War ended, Parker stayed in DC as Grant's aide-de-camp and attended many social events with the General.[69] As a prominent member of Grant's inner circle, Parker shared in the celebrity that the victorious general attained in the late-1860s. In fact, almost every article that addressed the Parker/Sackett affair noted that Parker was "of General Grant's staff," and many went so far as to describe Grant's thoughts and actions during the events of the disappearance.[70] The newspapers also frequently used terms like "the gallant Colonel" to describe Parker, or at the very least referred to his military ranking, as in the *Tribune* article that clarified, "his position in the army is that of First Lieutenant in the Second Regiment of Cavalry, transferred to staff duty with the brevut [sic] rank of Colonel."[71] Parker's connection to Grant and his role in the Civil War helped the Indian leader further situate himself as a middle-class member of Washington DC society in the 1860s. Significantly, his role as a Civil War military leader also contributed to the other

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Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

[68] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 28-34.

[69] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 145.

[70] "Matrimonial," *Washington DC Daily Morning Chronicle*, December 25, 1867, p. 5.

[71] *New York Daily Tribune*, December 25, 1867, p. 1 and "A Wedding in High Life Unexpectedly Postponed," *New York Daily Tribune*, December 18, 1867.

important facet of this public persona: his embodiment of standards of Victorian manhood, an issue that is addressed below.

In *Playing Indian*, Phil Deloria noted that Parker was "the ultimate Indian player," and although "he had no control over the history that had positioned him in the social and cultural borderlands between Indian and American...he nonetheless made himself into a new person, drawing power from Indianness and Americanness."[72] This intersection between notions of race, class, and gender might be best described as a process of mutual racialization and deracination and calls to mind Stoler's argument that "blurred genres" do not represent "empires in distress but imperial polities in active realignment and reformation."[73] As Deloria concluded, when "Parker wore his suit and tie...[he] played with the boundaries of selfhood and meaning, simultaneously breaking down and creating cultural difference."[74]

While Parker always maintained a strong connection to his Seneca heritage and culture, his education, career, and consumption patterns epitomized the ideals of white Victorian society and together created a public image of an "assimilated" Indian. As a young man he made an connection that shaped his life in significant ways. At sixteen, when Parker served as an interpreter for a Seneca political delegation in New York state, he met Lewis Henry Morgan, the lawyer and founder of the literary fraternal organization, the Grand Order of the Iroquois. Morgan approached the young man in a book store during his search for ethnographic literature concerning the Seneca,

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[72] Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 188.

[73] Stoler, "Intimidations of Empire," 9.

[74] Deloria, *Playing Indian,* 188.

information upon which he could model new rituals and initiation rites. Parker and Morgan became friends and partners in Morgan's quest for knowledge about New York's indigenous population.[75] Morgan laid claim to Parker's Indian identity and used it to advance his own career in writing and politics. He also "laid claim" to the actual bodies of Parker's siblings, whom he used as models for the ethnographic drawings he included in *The League*. Parker in turn, was aided by Morgan's connections and parlayed their friendship into an enrollment at the Cayuga Academy in Aurora, and an honorary membership in the Grand Order, the first of many fraternal groups he joined.[76] While Parker's involvement in Tonawanda political affairs kept him from attending college, his early educational experiences and the aid he received from Morgan's professional connections allowed him to pursue two career paths typical of pre-Civil War middle-class men: law and engineering. As an Indian, Parker lacked citizenship and was therefore denied entrance to the bar, but he found success and adulation as a canal engineer, first in New York, then in Virginia and Illinois, where he met a local store clerk and Mexican War veteran, Ulysses S. Grant.[77] In a letter to one of his former school teachers, Parker demonstrated considerable pride in his professional accomplishments, especially his work as a Resident Engineer on the Erie Canal, about which he wrote, "I had . . . 35 young men under me, and I had charge of about $5,000,000 worth of work."[78]

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[75] Deloria saw this relationship as one that "inaugurated a paradoxical mode of Indian--non-Indian interaction based not upon military or political conflict, but upon the idea of playing Indian itself." See Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 187.

[76] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 1-3. See also, Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 8, 140, 187-189.

[77] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, Chapter 4: "A Lawyer and an Engineer."

[78] Ely S. Parker to Benjamin Wilcox, former teacher, Yates Academy, September 10, 1860, Folder 2 – Correspondence, 1855-1890, Ely S. Parker Papers, 1846-1924, RRL-UR.

Parker also participated in the emerging consumer culture, and his purchases helped demonstrate his adherence to middle class ideals. While in school he used money supplied by the federal government to Indian students to purchase a "fine frock coat."[79] He also, as Arthur Parker noted, had a "love for fine horses" and "never was without a fine span of dashing colts."[80] The newspapers even noted the quality of Parker's horse stable and commented that at a carnival celebration in Washington, he "drove leisurely along with a pair of fine blacks."[81] "In financial affairs" after the Civil War, wrote Arthur Parker, he was "successful and...had a comfortable fortune."[82]

Parker's professional accomplishments and public behaviors eased any anxieties elite members of Washington DC society may have had concerning potential disruptions to the racial order in the capital. Historian Katherine Ellinghaus found a very similar phenomenon in the interracial marriages at the Hampton Institute and in the Eastman-Goodale union later in the nineteenth century. She argued that, "despite the prejudices of the day," when white "women selected [Indian] men who had outwardly proven themselves not only to have absorbed white culture, but to have become successful within it" there were no repercussions from mainstream society.[83] Ellinghaus could easily have added the term middle class to her description of white culture and indeed later asserted that, although, "interracial marriages crossed racial ethnic boundaries, it was only when

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[79] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 22.

[80] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 196-197.

[81] "Grand Exhibition of Fashionable Turnouts," *New York Herald*, February 21, 1871.

[82] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 145.

[83] Ellinghaus, "Assimilation by Marriage," 293-302.

marriages of white women and indigenous men did not transgress ideas of class that they were able to find a place...in the society in which they lived."[84]

Returning once again to a previous comparison may help to illuminate further the significance of class in the analysis of intermarriages. When John Ridge married Sarah Bird Northrup in Cornwall, community members initially demonstrated outrage at this affront to the racial order. When they learned, however, that "John Ridge's father, Major Ridge...was a Cherokee war hero and political leader" they recognized the younger Ridge as "something of a prince...thus redeeming Sarah for white womanhood."[85] This issue became even clearer to the Cornwall community because the Ridges owned many slaves, which at the time was a marker of class. "Possessing a bevy of slaves to wait on her made Sarah's life with an Indian husband acceptable and even enviable," argued historian Tiya Miles.[86] Cherokee scholar Thurman Wilkins concurred and wrote that the "townspeople even came to think of Sarah Northrup Ridge as a kind of princess who dressed in silk every day and had fifty servants to wait on her."[87] As public perceptions of Parker's class status would a generation later, Ridge's calmed the racialized storm and redeemed the purity of his white bride in the eyes of her community.

It is very possible though, that the reporters recognized a potential for outrage and controversy around the time of the Parker/Sackett marriage and because of his outward middle-class appearance, perhaps felt it necessary to explore Parker's heritage and racial

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[84] Ellinghaus, "Margins of Acceptability," 69.

[85] Miles, *Ties that Bind*, 23.

[86] Miles, *Ties that Bind*,, 23-24.

[87] Wilkins, *Cherokee Tragedy*, 153.

identity to either explain how he could have attained such a class status, or to demonstrate that in one way or another that he was not "completely" Indian. Interestingly, the *New York Daily Tribune* published an article several days after the rescheduled ceremony that identified Parker as a person of mixed, Indian and white, ancestry. The article stated that "the family of Col. Ely Parker...had its origin in the connection of a French officer who was stationed at Fort Du Quesne (now Erie) when that post was occupied by the French, with a Seneca Woman."[88] Although this story was false, it suggested that to the reporters, perhaps only a person with at least some European heritage could become so thoroughly middle class.

To the Washington DC public Parker was not simply an individual who had attained the trappings of middle class though, he also personified Victorian standards of manhood. As Anthony Rotundo argued in his vast study of gender identity, *American Manhood*, the ideal of the self-made man rose to prominence in the early nineteenth century along with important social, political, and economic changes like the development of a republican government, the market revolution, and the emergence of the middle class itself. "At the root of these changes was an economic and a political life based on the free play of individual interests...a man took his identity and his social status from his own achievements, not from the accident of his birth" he wrote.[89] Ely

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[88] "Col. Parker's Ancestry," *New York Daily Tribune*, December 28, 1867.

[89] Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 3. The study of American manhood emerged as a response to the development of women's history in the 1970s and 1980s. Several scholars argued that gender as a category of analysis had to include an understanding of historical significance of masculinity as well as femininity. This point has been well-received by scholars and more recent literature much more efficiently incorporates both men and women into their analyses. For more on the development of men's studies see J.A. Mangan and James Walvin eds., *Manliness and Morality: Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987); and Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1996).

Parker, by his own description, was a man "born of poor, but honest Indian parents," who became a successful civil engineer, Civil War leader, a friend to every president from Polk through Grant, and ultimately a federal policymaker in the Department of the Interior. Surely, he epitomized the ideals of the self-made man.[90]

Parker's career choices adhered to Victorian standards of manhood and this fact would have been easily recognizable to the DC elites that might have chosen to protest his marriage. Pursuing first a career in law, which, in the pre-Civil War era was increasingly identified as a masculine endeavor, Parker demonstrated many of the ideals that came to be valued in the legal profession, including story-telling skills, an intense competitive edge, and a general conviviality.[91] It was his convivial nature that endeared the young Parker to many members of Washington society. He "was entertained in their homes," "spent New Year's Day...in the home of Dolly Madison," and "Mrs. Polk once took him for a drive in her carriage."[92] Also, according to Arthur C. Parker, his "polished speech and effective arguments attracted the attention of many statesmen."[93] Perhaps more importantly, though, the development of the masculine ideal in law reflected a growing societal value that men should be able to "solve the practical problems of the

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[90] Ely S. Parker, "Draft for lecture containing autobiographical notes, notes on the history of Indian-white relations and on religion," [ca. 1878], MS 674, Folder 2, NL.

[91] Michael Grossberg, "Institutionalizing Masculinity: The Law as a Masculine Profession," in *Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America*, eds. Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 133-151, 139.

[92] Arthur Parker, "Ely S. Parker – Man and Mason," *Freemasons*, New York (State) Grand Lodge, American Lodge of Research, *Transactions* 8, no. 2, (Jan.-Dec., 1961): 229-247, 233-234.

[93] Parker, "Ely S. Parker – Man and Mason,", 233.

growing society."[94] When Parker was denied entrance to the bar, he sought a career in engineering, and in a most visible way, by creating canals and buildings; he worked to solve practical problems in the growing society.[95] Furthermore, as a member of Grant's personal staff during the Civil War, and in the post-war era, he held a very visible position as a ranking military official and a mid-level bureaucrat. Parker moved up the military hierarchy very quickly in the post-war period, from Second Lieutenant of U.S. Cavalry in the regular Army, to First Lieutenant, and received brevets of Captain, Major, Lieutenant, ant-Colonel, Colonel, and Brigadier-General, all in 1867. He also toured with General Grant after the war, and many of the photographs from that trip "show him at Grant's side."[96] As a leader in the victorious Union Army, and through his public connection with the famous General, Parker represented, to the DC elite, a masculine ideal in military service and the willingness to sacrifice his life to fight disunion that drove the romanticization of the Civil War in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.

Parker also participated in many fraternal organizations, another important marker of nineteenth-century manhood. Between the 1840s and 1860s Parker sought initiation into, received honors, and held offices in many fraternal lodges and masonic chapters. He frequently read Masonic literature, joined lodges in New York, Illinois, and Iowa, and

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[94] Parker, "Ely S. Parker – Man and Mason,", 136.

[95] In his recent book, Michael Adas argued that colonial officials and reformers in the U.S. "have rather consistently assumed that the adoption of American technologies (and material culture more broadly) would also entail the incorporation of American values, ways of thinking, and modes of organizing everything." As a civil engineer, and in a sense, a master of new American technologies (at least in terms of construction and transportation) Parker's career choice and excellence in this facet of his life contributed significantly to his public persona and the ease with which he was accepted into Washington DC society. See Michael Adas, *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperative and America's Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), 12.

[96] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 143.

even gave a well-known address at a Masonic convention in Chicago in 1859, in which he stated that, if the Indian race were to vanish, he would "knock at the door of MASONRY" for refuge.[97] He continued, describing the significance of fraternal organizations in his life,

> I knocked at the door of the *Blue Lodge*, and found brotherhood around its alter. I knelt before the Great Light in the Chapter, and found companionship beneath the Royal Arch. I entered the Encampment, and found valiant Sir Knights willing to shield me there without regard to race or nation.[98]

Historian Mark Carnes argued that fraternal rituals helped young men shift from a domestic, feminized childhood to a public manhood that valued power and commercial activity by fostering connections to other professional men. He stated that the groups provided "guidance during the young men's troubled passage into manhood."[99] Parker not only participated in these organizations, but excelled as a Mason, and like his professional pursuits, received recognition for his accomplishments in the form of acceptance into mainstream society. In fact, at the time of his death in 1895, several members of fraternal organizations attended and performed rituals at his burial.[100]

Although the newspaper reporters never overtly stated that Parker epitomized the standards and ideals of middle-class Victorian manhood, the tacit approval of his marriage demonstrated that although Parker was a Seneca, for all intents and purposes, he

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[97] "The Indian Craftsman," *The Masonic Review* vol. 23, no. 1 (1860): 16-17. See also Parker, "Ely S. Parker – Man and Mason," 243 and Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 70.

[98] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 70.

[99] Mark Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 14. See also Mark Carnes, "Middle-Class Men and the Solace of Fraternal Ritual" in *Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America*, eds. Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 37-60.

[100] "Gen. Parker's Funeral," *Batavia Daily News* (NY), September 7, 1985. and "Marking the Grave of Do-Ne-Ho-Geh-Weh," *Proceedings of the Buffalo Historical Society* VIII (1905): 511-519.

was a middle-class man in mainstream society as far as the Washington DC public was concerned.[101] In her article "Tense and Tender Ties," Ann Stoler asserted that "[e]laborate codes of conduct that affirmed manliness and virility arose from colonial cultures of fear - white men making unfounded claims to legitimate rule saw their manhood bolstered by equally unfounded claims to racial superiority."[102] Parker's public persona and the role it played in this case as traversing these boundaries and taxonomies affirms her contention. Parker may have looked like an Indian, but, to the viewing public, he certainly did not act like what they expected from one. While the reporters would continue to capitalize on and romanticize his Indian identity the tone of their rhetoric was such that it was clear he posed no real threat to the racial hierarchy. Parker's public identity neutralized the anxieties that DC elites might have felt about the potential disruption of the racial order represented by his marriage.

Parker's public presence also facilitated the open expression of fascination and even "colonial desire" on the part of elite, Victorian white women, a group whose

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[101] In a recent article, Law Professor Ariela J. Gross found that in the antebellum society and especially in courtrooms, the performance of whiteness factored heavily into legal definitions of race for African Americans. In fact, the "evidence" of racialized whiteness in this context, she argued, was often articulated through the performance of acts of citizenship like serving in a militia or becoming involved in political or legal matters such as voting or sitting on a jury. Although separated by time and space, my understanding of Parker's public persona reaffirms her conclusions. See Ariela J. Gross, "Litigating Whiteness: Trials of Racial Determination in the Nineteenth-Century South," *The Yale Law Journal* 108, no. 1 (Oct., 1998): 109-188. The evolving whiteness studies literature has begun to address similar issues among "white ethnics" later in the nineteenth century. Both Matthew Frye Jacobson and David Roediger demonstrated that constructions of race have changed dramatically between the nineteenth century and today, and Roediger in particular showed how it was possible for "non-whites" to live "in-between" racial binaries in their time period. Although he focused on later time period, I believe that Parker's career and marriage demonstrate that he occupied this "in-between" role at mid-century. See Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); and David Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White, The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (New York: Basic Books, 2005).

[102] Ann Laura Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies" in *Haunted by Empire: Geographies on Intimacy in North American History*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 37.

sexuality was often closely monitored and stifled. The intersecting ideologies of race, class, and gender at the site of this intermarriage perhaps even helped to intensify the curiosity the union invoked. Reportedly, no less than several thousand women attended the second scheduled ceremony, "all intent on seeing the white woman married to the red man."[103] The Washington DC *Evening Star* reported that "there was a large crowd at the Epiphany Church...all being strangers to both Col. Parker and his lady, but who were attracted there from curiosity alone."[104] The *New York Herald* stated that the "ladies were in ecstasies, and hurried up preparations to see the interesting spectacle" and the *Tribune* estimated that "not less than 5,000 of the fair sex visited the church."[105] The reporter from the *Herald*, who described an idealized romantic scene where Parker "with his warrior's sash, plume and tribal trappings," led "his fair Caucasian bride to the altar" may have been correct; a scene such as this was perhaps too compelling for elite Washington women to miss. [106]

Many colonization studies scholars have asserted that in colonial or other hegemonic settings members of the dominant society eroticized or fetishized the "other." In his interesting and persuasive study entitled *Colonial Desire*, Robert Young argued

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[103] *New York Daily Tribune*, December 25, 1867.

[104] "Marriage of Col. Ely S. Parker and Miss Sackett," *Washington DC Evening Star*, December 24, 1867.

[105] "The Parker-Sackett Nuptials," *New York Herald*, December 24, 1867; and *New York Tribune*, December 25, 1867.

[106] The ideas in this section owe an intellectual debt to literary scholar Paul Gilmore, who argued that nineteenth-century cultural amusements "produced blacks and Indians simultaneously as primitive embodiments of unruly masculinized behavior and as safe, sentimentalized commodities for a feminized middle-class audience." Thus, it is clear that Parker's dual appeal, as both an exoticized "other" and a non-threatening member of mainstream society, would have been something recognizable to the elite Washington DC public. For more see Paul Gilmore, *The Genuine Article: Race, Mass Culture, and American Literary Manhood* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 6.

that in 1860s British writings about "race-mixing," there was a recognition of interracial attraction between white men and women of color.[107] Ann Stoler demonstrated that in colonial regions European women were not the objects of male desire, rather they were either paragons of virtue or parasitic influences. Indigenous women thus became the objects of desire in these situations, she asserted.[108] For this reason, white women's sexuality was often closely policed; however, while it is less apparent in this literature, white women also participated in the practices of colonial desire along with white men. Young demonstrated that there was a fear that white women were attracted to men of color, but this idea also served as a fantasy in colonial settings because, as he wrote, "disgust always bears the imprint of desire." He used as an example, Louis Agassiz's wife, who was unable to stop watching the "fine-looking athletic negroes" in West Africa, and the fact that Agassiz himself wrote frequently about this in his journals.[109] Anne McClintock also argued that colonial women, although in a disadvantaged and frustrating position compared to that of colonial men, did occupy "positions of decided – if borrowed – power, not only over colonized women but also over colonized men."[110]

These assertions from colonization studies literature can help us understand the Parker/Sackett union, and the ways that the public obsession with the event itself

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[107] Young, *Colonial Desire*, 149-150. See also Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*; and Anne Maxwell, *Colonial Photography and Ehibitions: Representations of the "Native" and the Making of European Identities* (London: Leicester University Press, 1999).

[108] Ann Stoler, "Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender and Morality in the Making of Race," in *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*, ed. Ann Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 41-78.

[109] Young, *Colonial Desire*, 149.

[110] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 6.

suggested an expression of colonial desire on the part of white women. Even Minnie once said that "people thought I married the General *because* he was an Indian." Though she cryptically added, "[n]ow I don't care for Indians – I married the General because I loved him."[111] It is clear that Parker was often an object of female attention. Louise Bacheldor, in her letter to the *Buffalo Express* editor, enthusiastically described the young Parker as having "a noble, commanding form, tall, erect, broad-shouldered . . . [with] straight, coal-black hair, high cheekbones and copper-colored complexion." And when discussing the rumored affair he had with one of his white schoolmates and their storied July Fourth carriage ride at Yates academy, she outlined a scene that was not unlike the one at the Church of the Epiphany 22 years later. She wrote that "[v]erandas were filled with people and even the street corners . . . [as] many were on the alert to know if the rumor was really true."[112] Later in life Parker described himself as a "savage Jack Falstaff of 200 weight," but a description from a Masonic meeting he attended referred to him as the "valiant Batchelor [sic] Chief" and revealed that "the *ladies vied* with the brethren" for his attention.[113] To compare Parker to other prominent nineteenth-century Indian men reveals striking similarities. Although their marriage generated extreme

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[111] Miscellaneous notes of James E. Kelly, Kelly Papers, New York Historical Society, New York, New York, quoted in Armstrong, 132, emphasis added.

[112] Mrs. Louise Bacheldor, letter to the editor, *Buffalo Express*, 24 March 1915, Box 6 - 1886-1946 and n.d., Ely S. Parker Papers, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, PA. In her 2006 presentation at the American Historical Association Annual Meeting, historian Christine Skwiot also recognized the significance of colonial desire when she discussed the Hawaiian tourism industry in the early-twentieth century. There she found that tourism boosters promoted the fantasy of "torrid affairs" between white women and Polynesian beach boys. "Building on the myths of the sensuous and sexually available Polynesian woman that had informed Western fantasies...they reversed the gender roles to make erotic encounters with Polynesian men available to white women," she wrote. See Christine Skwiot, "Sexual License as Imperial Discipline: Miscegenation and Hawai'i, 1819-1959" (paper presented at the 120th Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, Philadelphia, PA, January, 2006), 24-25.

[113] "An Indian Craftsman," *The Masonic Review* 19 (1858): 364.

outrage, when Elias Boudinot and Harriet Gold announced their engagement, her sister noted that she "never appeared more interesting than she does at present."[114] Perhaps she was alluding to Boudinot's appeal as an exoticized "other." Furthermore, Charles Eastman, the Santee Sioux who married Elaine Goodale, was often described as being much sought after by white women.[115] The newspaper reporters at the time of the Parker/Sackett wedding most likely fed these fantasies when they described Parker as having "a strong, manly build . . . of pure Indian complexion." They drew on racialized historical symbolism, invoking the image of "the grand matrimonial and spectacular drama of 'Pocahontas'" and they referred to Parker using his Seneca name, "Do-ne-ho-ga-wa."[116]

Despite the fact that white women's sexuality was often closely monitored, the elite women of Washington DC society very openly expressed their curiosity and interest in interracial affairs at the time of the Parker/Sackett marriage. Like the marriage itself though, this failed to create any kind of controversy. In fact, the newspaper reporters took a jovial, almost playful tone when describing the white women's actions and rather than indicating any disapproval, they used language that expressed or at least supported colonial fascination. It is clear that Parker's public identity and fulfillment of middle-class Victorian ideals of manhood facilitated this open expression. As a Seneca sachem, "near relative to the famous Red Jacket," and Civil War hero he provided material for

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[114] Mary B. Church, "Elias Boudinot," *Magazine of History* 17 (1913): 209-219, 214.

[115] Sargent, *The Life of Elaine Goodale Eastman*, 45, 50.

[116] "The Parker-Sackett Nuptials," *New York Herald*, December 25, 1867.

romantic fantasies as an exoticized "other."[117] But through his public identity, he was also the civil engineer, military secretary, and dear friend to U.S. Grant, and as such, he appeared as a non-threatening object of fascination for a sentimentalized, feminized audience.

Arthur C. Parker wrote that Ely was "devoted to his wife, whom he frequently described to friends as 'the one woman in all the world for me.'" "He was with her in sickness and in health," he continued, "always kind, patient and courteous."[118] William Armstrong also concluded that the Parkers had a long and happy union. For a marriage that began under such mysterious and intriguing circumstances, it seems strange that issues related to shifting and evolving notions of race, class, gender, and colonialism would cease to play a role so quickly.

There are hints though, in the historical records that suggest such complications continued to impact the Parkers' lives. After Ely's ouster from the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the early-1870s, his one-time friend, but more recent rival, William Welsh, the Episcopal missionary, wrote a letter to Lewis Henry Morgan in which he stated that "Parker meant well but conviviality and a fashionable wife made him the prey of astute and polished augers."[119] Welsh, who previously made comments about Parker's racial identity, may have been suggesting that, as an Indian man, his attentions were focused

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[117] "A Wedding in High Life Unexpectedly Postponed," *New York Daily Tribune*, December 18, 1867.

[118] Parker, *The Life of General Ely S. Parker*, 221.

[119] William Welsh to Lewis Henry Morgan, 20 March, 1873, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, RRL-UR.

too closely on maintaining his middle class status and his relationship with a white woman, than on his work as a policymaker.

Throughout his life and career Parker wrote hundreds of letters, luckily many of these still exist in archives and libraries spread across the United States. Among all of these letters, however, none exist that he exchanged with his wife, Minnie. Furthermore, Parker only mentioned his wife a few times in all of his correspondence, and these were only fleeting. In one letter he mentioned that "Mrs. P. and I have spent three days at Manhattan Beach and found it charming," but in another, "Mrs. Parker has changed her mind and . . . has gone back from Western New York to Denver, to stay until she changes her mind to come home to me."[120] While it is impossible to know exactly what caused Minnie's stress, the general silence in the historical record speaks volumes. Perhaps the pressures placed on these two individuals who married across racial boundaries caused Parker to downplay their relationship in his correspondence.

Parker's relationship with the poet and ethnographer, Harriet Maxwell Converse, may also reveal the significant role that racial identities played throughout this marriage. In the 1880s Parker began a frequent correspondence with Converse that would continue through the end of his life, and their letters demonstrated the importance of his Seneca heritage to the aging sachem. While Parker may not have been able to share this part of his identity with Minnie, "[n]ow I don't care for Indians" she once said, Converse understood and appreciated Seneca history and culture, and this fact may explain their friendship. The Seneca even adopted Converse and bestowed upon her an honorary clan membership. In their letters Parker addressed her by her Seneca name, Gayaneshaoh, or

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[120] Ely S. Parker to Harreit Maxwell Converse, 23 June, 1891, quoted in Parker, 178; Ely S. Parker to Harreit Maxwell Converse, 10 July, 1894, quoted in Parker, 180.

"The Little Snipe." Although mainstream society may have seen a Victorian middle-class man when they looked at Parker, Converse saw and appreciated Parker as an Indian.

The Washington DC public obsessed over the marriage of Ely Parker and Minnie Sackett. This chapter illustrated that even though this union could have motivated outrage and even violence in the nation's capital, it was Parker's fame as a Civil War hero and his fulfillment of middle-class ideals and standards of Victorian manhood that made him an acceptable husband for a white woman. Furthermore, this case study showed that through the interwoven discourses of race, class, and gender, an Indian leader like Parker could represent the embodiment of primitive masculinity to some, while at the same time be a non-threatening object of public fascination for a sentimentalized, feminized, middle-class audience. The vast newspaper coverage in Washington DC and New York, of the events surrounding the Parker/Sackett affair, commented upon, scrutinized, and even invented a constellation of issues, but by taking these articles as its primary source of evidence, this chapter has suggested some of the significant ways that discourse shaped actions around colonial racial boundaries, but also revealed the fluidity of racial identities.

The Parker/Sackett affair is significant for the study of Indian/white intermarriage in several capacities. First, it calls into question the assertion that it was simply assimilation policies in the late-nineteenth century that made Indian man/white woman intermarriages acceptable. Assimilation policies clearly factored into the increasing visibility of intermarriages in this period, but the existence of marriages like Parker's prior to the institutionalization of these colonial policies demonstrates that other issues played equally important roles. In particular, unions such as Ridge and Northrup's,

Boudinot and Gold's, and Parker and Sackett's demonstrated that notions of class and gender impacted public acceptance in ways that precluded federal policies. Perhaps it is more accurate to assert that assimilation policies in the late-nineteenth century provided additional opportunities for Indian men to achieve class and gender statuses, and that those statuses made their marriages acceptable or at least tolerable to mainstream society. Additionally, by focusing on an interracial marriage that took place in the seat of national, colonial power, rather than in a peripheral or borderland region where the role of the colonial state was unstable, this analysis demonstrated the pervasiveness of fluid and insecure boundaries between public perceptions of colonial identity markers. One might be inclined to dismiss these events if they took place in a less visible locale, but that they happened in the capital makes them even more significant.

By demonstrating the applicability of insights from colonization/postcolonial studies to the examination of intimate relations across racialized boundaries in United States history, this chapter lends support to Ann Stoler's recent contentions in *Haunted by Empire* among others. While some might disagree with the assertion that the elite white women attending the Parker/Sackett wedding were participating in the act of colonial desire, or that Parker's ability to transcend racial taxonomies actually demonstrated the existence of the taxonomies themselves, it is difficult, if not impossible, to argue against the fact that these insights provoke us to ask new questions and search for new and better explanations for the workings of race, class, and gender in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, understanding the perceptions of this marriage as "a barometer for society," the Parker/Sackett affair indicates the significance of the early Reconstruction years as a

time of potential (though often unrealized) for racial reconfigurations in the capital, but also in the nation more broadly.

Intermarriages like the Parker/Sackett affair, which captured the public's attention, are particularly significant for their interpretive value. These unions provided sites at which notions of race, class, and gender, within an evolving colonial context, intersected, and as such allow for multi-layered analyses that historians can use to demonstrate the rigidity and permeability of racial taxonomies, as well as the significance of social constructions of class and gender, and the ways these notions and classifications shifted and interacted as state and society evolved and changed. While in the past, an anomalous event such as the Parker/Sackett affair may have been easily ignored, this study suggests that it is exactly these kinds of events that scholars should interrogate further. These anomalous moments can push us to consider alternate understandings of the role of the state in the post-Civil War era, as well as the ways in which colonial imperatives manifested themselves within the actions of individuals and communities. Finally, by bridging multiple interpretive frameworks, this study demonstrates the need for the development of alternate and increasingly sophisticated examinations of Indian-white intermarriage in the nineteenth-century United States.

Parker's role as a federal policymaker in the middle of the nineteenth century might also appear as anomalous for an Indian man. It was his public acceptance, however, that helped provide him this opportunity. The next chapter examines Parker's efforts to shape the development and administration of the federal Peace Policy of the late-1860s and early-1870s in order to understand more fully the position of Indian people in the evolving state structures of the nineteenth-century United States. In

particular, it seeks to connect the legacy of the Ogden land dispute, a localized pre-Civil War event, with the national-level Indian policy reform campaign in the post-Civil War era, by examining how Parker attempted to apply the lessons he learned at Tonawanda to the federal bureaucracy.

CONFINING INDIANS: POWER, AUTHORITY, AND THE COLONIALIST IDEOLOGIES OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY REFORMERS

VOLUME TWO

By

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Chapter 4

"[F]or the establishment of a permanent and perpetual peace": Ely Parker's role in the Early Peace Policy

"This project, at first blush, may seem to be devised on too extensive a scale, and involving too much expense for an experiment. I cannot regard it so..."
Ely S. Parker, 1867[1]

The Peace Policy in the late-1860s and early-1870s exists in the historical literature as a complex and paradoxical phenomenon fraught with internal contradictions. This chapter examines the policy's development within the context of an earlier local controversy, namely the Ogden/Tonawanda land dispute, and as a part of the evolution of Indian affairs within the nineteenth-century state and seeks to provide coherence to these scholarly interpretations. I focus on Ely Parker, the first Indian Commissioner of Indian Affairs, as an integral character in federal policymaking in the late-1860s and early-1870s, and I contend that his political education in western New York profoundly shaped the reform programs that led to the Peace Policy. While some have characterized this period in Indian affairs as "a mere hodge-podge," examining Parker's role in the early Peace Policy suggests that there was a consistent movement toward an increasingly efficient, effective, and impartial bureaucratization. It was also this process of bureaucratization, though, that facilitated the increasing physical, economic, and social confinement of Indian communities and Indian people.[2]

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[1] "Letter from the Secretary of War, Addressed to Mr. Schenck, Chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, Transmitting a Report by Colonel Parker on Indian Affairs," U.S. Congress, House Misc. Doc. No. 37, 39th Cong., 2nd Sess., 7.

[2] See Richard Levine, "Indian Fighters and Indian Reformers: Grant's Indian Peace Policy and the Conservative Consensus," *Civil War History* 31, no. 4 (1985): 329-352.

The Peace Policy, according to historian Francis Prucha, "was a state of mind, a determination that since the old ways of dealing with Indians had not worked, new ways which emphasized kindness and justice must be tried." "Because states of mind do not begin and end abruptly," he continued, "the peace policy cannot be precisely dated nor can it be rigidly defined."[3] Other historians have taken a more pragmatic approach to the study of the Peace Policy and tend to define it by focusing on one or more of the following developments: Ely S. Parker's appointment as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the creation of the Board of Indian Commissioners, the attempt to transfer the Bureau of Indian Affairs from the Department of the Interior back to the War Department (it was originally in the War Department, but was transferred to the Department of the Interior in 1849), religious organizations' responsibility of nominating reservation agents, the increasing concentration of Native communities on reservations, and the expanded program of government appropriations for subsistence and agricultural goods and supplies, and educational staff and facilities.[4]

Throughout his early life and career, Parker situated himself as a man who publicly adhered to middle-class, Victorian ideals, and through his friendship with U.S. Grant and his work in Indian affairs in the 1860s, he got the opportunity to apply his reform agenda through the Peace Policy. And although various scholars have attempted to characterize it as an exclusively religious, military or humanitarian movement, the one key element that united all of the disparate parts of the policy was its attempt to end corruption and mismanagement through the development of an efficient and impartial bureaucracy and public oversight. These were innovations that emerged out of Parker's

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[3] Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 30-31.

[4] For specific discussions of the Peace Policy historiography, see below.

previous experience as a Seneca spokesman in the Ogden/Tonawanda land dispute, and careers in both civilian and military branches of the federal government, and first surfaced in his 1861 reform of reservation governance at Tonawanda. Furthermore, Parker's underlying political philosophy which argued that protecting community cohesiveness, providing adequate compensation for dispossession, and educational opportunities for Native peoples would allow the "Indian Problem" to cease being a problem on its own represented the initiation of a significant tradition of dissent within mainstream systems of governance. Although oppositional reformers defeated Parker in these policy debates, it is intentionality that I am most concerned with, and the communitarian and compensatory intentions that drove his programs would emerge again in the work of later Native and non-Native reformers at the end of the nineteenth century and again in the twentieth century. These policy innovations can also be seen as forerunners to larger social policy reform efforts at the end of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century.

The historical literature on the Peace Policy generally focuses on the religious organizations that administered the policy on the local level, the non-Native reformers who sponsored, approved of, and directed those religious organizations, or the military component of these reforms. Taken singularly or together, these studies do not provide an overall interpretation of this time period in Indian affairs. As historian Richard Levine noted, this literature has not "suggested a single ideological framework within which to fit all the disparate elements of the Grant Indian policy."[5] Furthermore, the existing

[5] Levine, "Indian Fighters and Indian Reformers," 330.

literature does not address Ely Parker's role as a strong Indian voice in policy reform, nor does it adequately reflect the significant BIA conflicts in this period.

"The demand of religiously motivated men and women for reform in Indian affairs could not be disregarded," wrote Francis Prucha in his seminal two-volume study of the entire course of United States/Indian relations, entitled *The Great Father*.[6] "The governmental structures that marked the peace policy were a remarkable manifestation of reliance of the 'Christian nation' on professedly Christian men and principles," he continued.[7] Prucha's work represents one of the most significant trends in the Peace Policy literature and his interpretations established the frameworks within which most subsequent scholars situated their studies. Prucha's interest in and devotion to the power of the religious convictions of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Americans proved to be very influential and few scholars questioned his assertions about the harmony between reformers and the linear progression of post-Civil War Indian policy.

Some historians, though, have questioned the intentions of the religious organizations and in various ways engaged with Prucha's earlier work. These scholars presented interpretations that attributed the failures of the Peace Policy to internal divisions within or among the religious organizations themselves, particularly focusing upon the doctrinal, dogmatic, or sectarian divides. Others focused on the inability of the missionaries to reconcile or cooperate with private companies and land speculators who

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[6] Prucha, *The Great Father* vol. 1, 501.

[7] Prucha, *The Great Father* vol. 1, 501. See also Carol Higham, *Noble, Wretched, and Redeemable: Protestant Missionaries to the Indian in Canada and the United States, 1820-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000). Higham's comparative study also demonstrates this obsession with the religious component of the development of nineteenth-century Indian affairs, as well as the tendency of this type of literature to cloud other important nuances in interpretation. She argued that despite the differences between the United States and Canada, the Protestant missionaries shared remarkably similar attitudes toward their charges.

profited from Indian confinement, as well as their inability to persuade the federal government to remove these contractors and "whiskey hucksters" completely. Still other historians, simply following Prucha's lead, present the development of this period as the positive result of the harmonious Christian orientation of the participants involved. Clyde Milner's study of the Hicksite Quakers who worked with the Pawnees, Otos, and Omahas, entitled *With Good Intentions*, argued that although the religious men meant well, they actually demonstrated many of the same prejudices and expectations about Indian communities as other non-Native reformers. Furthermore, he asserted that they allowed ethnocentrism to drive their actions, and ultimately did more harm than good among the Native communities with which they worked.[8] Similarly, Robert Keller's *American Protestantism and United States Indian Policy, 1869-1882* came to the pessimistic conclusion that no matter how altruistic or idealistic the goals of the government or the religious organizations, real-life interests, particularly the western drive for land, Indian removal, and concentration on reservations, superseded any philosophical orientation.[9] In *"New Hope for the Indians,"* Norman Bender found that in New Mexico, the Peace Policy was not a successful reform effort due to the divisions within the Presbyterian Church, as well as personnel issues and ethnocentrism.[10]

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[8] Milner, *With Good Intentions,* xi-xiii. See also Robert Trennert, "John H. Stout and the Grant Peace Policy Among the Pimas," *Arizona and the West*, 28, no. 1 (1986): 45-68.

[9] Keller, *American Protestantism*, xi-xii. See also Robert Keller, "Episcopal Reformers and Affairs at Red Cloud Agency, 1870-1876," *Nebraska History*, 68, no. 3 (1987): 116-126, and Joseph E. Illick, "'Some of Our Best Indians are Friends...': Quaker Attitudes and Actions regarding the Western Indians during the Grant Administration," *Western Historical Quarterly*, 2, no. 3 (1971): 283-294. Illick concluded that "Land hunger on the frontier, which had always poisoned Indian-white relations, played a part in undermining Quaker efforts"(293).

[10] Norman Bender, *"New Hope for the Indians: The Grant Peace Policy and the Navajos in the 1870s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1989). See also Cary Collins, "A Fall from Grace: Sectarianism and the Grant Peace Policy in Western Washington Territory, 1869-1882," *Pacific Northwest*

Other scholars have reached less pessimistic conclusions. For example, T. Ashley Zwink argued that Lawrie Tatum, the Quaker agent selected to administer BIA policy on the Kiowa agency, found success in his efforts to encourage self-sufficient agriculture there and "pioneered in the government's efforts to civilize and Christianize the Indians."[11] Similarly, Henry Waltmann argued that although the Presbyterian administrator John Lowrie advocated "justice for the Indians, he did not think in terms of comprehensive equality for their race." Nonetheless, "much good had been done for the Indians in an era when the very existence of the red race was in jeopardy."[12] In his book *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, Francis Prucha argued that the Christian humanitarians were "sincere, religious-minded men and women who believed intensely that only one solution was possible for the problem they saw facing the United States in its relations with the Indians." Furthermore, he wrote, "they were closely united both in outlook and in goals, and they were supported by government officials of like mind."[13]

Another group of historians have examined the non-Native reformers and government officials of the Peace Policy era. "The sponsors of Indian reform in the years following the Civil War deserve praise for their work," wrote Loring Benson Priest in his

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Forum, 8, no. 2 (1995): 55-77; and Henry Stamm, "The Peace Policy at Wind River: The James Irwin Years, 1871-1877," *Montana* 41, no. 3: 56-69. Stamm concluded that Irwin's failures reflected those of the larger Peace Policy, in that "the dominant culture failed to include the voices of the minority in any real way" (69).

[11] T. Ashley Zwink, "On the White Man's Road: Lawrie Tatum and the Formative Years of the Kiowa Agency, 1869-1873," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 56, no. 4 (1978-1979): 431-441, 441. See also Martha Bunin, "The Quaker Agents of the Kiowa, Comanche, and Wichita Indian Reservation," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, 10, no.2 (1932); and Lee Cutler, "Lawrie Tatum and the Kiowa Agency, 1869-1873," *Arizona and the West*, 13, no. 3 (1971): 221-244.

[12] Henry Waltmann, "John C. Lowrie and Presbyterian Indian Administration, 1870-1882," *Journal of Presbyterian History*, 54, no. 2 (1976): 259-277, 272-273.

[13] Francis Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, vi.

book *Uncle Sam's Stepchildren.* "The failure resulting was unfortunate; but misapplication by administrators rather than the evil intent of legislators was responsible for the disastrous history of America's first systematic effort to provide for Indian welfare," he continued.[14] In his attempt to understand and characterize the reformers, Henry Fritz wrote that for the most part these individuals were not "Eastern sentimentalists," but rather men and women "who had moved to the western frontier." He also asserted that all the reformers "had one characteristic in common: a genuine sympathy for all humanity motivated by a deep-rooted Christian philosophy."[15] He concluded that, the shortcomings of the policy had nothing to do with the reformers or administrators themselves, rather that it was "the fault of Congress, which did not appropriate enough funds."[16] Robert Mardock argued that the reformers were Republican, middle-class, "social-gospel Christian humanists" and that their Christian beliefs drastically shaped their understandings of race and Indian-white relations.[17] He found that the reformers were perhaps motivated by over-zealous, idealistic principles, that they failed to adequately study the problems they sought to correct, and that their

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[14] Loring Benson Priest, *Uncle Sam's Stepchildren: The Reformation of United States Indian Policy, 1865-1887* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1942), 252. See also Robert Utley, "The Celebrated Peace Policy of General Grant," *North Dakota History* 20, (1953): 121-142. Of course, the work of Francis Prucha could also factor into this discussion, although since he focused on the Christian orientation of the non-Native reformers, I chose to place his work in the earlier section.

[15] Henry Fritz, *The Movement for Indian Assimilation, 1860-1890* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963), 34. See also Henry Fritz, "The Making of Grant's Peace Policy," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 37, (1959-1960): 411-432.

[16] Fritz, *The Movement for Indian Assimilation,* 220.

[17] Robert Mardock, *The Reformer and the American Indian* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971), 3. See also Robert Mardock, "The Anti-Slavery Humanitarians and Indian Policy Reform," *Western Humanities Review* 12, (1958).

reforms were not necessarily practical.[18] These scholars, though successful in demonstrating the complexities in Indian policy reform in the post-Civil War period, did not recognize the significant role Ely Parker played, as a strong Indian voice, in the creation and administration of Indian policy.

A final, though less significant trend in the literature on the Peace Policy examined the role of the military as an active agent of policy creation and administration, some of these scholars also focused particularly on President Grant. Robert Wooster argued that the "army's role in implementing policy should not be ignored."[19] Much like the historians who studied the religious organizations and the non-Native reformers, Wooster found it difficult to apply an overall framework to the history of military interaction with Indian peoples in the west. Rather, he concluded, there was no "strategic doctrine" when it came to the army's Indian policy, and that any successes can only be attributed to "a commander's personal experiences in the West, his perceptions of Indians and the natural environment, the abilities of his subordinates, and simple good fortune."[20] Other scholars, who focused attention on the role that U.S. Grant himself played in the creation and administration of Indian policy, argued that the President was a sympathetic sponsor of Indian rights. Biographers and mythmakers assert that he was concerned with Native communities in the Pacific Northwest in the 1850s and that when he was elected

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[18] Mardock, *The Reformer and the American Indian*, 228.

[19] Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 211.

[20] Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy*, 213. See also Utley, *Frontier Regulars.* Judith St. Pierre's dissertation attempts to find some over-arching philosophy in military strategy by studying the life and career of one General who was involved in both the administration of Reconstruction and Indian policies. See Judith St. Pierre, "General O.O. Howard and Grant's Peace Policy," (PhD. diss, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1990).

in 1868, he sought to use his authority to provide a more humane and justified Indian policy.[21] This idea is most clear in the fact that the Peace Policy itself is often referred to as "Grant's Peace Policy." However, "when the story of the Peace Policy is examined critically, though, it becomes obvious that Grant's influence, rather than being decisive and salutary, was in fact more circumstantial."[22] Thus, neither the military's approach, nor Grant's individual orientation, provides a general framework for interpreting this period.

Historians have not yet rectified the competing and conflicting developments in Indian affairs during this era. The focus on the religious element of the reform effort has tended to mask the fundamental conflicts over the relationship of the BIA to Indian communities and to the larger state itself. Historians have rarely recognized the significant role that Ely Parker played in the creation of this reform agenda. Parker intended the BIA to serve as a compensatory agency that could provide protection, supplies, and educational opportunities for dispossessed Native groups. He also suggested that the federal government should work to maintain Indian communities and indigenousness distinctiveness. By examining the influence of Parker's early career and his involvement with the Grant administration, this chapter seeks to illuminate the significance of the Indian voice in nineteenth-century policy reform. It also seeks to demonstrate that the conflicts between and among the various religious and secular

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[21] See Elsie Rushmore, *The Indian Policy During Grant's Administration* (New York: Marion Press, 1914); William S. McFeely, *Grant: A Biography* (New York: Norton, 1981); and Jean Smith, *Grant* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001). In *Cigars, Whiskey, and Winning*, Al Kaltman, in an effort to celebrate all of Grant's accomplishments, listed his appointment of a Native American as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs as one of his top ten positive actions as President. See Al Kaltman, *Cigars, Whiskey, and Winning: Leadership Lessons from General Ulysses S. Grant* (Paramus, NJ: Prentice Hall Press, 1998).

[22] Henry Waltmann, "Circumstantial Reformer: President Grant and the Indian Problem," *Arizona and the West*, 13, no. 4 (1971): 323-342, 323.

reformers represented larger issues concerning the role and responsibilities of the BIA and the nineteenth-century state.

Public Debates and Indian Policy(ies)

The Civil War represented the complete and total break-down of civil society, it exposed the inability of the federal government to solve fundamental issues of racial equality and regional differences, and it allowed humanitarians such as anti-slavery and abolitionist groups to gain a foothold in federal policymaking. The question remains though: how and why did these developments manifest themselves in a period of drastic and intense Indian policy reform? In an effort to answer this question, one must examine Indian policy during Lincoln's administration, developments along the borderlands of Indian-white contact during the Civil War, and the larger impact of the war on society and the government.

While Indian affairs seemingly received little attention during Abraham Lincoln's presidency, Lincoln himself and several other individuals considered reform in the BIA to be an important priority, of course, sectional conflict and the administration of the war effort often superseded any other actions. Historian David Nichols contended that the Bureau of Indian Affairs was already a corrupt agency when Lincoln took office, and that the Civil War, differences of opinion between Congressmen, and the President's focus on white western settlement impeded any efforts at reform.[23] Edmund Danziger Jr., in his book *Indians and Bureaucrats* argued that the problems of the Indian Bureau in the 1860s

[23] See David Nichols, *Lincoln and the Indians: Civil War Policy and Politics* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1978). For an alternate and more nuanced study of Lincoln and his efforts to reform political institutions and practices see J. David Greenstone, *The Lincoln Persuasion: Remaking American Liberalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

were directly related to larger developments in 1850s, including, "accelerated territorial expansion, the nation's preoccupation with the slavery question, the 'Indian Ring,' whiskey hucksters, fraudulent records, disagreements with the war department, cultural clash, race hatreds and the political power of frontiersmen in Indian matters."[24] Danziger also excused Lincoln from any kind of blame because of his devotion to Civil War issues. However, several developments during the Civil War caused concerned citizens and others to turn their attentions directly to Indian affairs.

The 1862 United States-Dakota War in Minnesota thrust Indian affairs into the public eye. Throughout a six week period, between August 18 and September 26 of that year, starving Dakota community members, particularly Mdewakanton and Wahpekute band members, attacked local white settlers around the Lower Sioux Agency near St. Paul, Minnesota.[25] While the cause of the attack remains an issue of interpretation, most agree that the failure of the federal government to provide annuities stipulated by a series of treaties in 1851 intensified a situation already made volatile by dispossession, non-Native settlement, and continuing colonialism.[26] The Dakota warriors moved south toward New Ulm and north along the Missouri River destroying farms and homesteads, killing settlers, and capturing immigrants and mixed-race men, women, and children. Estimates of these events place the death toll at approximately 500 whites along with an unknown number of Native people, while roughly 269 white and mixed-race men,

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[24] Danziger Jr., *Indians and Bureaucrats,* 12.

[25] The majority of the Sissetons and Wahpetons opposed the war, but some of them did participate. See Marouf Hasian, "Cultural Amnesia and Legal Rhetoric: Remembering the 1862 United States-Dakota War and the Need for Military Commissions," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 27, no. 1 (2003): 91-117, 99.

[26] At the time there were rumors that the Indians had been whipped into a frenzy by "rebel emissaries," although there is little evidence to support these claims. See Hasain, "Cultural Amnesia," 95.

women, and children were held captive at the hands of Dakota warriors. The United States military, led by Major General John Pope, commander of the newly created Department of the Northwest, with the help of the Minnesota volunteer militia gained control of the situation by the end of September. Brigadier-General Henry Hastings Sibley established a military tribunal at Fort Release (which was later moved to nearby Fort Snelling), and in a gross violation of due process rights, tried and convicted 303 of 393 of the Dakota "hostiles." The tribunal condemned all 303 men to execution, but Abraham Lincoln pardoned 264 of them. On December 26, 1862, only a few days prior to the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation, the United States military hung 38 Dakotas in the largest mass execution in its history.[27]

The events of the United States-Dakota War received some public attention. Most commentators, especially those in Minnesota supported the actions of the military and militia, some even criticized Lincoln's leniency. Other outspoken critics, though, took this opportunity to argue for the need to reform Indian policy and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Episcopal Bishop Benjamin Whipple asserted in a letter to Lincoln, that the president needed to find honest Indian agents, reform treaty-making practices, provide legal representation for Sioux peoples, and control the liquor trade. Commissioner of Indian Affairs William Dole argued that the problems in Minnesota emerged from an inability to control non-Native settlers and that this problem would

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[27] For more see Chester Oehler, *The Great Sioux Uprising* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959); Duane Schultz, *Over the Earth I Come: The Great Sioux Uprising of 1862* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992); June Namias ed., *Six Weeks in the Sioux Tepees: A Narrative of Indian Captivity* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997); Michael Clodfelter, *The Dakota War: The United States Army Versus the Sioux, 1862-1865* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1998); Jerry Keenan, *The Great Sioux Uprising: Rebellion on the Plains, August-September, 1862* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2003); and Kurt D. Bergemann, *Brackett's Battalion: Minnesota Cavalry in the Civil War and Dakota War* (St. Paul: Borealis Books, 2004).

likely be seen elsewhere as Native peoples came into increasingly close contact with non-Natives. One of the women who was held captive by the Dakota, Sarah Wakefield, even published a short book entitled *Six Weeks in the Sioux Tepees*, in which she criticized the government's policies. She stated that the Dakota had only fought for what was rightfully theirs and that they had suffered greatly. I "listened to their tales of suffering and distress until my heart bled for them," she wrote, "I pray God they may for the future be more mercifully dealt with by those that are in authority over them."[28] As the Civil War raged, events like those in Minnesota in 1862 began to capture public notice and draw attention to Indian policy reform.

Two years later, on November 29, 1864, Colonel John M. Chivington led more than 700 volunteer U.S. soldiers into a village of peaceful Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians in southeastern Colorado. The Cheyenne and Arapaho, led by Black Kettle and Left Hand, had assembled along Sand Creek to distinguish themselves from the other Indians in the region who were actively pursuing military engagements with the United States. Attacking at dawn, Chivington and his volunteers flushed the Indians from their village and even though Black Kettle, a proponent of peace, raised a United States flag and white surrender flag above his lodge, the soldiers relentlessly pursued the fleeing Cheyenne and Arapaho. They pinned the Indians in the dry streambed, an area several hundred yards wide containing sandy soil. There, the noncombatant women, children, elderly, and weak, struggled, but could not escape the soldiers' small arms and howitzer fire. More than 150 Indian people lost their lives along with 9 non-Natives.[29]

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[28] Namais, ed., *Six Weeks*, 110.

[29] For more on Sand Creek see Stan Hoig, *The Sand Creek Massacre* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961); David Svaldi, *Sand Creek and the Rhetoric of Extermination: A Case Study in*

This massacre brought the ineffectiveness of federal Indian policy into the public view and coupled with the earlier events in Minnesota, inspired reformers and journalists across the nation. As Francis Prucha wrote, the massacre "became a cause célébre, a never-to-be-forgotten symbol of what was wrong with United States treatment of the Indians, which reformers would never let fade from view."[30] The *New York Times* argued, in 1865, that "civilization was not working, and extermination was not civilized."[31] *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* asserted that the massacre was the government's fault, particularly the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Military actions against Indians meant lucrative contracts for the private companies that supplied war materials, and agents and officials grew rich from bribes for preferential treatment.[32] The *Times* also argued that because "Indian matters...have been horribly bungled" under civilian control, they should "turn over the Indian affairs to the army."[33] Throughout 1867, the *Times* ran editorials and concluded that not only was Indian policy in its current form incredibly costly to the government, but also that it resulted in "frightful wrongs to the Indians."[34] These articles and the public discourse

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Indian-White Relations (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1989);Thom Hatch, *Black Kettle: The Cheyenne Chief who Sought Peace but Found War* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2004); and Jerome Greene and Douglas Scott, *Finding Sand Creek: History, Archeology, and the 1864 Massacre Site* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004).

[30] Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 13.

[31] *New York Times*, 29 July 1865, 1, cited in Patricia Curtin, "From Pity to Necessity: How National Events Shaped Coverage of the Plains Indian War," *American Journalism* 12, no. 1 (winter 1995): 3-21, 7.

[32] *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 1 February 1868, 306, in Curtin, "From Pity to Necessity," 10.

[33] *New York Times*, 19 January 1867, 2, cited in Curtin, "From Pity to Necessity," 10.

[34] *New York Times*, 10 January 1867. See also *New York Times*, 23 April 1867, and *New York Times*, 28 April 1867.

that surrounded the Minnesota and Colorado events resulted in increasing pressure for federal reform and in important ways, paved the way for Parker's programs in the late-1860s. In the short term, the federal government formed two separate commissions to examine Indian policymaking, the Doolittle Commission, led by Senator James Doolittle of Wisconsin, which found that Chivington and his volunteers conducted a needless massacre, and the Peace Commission of 1867, which worked to ease tensions along the Bozeman Trail.[35]

The Civil War experience itself also helped motivate post-war reform initiatives. Government officials, military leaders, and civilians alike sought peace and a return to normalcy after 4 long years of war. As public and governmental attention focused on western expansion and settlement (especially as a safeguard against the rebirth of north-south sectional tensions), peaceful interaction with, or at least the peaceful removal of Native American groups, became a driving ideology.[36] The expansion of federal power and the general reformist orientation of the government during the Reconstruction Era also provided a major factor in the development of this period of reform in Indian affairs. During and after the war, the federal bureaucracy expanded and local and national governments became more integrated.[37] These developments combined to provide the mechanisms and the motivations for individuals concerned with Indian reform.

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[35] Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 14-19.

[36] For more on this idea see Brooks Simpson, *Let Us Have Peace: Ulysses S. Grant and the Politics of War and Reconstruction, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

[37] Foner, *Reconstruction*, xv-xvi. See also, William Nelson, *The Roots of American Bureaucracy, 1830-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982); Bensel, *Yankee Leviathan*; and Daniel Carpenter, *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy: Reputations, Networks, and Policy Innovation in Executive Agencies, 1862-1928* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Parker's Political Education

One of these individuals was the Seneca leader Ely S. Parker. He had led a distinguished career as a statesman on the local level in the 1840s and 1850s on behalf of his Tonawanda community in western New York, spent his youth and early adulthood traveling to Albany and Washington DC, and helped negotiate, in 1857, an agreement with the federal government that allowed the Tonawanda Seneca to buy the permanent title to some of their reservation lands from the Ogden Land Company.[38] During the Civil War though, Parker, who became a commissioned officer with the help of his friend from Galena, Ulysses Grant, got the opportunity to demonstrate his knowledge and insight on the federal level. While the Union army bogged down at City Point in 1864, President Lincoln visited the encampment. Parker took this opportunity to speak with the President about Indian affairs and found Lincoln to be "sympathetic to the Indians' plight and hopeful that the nation would someday make amends for the injustices done to them."[39] In 1865 Parker served as part of a commission that negotiated with the southern Indian communities who had joined with the Confederacy. This service was particularly significant because it demonstrated to other policymakers, the importance of including Native opinions in their work. The Choctaw and Chickasaw representatives at the September councils held at Fort Smith that year stated that "the fact that the United States Government have seen fit to include a member of an Indian tribe with its commissioners, has inspired us with confidence as to its designs and desires...we are anxious to have the

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[38] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 66.

[39] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 107.

benefit of his presence and counsel in any deliberations or interviews."[40] In 1866 the Bureau of Indian Affairs employed Parker sporadically to help negotiate treaties with other southern Indian groups, and later that year, he began to serve as a personal advisor to General Grant on Indian matters as they related to military affairs.[41] Parker's accomplishments in the 1860s had a direct and immediate consequence in his appointment as Commissioner of Indian Affairs by U.S. Grant in 1869. To understand how he developed his reform agenda, and the significance of his dissenting position within the mainstream system of governance, however, it is important to examine his previous work for the Indian communities of New York State and his previous experience with federal bureaucracy.

When Parker entered the Bureau of Indian Affairs as Commissioner in 1869, his experience working on behalf of Indian communities played a major role in his ideas and efforts at policy reform.[42] As a young man he served as an interpreter and spokesman for Tonawanda leaders in Albany and Washington DC. He witnessed cooperation between communities in western New York, as local non-Natives, outraged by the land company's treatment of the Seneca, signed petitions and advocated on their behalf. In his experience, when private corporations outside the jurisdiction of government regulations, such as land companies or transportation agencies, appealed to state policymakers and influenced colonial action, Native people faced injustice, dishonesty, greed, and

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[40] Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (1865), 479-522, quoted in Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 115-116.

[41] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 188-119.

[42] Parker's appointment as Commissioner of Indian Affairs was covered in many newspapers, for example, see "Nominations Sent to the Senate," *New York Herald*, 14 April 1869, 5, and "Nominations Confirmed," *New York Herald*, 17 April 1869, 3.

dispossession. Also, as a civil engineer, he came to understand the importance of an efficient and impartial bureaucratic structure. He received praise and acclaim for the customhouses he built, and his ability to organize, work within a budget, and complete tasks according to a schedule, served as a testament to his faith in bureaucracy. These experiences gave Parker the confidence to assume that a Native leader could institute a successful reform agenda on the federal level, that the federal government was a useful entity for his efforts to provide compensatory opportunities for Native communities, and that a well-developed bureaucratic structure would help end corruption and mismanagement in Indian affairs.

Beginning in 1844, Ely Parker served as an interpreter for Tonawanda leaders in their legal battle against the Ogden Land Company. The Tonawanda community was in a precarious position as the result of the Buffalo Creek Treaty of 1838 and the compromise treaty of 1842, which sustained the Cattaraugus and Alleghany Reservations, but allowed for the sale of the Tonawanda and Buffalo Creek reservations to the Ogden Land Company.[43] Because the leaders at Tonawanda objected and refused to sign the treaty, they argued that it was unenforceable on their reservation. Even though he was only sixteen at the time, Tonawanda leaders recognized Parker's talents with the English

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[43] The 1842 treaty was the government's response to a four year battle on the part of the Iroquois to have overturned the 1838 Buffalo Creek Treaty, which on scholar referred to a "one of the major frauds in American Indian history" (Hauptman, 176). In that treaty, as the result of bribery, forgery, and alcohol consumption, the Iroquois agreed to cede all of their New York lands except for a small strip known as the Oil Spring Reservation, as well as the lands purchased for them by the federal government in Wisconsin, in exchange for a plot of land in Kansas. See "Treaty with the New York Indians, 1838," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2, edited by Charles Kappler (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), 502-516, and "Treaty with the Seneca, 1842," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2, edited by Charles Kappler (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), 537-542. For more on this series of events see Hauptman, *Conspiracy of Interests,* particularly Chapter 11: "The Bucktails Stop Here," Manley, "Buying Buffalo from the Indians," and Francis Prucha, *American Indian Treaties: The History of a Political Anomaly* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

language and employed his services from that point through the Civil War. As he grew older, Parker took a more active role in the affairs of his community.[44] These experiences proved very significant in the young man's development, and in a letter later in his life, he wrote about the ways non-Native politicians received him. He stated that,

> For many years I was a visitor at the State and Federal capitals either seeking legislative relief or in attendance at State and Federal courts. Being only a mere lad, the pale-faced officials, with whom I came in contact, flattered me and declared that one so young must be extraordinarily endowed to be charged with the conduct of such weighty affairs. I pleased my people in eventually bringing their troubles to a successful and satisfactory termination. I prepared and had approved by the proper authorities a code of laws and rules for the conduct of affairs among themselves and settled them for all time. . .[45]

The praise he received at a young age was sustained throughout his career, up to and beyond the Civil War, and gave him the confidence to believe that policy makers in mainstream systems of governance would help him work toward his policy goals.

During the Buffalo Creek Treaty period in western New York, Parker and the Seneca received considerable aid from non-Native citizens in their fight against the Ogden Land Company. That experience, as well as his acceptance in mainstream fraternal organizations profoundly shaped his approach to policy reform. When he became Lewis Henry Morgan's research partner and informant, Parker gained entry into a large network of non-Native people interested in Indian history and cultures. As he worked to build the case against the land company, Parker exploited these connections, sought, and received advice, council, and direct intervention. In a May 1846 letter he asked the noted ethnographer Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, who was also a member of Morgan's Grand Order, if he could provide some data and historical references for their

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[44] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 48.

[45] "Writings of General Parker," *Proceedings of the Buffalo Historical Society* VIII (1905): 525.

case. In particular Parker wanted to use Schoolcraft's response, as well as his reputation as an "expert" on Indian societies, to provide legitimacy to his argument that the Iroquois had historically operated on the principle of unanimity when making decisions for the confederacy, and that the concept of majority rule was a foreign one to them. He assured Schoolcraft that if he could offer assistance, it would "greatly oblige the friends of the Indians and do much to further the cause of justice and humanity."[46] Five days later Schoolcraft replied with the answers and details Parker needed.[47] In January 1848 Parker again wrote to Schoolcraft in DC and this time asked that he "keep an eye out upon the Tonawanda case. Should any one attempt to move the matter in the Senate you will oblige me very much to give notice of the fact."[48]

Perhaps even more significantly though, Lewis Henry Morgan and other non-Native citizens drafted and distributed petitions to the non-Native residents of western New York in an effort to demonstrate a broad appeal on behalf of the Seneca. In an 1846 letter to Morgan, Parker wrote that "we [the Seneca delegation] want our friends to circulate more petitions throughout the entire state," he continued, we "have here good friends but I am afraid they will be ear-wigged by the company and [we will] be thrown on our backs."[49] One of the widely distributed petitions read, "The undersigned citizens...humbly represent that we believe that great injustice is about to be done to the

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[46] Ely S. Parker to Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, May 2, 1846, Box 1 – Correspondence, 1839-1854, Folder 8 – Morgan Correspondence, May 1846, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, 1839, UR-RRL.

[47] Henry Rowe Schoolcraft to Ely S. Parker, May 7, 1846, Box 1 – Correspondence, 1839-1854, Folder 8 – Morgan Correspondence, May 1846, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, 1839, UR-RRL.

[48] Ely S. Parker to Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, January 23, 1848, Box 1 – Correspondence, 1839-1854, Folder 12 – Morgan Correspondence, 1848, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, 1839, UR-RRL.

[49] Ely S. Parker to Lewis Henry Morgan, April 2, 1846, Box 1 – Correspondence, 1839-1854, Folder 7 – Morgan Correspondence, 1839-1854, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, 1839, UR-RRL.

Tonewanda [sic] band of the Seneca Indians, by the execution of the Treaty of 1842...we humbly and earnestly petition your honorable body to except the Tonewanda [sic] band of Indians from the execution of the treaty."[50] Another stated that,

> The Treaties themselves are of questionable validity – the government has never sought to execute them and the deep frauds and bribery upon which they rest, demand a reinvestigation, and the release of the Tonawanda's upon such terms will be consistent with the obligations of the Government to both parties respectively.
>
> There is universal sentiment abroad that these Indians have been unmercifully defrauded; and upon the facts, we as sitizens [sic] of this section of the State, feel called upon to petition for their relief.[51]

The aid and support that Lewis Henry Morgan, his colleagues, and the other citizens of New York State provided suggested to Parker that cooperation between Native and non-Native people was possible and could be very effective. When he entered into Indian affairs on the federal level, then, his reforms reflected this history and relied upon the idea of peaceful and purposeful interactions across racial boundaries.[52] Parker, however, overlooked the fact that the history of Native/non-Native relations in western New York was unique and particular. Relations between Indians and settlers across the Mississippi River had been volatile and tense in the pre-Civil War era and became increasingly more

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[50] Manuscript Draft of Petition by Morgan, Box 24 – Mss of Articles, etc. 108-130, Folder 110 – Seneca Indians at Tonawanda. Petitions on their behalf, 1840's (copies and typescript summaries), Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, 1839-1885, UR-RRL.

[51] Printed Copy of Petition to the Senate of the United States, Box 24 – Mss of Articles, etc. 108-130, Folder 109 – Seneca Indians at Tonawanda, Petitions, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, 1839-1885, UR-RRL.

[52] For some historical perspective on the Native / non-Native connections and issues in the New York borderlands, see Christman, *Tin Horns and Calico;* Alan Taylor, *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995); and Summerhill, *Harvest of Dissent.*

so in the post-Civil War period, many times erupting into violence and warfare. In this way, his previous experiences actually established in Parker's reform program, a false expectation of harmony and peace.

Parker learned another important lesson in the Ogden/Tonawanda land dispute that he brought to the federal level: the distrust of land speculators, private corporations, and business interests. In a petition he helped write and interpret, which Tonawanda leaders submitted to the governor of New York in 1846 stated that,

> for many years past a number of your citizens, known as the Ogden Land Company . . . have been actively engaged in attempting to despoil and rob us of our homes and lands . . . they have presumed to dispossess us of large quantities of our forest lands, and they have so far trampled on our just rights, as to dispossess us of improvements actually made by our own hands."[53]

As noted historian of Iroquois history, Laurence Hauptman argued, "Indian dispossession was not merely an unfortunate consequence or unexpected result of state transportation, land settlement, or defense policies, but an integral part of those policies."[54] The Ogden Company's dispossession of Seneca peoples and threats of removal unsettled the Tonawanda community, disrupted customary notions of power and authority, fractured clan and kinship allegiances, and almost ended the existence of the Seneca as a distinct group. Parker recognized that it was private interests such as the Ogden Company that posed the real threat to Indian communities and he sought to apply this to the federal level by safeguarding the BIA against the influence of such land speculators and corporations.

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[53] "Petition from Tonawanda Leaders to the Governor of New York, 1846," Folder 12842, Ely S. Parker Papers, NYSL.

[54] Hauptman, *Conspiracy of Interests*, xvii.

Parker's careers as an engineer for the Department of the Treasury and as a commissioned officer in the military during the Civil War provided him positive experiences with the federal bureaucracy. In both of these cases he had to fight to receive and maintain the positions he held, but it is clear that he always distinguished himself. As a civil engineer in Galena, Illinois, Parker worked within the bureaucratic framework of the Treasury Department and successfully petitioned to have stone shipped from Nauvoo, 240 miles away, because the stone in the local area was not suitable for construction. Although he was frustrated by the amount of paperwork and bureaucratic maneuvering this entailed, he learned and understood the mechanisms well, and in fact, the customs house that he built was referred to as "the most perfect structure."[55] Parker, "by strict attention, impartiality, and perfect knowledge of every branch of work, contributed in a very great measure, to the successful completion of the building."[56] As a military man, Parker demonstrated his abilities to understand and maneuver through bureaucratic mechanisms to such an extent, that General Grant promoted him from assistant adjutant general of volunteers, to his personal military secretary very quickly.[57] This knowledge and understanding of bureaucracy would play an important role in the nature and character of Parker's reform agenda.

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[55] *Weekly Northwestern Gazette*, June 28, 1859, quoted in Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 71.

[56] *Galena Daily Advertiser*, July 8, 1859, quoted in Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 71.

[57] See Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, "Chapter 9: Military Secretary."

Parker and the Peace Policy

In the aftermath of the Ogden/Tonawanda land dispute, Seneca community leaders called upon Parker to reform their structures of governance. While they initially rejoiced in the fact that they had maintained part of their homeland and hoped to encourage land improvements and agricultural development among their residents - two activities that had not received particular attention due to reasonable fears of land loss - many Seneca cut timber and extracted other resources from newly secured common lands, against the wishes of the chiefs, and looking to make an easy and quick profit, sold them to non-Natives at a minimum. The land dispute had disrupted customary notions of power and authority, though, and in the post-dispute political environment chiefs fought against each other and struggled to shape events within the community. Parker even commented that these developments had created "bitter and hard feeling among our leading men."[58] In an effort to alleviate these problems in 1861, Parker, with the help of the non-Native attorney John Martindale, instituted a bureaucratized system of elective offices, designed to provide efficient and impartial governance, and a series of legislative mandates that outlawed unauthorized timber and resource sales to non-Native people. This action represented a transitory moment for Parker as he began to see himself as an innovative thinker and policymaker. It was also in this moment that Parker first applied the lessons he learned throughout the land dispute, lessons that in the late-1860s provided the foundation for his national level reform agenda.

Historian Robert Keller, in his book *American Protestantism and United States Indian Policy, 1869-1882*, referred to the Peace Policy as "the most radical bureaucratic and ideological reform in the history of United States Indian administration," because it

[58] Ely S. Parker to Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, 25 March 1853, Folder 4 - 1853-1858, Ely S. Parker Papers, APS.

sought to create a hybrid, public and private framework in Indian affairs and rather than focusing solely on Indian removal or confinement, it sought to assimilate Indian people through a variety of "civilizing" programs – many led by missionaries and church leaders.[59] Among the most important facets to this reform period, he noted the appointment of Ely Parker as Commissioner of Indian Affairs as one of the most significant. However, he proceeded, curiously enough, to downplay Parker's role in the creation and development of the policy itself. According to Keller, the Peace Policy was born out of "Grant's radical innovations in 1869 and 1870."[60] He stated that the president "removed all Indian agents and in their place appointed army officers and Quakers," he then "created the Board of Indian Commissioners," and finally, that Grant "promised the churches that his administration would do everything in its power to support Indian missions morally and financially." Keller also made the assumption that "the basic outlines of the Peace Policy were suggested to Grant by Whipple, Welsh, and Hallowell delegation," but concluded that, "Grant's motives and inspiration for his Peace Policy seemed mysterious."[61] Keller's interpretation of the Peace Policy era suffers from an incomplete discussion of the significance of competing voices in the development of Indian policy reform. Had he addressed Parker's and Grant's friendship, the president's interest in policy reform would appear less "mysterious." Parker's contributions to the development of the Peace Policy, both the elements of his agenda that became policy

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[59] Keller, *American Protestantism and United States Indian Policy* 1.

[60] Keller, *American Protestantism and United States Indian Policy*, 17.

[61] Keller, *American Protestantism and United States Indian Policy,* 22, 18. "Whipple, Welsh, and Hallowell" refers to the Episcopalian and Quaker philanthropist groups that sought to be involved in Indian policy reform.

directives as well as those that, for one reason or another, never moved beyond the proposal stage, also demonstrates the level to which conflicts between reformers characterized this era.

In 1867, General Grant asked Parker, who had served informally as his advisor on Indian affairs, to develop a plan for the reform of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The letter Parker submitted in response reflected his earlier experiences and political education and proposed a four point plan for "the establishment of a permanent and perpetual peace, and for the settling of all matters of difference between the United States and the various Indian tribes."[62] This lofty statement represented the idea shared by many non-Native policy makers and officials at the time - that such a goal was not only possible, but could be achieved expeditiously. In the letter Parker outlined several of the main facets of his reform agenda. And while these early suggestions helped establish Parker as a leading voice in policy reform, he also developed and pushed for other innovations during his short tenure as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. His ideas focused on public oversight of policy administration by both Native and non-Native individuals, the establishment and protection of specific land rights for Native communities, and bureaucratization through the transfer of the BIA back to the War Department, in an effort to end corruption and to protect the BIA from land speculators and business interests outside the government to drive policymaking. Parker also believed that the government should provide money, goods, services, and new opportunities for Native people, particularly in the form of education, in an effort to compensate for dispossession and the history of colonization. Two of Parker's primary suggestions in his 1867 letter involved the creation of oversight

[62] "Letter from the Secretary of War, Addressed to Mr. Schenck, chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, transmitting a report by Colonel Parker on Indian Affairs," U.S. Congress, House Misc. Doc. No. 37, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, 1.

Figure 11: Ulysses S. Grant on Inauguration Day, March 4, 1869
Source: Jean Edward Smith, *Grant*

committees comprised of individuals with no other official governmental affiliation. He wanted to appoint an inspection board to monitor the acquisition and disbursal of goods and rations as outlined in the numerous treaties between the federal government and Indian nation, to "see that every cent due the Indians is paid to them promptly as may be promised in treaties, and that proper and suitable goods and implements of agriculture are delivered to them." Parker believed that this would instill confidence in Indian people and help ease tensions between them and local non-Natives. He argued that such a commission "would be a most convincing proof to the Indians' mind that the government was disposed to deal honestly and fairly by them."[63] Parker envisioned that this commission's work would only last as long as it took to develop the internal bureaucratic systems of the Indian Office, systems that could monitor appropriations, acquisitions, and disbursements impartially. Once these systems were established, the oversight committee could be disbanded.

Parker also suggested the appointment of a separate and "permanent Indian commission" to be "composed of such white men as possessed in large degree the confidence of their country, and a number of the reputable educated Indians, selected from different tribes." He wanted this group to meet with all of the Indian communities in the United States, to hold talks with them, and demonstrate the importance of peaceful relations, as well as the "earnestness, sincerity, and humanity of the government." As he did throughout his life, Parker used this opportunity to challenge popular misconceptions about Indian people. In regards to putting Indians on the committee, Parker assured his superiors in the military, that as "members of the great human family, they know and feel

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[63] "Letter from the Secretary of War," 4-5.

that they are endowed with certain rights. They possess fair intellectual faculties. They entertain the most ardent love for the largest liberty and independence." He also asserted that because "they are familiar with the best modes of communicating with the tribes... [they] would add greatly to the confidence of the tribes."[64]

Beyond simply assuring Native people "that the white man does not want the Indian exterminated from the face of the earth," Parker wanted this "mixed" commission to serve as a liaison between Indian leaders and the federal government. It would be their responsibility to mediate disagreements and find equitable solutions to Indian concerns.[65] He argued that "nothing could occur that would tend more strongly to advance the happiness of the Indians, and attach them firmly to the United States government, than the realization of the benefits of an impartial dispensation of justice." Parker recognized that there might be some negative reaction to his suggestions for oversight committees and sought to head off any such criticism stating, this "project, at first blush, may seem to be devised on too extensive a scale, involving too much expense for an experiment. I cannot regard it. On the contrary, I believe it to be more economical than any other plan that could be suggested."[66] Parker intended this commission, comprised of both Native and non-Native members, to be an important first step in facilitating communication and fostering a more effective system of conflict resolution.

Between Parker's letter in 1867 and legislative action, the character and foundation of the oversight commission plan changed considerably. Congress

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[64] "Letter from the Secretary of War," 5-7.

[65] "Letter from the Secretary of War," 6-7.

[66] "Letter from the Secretary of War," 7.

established the Board of Indian Commissioners on April 10, 1869, and called for the selection of "men eminent for their intelligence and philanthropy, to serve without pecuniary compensation," but left out any mention that the group should be composed of Native and non-Native people alike.[67] Furthermore, that the men were not to be paid assured that only elite members of society, those with the leisure time to devote to philanthropic causes, would agree to participate in such a committee. Although this was clearly not the oversight committee that Parker initially envisioned, and should have demonstrated that perhaps his reform agenda would face stiffer criticism and create more controversy than he had originally envisioned, in his first annual report, he stated that the Board of Indian Commissioner's suggestions should be "deemed to be of great importance, and . . . should receive careful consideration."[68]

The next proposal in Parker's letter clearly reflected his efforts to protect Indian communities as distinct entities within the United States. He suggested that the federal government create "a plan of territorial government for the Indians...[that] should remain upon the statute books as the permanent and settled policy of the government."[69] He argued that the boundaries of Indian territories had to be well-defined and that the federal government needed to work to maintain these regions for Indian settlement only. This was a significant point in Parker's reform agenda and reflected his previous experience working on behalf of the Tonawanda community. While the Ogden Land Company sought to displace and disrupt the Seneca community, Parker fought against them for two

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[67] 16 *United States Statutes* 40, quoted in Prucha, *The Great Father*, 503.

[68] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1870, 446.

[69] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1870, 4.

decades and succeeded in securing permanent title to a portion of the Seneca homeland along the Tonawanda Creek. On the federal level then, he sought to apply this experience and argued that maintaining and protecting Indian communities was one of the most crucial elements in developing peaceful relations and just policies for Indian peoples.

Providing a permanent and well-defined land base for Native people and funding for subsistence and agricultural development demonstrated Parker's interest in federal compensation for dispossession and the history of colonialism in several ways. In his first annual report Parker argued that there needed to be clear and permanent lands devoted to the settlement of many Indian groups in New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, and California. Furthermore, he stated that "it will be necessary that Congress, by appropriate legislation, provide for their wants, until they become capable of taking care of themselves."[70] Later in the same report Parker again raised the issue of compensatory legislation and urged Congress to appropriate "a large contingent fund" to help supply food and supplies to the Native communities "not provided for by treaty stipulations, whose precarious condition requires that something should be done for their relief."[71] Of all Parker's reform innovations, it can be argued that this funding allocation was the most successful. Although Congress did not incorporate this suggestion into legislation to the extent that Parker hoped, they did, in 1869, allocate $2 million for the BIA to provide for Indian communities' "necessities, and encourage their efforts at self-support." Parker reported that the money was used to relieve suffering, and helped Indian communities

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[70] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1870, 445.

[71] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1870, 447.

"who otherwise, by force of circumstances [i.e. dispossession], would have been led into difficulties and extreme want." In addition, Parker asserted that due to "the timely supplies of subsistence and clothing...the tribes from whom the greatest trouble was apprehended have been comparatively quiet, and some advance, it is to be hoped, made in the direction of their permanent settlement in the localities assigned to them, and their entering upon a new course of life."[72]

The final major suggestion that Parker made in his 1867 letter was to transfer the Bureau of Indian Affairs from the Department of the Interior to the War Department. He argued that the civil agents currently working in Indian affairs sought "generally to avoid all trouble and responsibility, and to make as much money as possible out of their offices." While the military officer's "honor and interest is at stake, and impels him to discharge his duty honestly and faithfully." [73] He also suggested that the practice of employing outside traders to supply Indian agencies be ended, and instead that the military assume these responsibilities, work which the Army Commissary Department had carried out well during the Civil War. Finally, Parker asserted that Native leaders would more likely listen to the advice and councils of military officials, rather than the civil agents who had mistreated or lied to Indians, or mismanaged affairs in the past.

A critical analysis of Parker's ideas for the transfer of the BIA to the War Department demonstrates that this facet of his reform program reflected most clearly his interest in creating an efficient, effective, and impartial bureaucracy. At the end of the Civil War, the War Department housed the most complex and well-developed

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[72] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1870, 446-447.

[73] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1870, 2.

bureaucratic system of any of the executive agencies. Furthermore, it was arguably the most smoothly running department. Roughly 2,213,000 men fought in the Union army. Starting in 1863 the War Department began administering the conscription act, which applied to men between the ages of 20 and 44, and involved conducting the draft, accepting commutation payments, or accepting substitutions.[74] This was a significant expansion beyond the bureaucratic developments necessary to carry out the war effort on a more limited scale.[75] Parker was not the only individual advocating for the transfer of the BIA, Grant and many of his generals, including Phillip Sheridan also made arguments in favor, but Parker's support clearly addressed issues of bureaucratization that the other's did not. In his first annual report he stated that in a break from the previous complex and confusing relationship, there was "now a perfect understanding between the officers of this department [Interior] and those of the military, with respect to their relative duties and responsibilities in reference to Indian affairs."[76] Parker also circulated a statement of proper protocol for the administration of Indian affairs to the members of the Interior department and asked that similar orders be issued by military leaders. The result of this, Parker reported, was a "harmony of action between the two departments" with "no

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[74] Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 103. See also Eugene Murdock, *One Million Men: The Civil War Draft in the North* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1971) and James Geary, *We Need Men: The Union Draft in the Civil War* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991). For more on the expansion of the military bureaucracy see Robert Angevine, *The Railroad and the State: War, Politics, and Technology in Nineteenth-Century America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

[75] For more on the significance of the development of the War Department during the Civil War, see Richard Bensel, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859-1877* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), especially Chapter 3: "War Mobilization and State Formation in the Northern Union and Southern Confederacy." See also Marvin Kreidberg and Merton Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army, 1775-1945* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 1955).

[76] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1870, 447.

conflict of opinion having arisen as to the duty, power and responsibility of either."[77] Of course, Parker saw this as only a stop gap until the BIA could be properly seated within the War Department.

Religious organizations, such as the Society of Friends, criticized Parker's support of the BIA transfer. In a memorial to Congress in 1869, the Friends stated that they appreciated the "evident desire of Congress to remedy the gross evils and abuses of our Indian system" and that they were sure that the "proposal to place the Indian affairs in the control of the War Department has been dictated by motives of humanity, both to the interest of the Indians and the honor of the nation." They argued, however, that the transfer should not occur because the "loathsome disease which has destroyed thousands, and which now enfeebles and degrades most of the tribes, must be traced to licentious intercourse between the soldiers and the Indians."[78] It was not, though, these criticisms that prohibited the transfer. Rather, it was simply historical circumstances. In 1869-1870, General Phillip Sheridan authorized and defended an attack on Piegan Indians in northern Montana. These military actions became known as the "Piegan Massacre" and raised questions about the military's ability to simultaneously punish the "hostile" Indian communities while protecting the "friendlies." When the congressman from Illinois and chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs of the House of Representatives, John A. Logan, read the details of the Piegan Massacre in early 1870, "his blood ran cold in his

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[77] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1870, 448.

[78] "Memorial of Yearly Meetings of the Society of Friends Relative to the Treatment of the Indians," House of Representatives, 40th Congress, 3rd Session, Misc. Doc. No. 29, 1869, 2.

veins" and he asked the committee to "let the Indian Bureau remain where it is, and the committee...agreed to that."[79]

Though it was not reflected in Parker's 1867 preliminary proposal for BIA reform, pressuring the federal government to provide educational opportunities served as another pillar of his reform agenda. In an 1885 letter to his friend Harriet Maxwell Converse, an aging Parker stated that one of the driving philosophies of his earlier work in policy reform was Indian education. In the midst of a discussion about coercive assimilation policies, Parker intimated that the "only salvation for the Indians and the only solution of the great Indian problem is to give them secular and industrial schools in abundance." "This alone will perpetuate their life," he wrote. [80] He attributed his professional success to the educational opportunities that he received as a result of his own hard work and his friendship with Lewis Henry Morgan. As a young man Parker studied at both Yates Academy and Cayuga Academy in upstate New York.[81] Morgan often encouraged him through their correspondence and instilled in him the recognition that education was the key for Native peoples. In an 1848 letter, Morgan referred to Parker's efforts to study law and wrote "I am glad to hear that you are attending diligently to your studies. All eyes will be upon you and if you establish a good character as a student and as a man, and I have no doubt you will, you will find something in Aurora

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[79] "Message of the President of the United States Communicating the Second Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners," Senate, 41st Congress, 3rd Session, Ex. Doc. No. 39, 1871, 90. See also Paul Hutton, "Phil Sheridan's Pyrrhic Victory: The Piegan Massacre, Army Politics, and the Transfer Debate," *Montana* 32, no. 2 (1982): 32-43.

[80] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, ca. 1885, MS 674, Folder 5, Ely Samuel Parker Papers, NL.

[81] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 21-22.

worth having."[82] Morgan demonstrated a similar interest in the education of Parker's sister Caroline. They corresponded frequently and in one letter Morgan wrote, "You are now at the time of life when it is necessary to put forth great effort for the improvement of the mind...Be encouraged therefore to pursue your studies with diligence."[83] Parker also wrote to Caroline while she was at school and stated, "I must hope also that you are improved in your studies."[84]

Upon entering into federal policymaking as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in the late-1860s, Parker focused on establishing educational opportunities for Native communities. He used a portion of the $2 million Congressional allocation to develop schools and educational programs in conjunction with mission work. In his first annual report as Commissioner, Parker argued that the improvement in Indian affairs during the previous year was directly attributable to "supplying them [Indian communities] with means for engaging in agricultural and mechanical pursuits, and for their education and moral training."[85] Using language that today seems offensive, but at the time reflected common perceptions, Parker asserted that through education, "the clouds of ignorance and superstition in which many of this people were so long enveloped have disappeared ...and opened up a brighter future."[86] Later in his report, Parker commented that among

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[82] Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker, Gah-sah-nah 14, 1848, Box 1, Folder 4: Lewis Henry Morgan to Ely S. Parker and his sister Caroline Parker, Photostats, 1844-1868, Arthur C Parker Papers, SC13604, NYSL.

[83] Lewis Henry Morgan to Caroline Parker, July 30, 1847, Box 1 – Correspondence, 1839-1854, Folder 11 – Morgan Correspondence, 1847, Lewis Henry Morgan Papers, 1839-1885, UR-RRL.

[84] Ely S. Parker to Caroline Parker, May 10, 1846, Folder 1 – Correspondence, 1846-1854, Ely S Parker Papers, 1846-1924, Rare Books and Manuscripts Department, UR-RRL.

[85] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1870, 445.

[86] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1870, 445.

the Seminoles of the Southern Superintendency, "schools are well attended and a deep interest is apparent in regard to the subject of education."[87] Concerning his own New York communities he wrote, "[a]n increase is manifested in reference to education ...twenty-six schools are in operation."[88] Throughout his tenure as a federal policymaker, Parker worked to institute within the BIA his own personal maxim: "Education to be made first above all...Other good things will follow."[89]

Although he probably did not realize it at the time, Parker's reform agenda on the federal level represented both a significant break with previous traditions in Indian policy and was a forerunner to larger, later trends in social policymaking. Parker's biographer even noted that his "Indian plan was well received" and that a "new voice had been heard in Indian affairs."[90] By attempting to apply public oversight of policy administration by concerned citizens with no vested interests beyond philanthropy, Parker initiated techniques that would rise to prominence in the larger efforts of social policy reformers in the Progressive era. In his assertion that one of the most important responsibilities of the BIA was to provide supplies, goods, and money to Native peoples, as well as educational opportunities, and that rather than breaking up tribal groups, the BIA should work to maintain Indian community coherence, he applied a framework based on compensatory legislation that intended to ease the disruptions caused by dispossession and colonial

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[87] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1870, 480.

[88] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1870, 488.

[89] Ely S. Parker to Harriet Maxwell Converse, ca. 1885, MS 674, Folder 5, Ely Samuel Parker Papers, NL.

[90] Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 120-121.

action, while allowing Native people to assimilate into mainstream American society on their own terms, in their own time. This framework was very similar to that which would be used by later reformers who worked among urban immigrant groups at the turn of the twentieth century. Finally, by working for the transfer of the BIA back to the War Department, with its efficient, impartial, and expanded bureaucratic capacity, Parker started a movement that, though unsuccessful in the transfer debate, would result in the increasing bureaucratization of Indian affairs and the ultimate confinement of Indian peoples through the General Allotment Act of 1887 and its accompanying coercive assimilation programs.[91] Of course, this was the exact opposite of Parker's philosophy, but the other prominent group of reformers of the Peace Policy era, in particular William Welsh and the Board of Indian Commissioners, became responsible for leading policy in this direction as the federal government began to take on an increasingly colonialist mantle in the late-nineteenth century.

[91] Stephen Skowronek argued that individuals engaged in expanding the powers of federal bureaucracies rarely understood the full ramifications of their actions. Although he referred to the Interstate Commerce Commission and railroad administration, his overall assertions apply in the case of the expansion of the BIA. See Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capabilities, 1877-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

Chapter 5

"Black Deception, Damnable Frauds and Persistent Oppression:" Ely Parker, William Welsh, the Board of Indian Commissioners, and the Contentious Peace Policy

"I have little or no faith in the American christian civilization methods of healing the Indians of this country. It has not been honest, pure or sincere. Black deception, damnable frauds and persistent oppression has been its characteristics, and its religion today is that the only good Indian is a dead one."

Ely S. Parker, 1885[1]

On January 13, 1871, Ely Parker, serving as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, met with members of the Board of Indian Commissioners (BIC), Secretary of the Interior Columbus Delano, representatives of the major Christian denominations involved in the institutionalization and administration of the Peace Policy, as well as the fiery independent philanthropist William Welsh at the Department of the Interior building in Washington DC. Parker worked closely with many of these individuals in the past, but the meeting on this day was different. While the Indian policymakers discussed how to balance the roles and responsibilities of the religious organizations, federal bureaucrats, and Indian agents within the hybrid, public and private framework of the new Peace Policy, across the mall, in the capitol building, the House of Representatives' Committee on Appropriations investigated charges that Parker had committed fraud and misconduct, and prepared for a public hearing. The hearing would begin on January 17.[2]

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[1] Parker made this comment in a letter to his close friend, the poet and ethnographer, Harriet Maxwell Converse. Ely S. Parker to Cousin Gayaneshaoh (Harriet Maxwell Converse), ca. 1885, MS 674, Folder 2, Ely Samuel Parker Papers, NL.

[2] Minutes of January 13, 1871, Records of the Board of Indian Commissioners, Minutes of Board Meetings, vol. I, 40-41, MS 907, Edward E. Ayer Collection, NL.

Throughout the previous month, December, 1870, Parker had travelled to Indian Territory and attended a general council of Native communities. With the commissioner out of the capital and unable to respond immediately, William Welsh published an open letter to Secretary Delano that suggested Parker had committed "frauds in the purchase and transportation of goods for the Indian service."[3] While Welsh published these charges and worked to destabilize the position of Indians within the federal policymaking process, Parker did the exact opposite. All month he met with and spoke to representatives of the Cherokee, Choctaw, Seneca, Ottawa, Wyandotte, Creek, Pawnee, Osage, Sac and Fox, Seminole, and Chickasaw Nations, among others, in an effort to create a confederated territorial government of Indian people, "a government exclusively of Indians, ultimately to become one of the States of the Union."[4]

Although Parker did not return to DC until the end of the month, the House of Representatives adopted a resolution to conduct a proper investigation into these charges on December 12. The Committee on Appropriations decided that during the hearing, Welsh would not only be allowed to serve as a witness, but also as an ad hoc prosecutor, with the privilege of calling, questioning, and even cross-examining witnesses, including Parker himself.[5] The *New York Herald* speculated in late-December, that if the charges

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[3] *Report of Honorable E.S. Parker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to the Honorable Secretary of the Interior, on the Communication of William Welsh, Esq., Relative to the Management of Indian Affairs*, (Washington: Joseph L. Pearson, Printer, 1870), 1, Edward E. Ayer Collection, NL.

[4] "The Indians: Great Council at Okmulgee - Proposed Confederation of the Tribes in the Indian Territory - A New State Looming Up in the Southwest," *New York Herald*, 19 December 1870, 7.

[5] "Affairs in the Indian Department," *House Report* No. 39, 41 Congress, 3rd session, serial 1464, i.

"prove true upon investigation, it is believed that General Parker will be removed, to say the least, from the position he now occupies."[6]

Following two months of investigations and hearings though, the House of Representatives exonerated Parker in February, 1871. They could not find evidence of fraud or misconduct. They did note, however, that testimony revealed "irregularities, neglect, and incompetency," but these facts alone did not distinguish Parker from other federal appointees during the Grant administration.[7] After the investigation, Parker realized he would be unable to make headway among reformers and legislators that expected Indians to be the subjects of federal policy, but not active voices in its creation. His resignation letter stated that the BIC had robbed his office of its importance and made his position ambiguous, but *The Nation* declared, in August 1871, that his ouster signaled "the complete overthrow of a most gigantic system of wrong, robbery, hypocrisy, greed, and cruelty, and the triumph of right, of official integrity, of administrative economy, and of the principles of a Christian civilization."[8]

The House of Representatives investigation of Ely Parker's conduct as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1871 effectively drew to a close a moment when profound change in the history of Indian-white relations seemed possible. Much like the broader Reconstruction policies of this era, the reform efforts of the late-1860s and early-1870s represented an opportunity for politicians and the general public to set a different course for race relations. Parker's policies could have protected a degree of tribal sovereignty and the existence of Indian communities as distinct entities that the Indian

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[6] "Indian Bureau," *New York Herald*, 30 December 1870, 8.

[7] "Affairs in the Indian Department," ii.

[8] "The Recent Change in the Indian Bureau," *The Nation*, 17 August 1871, 100.

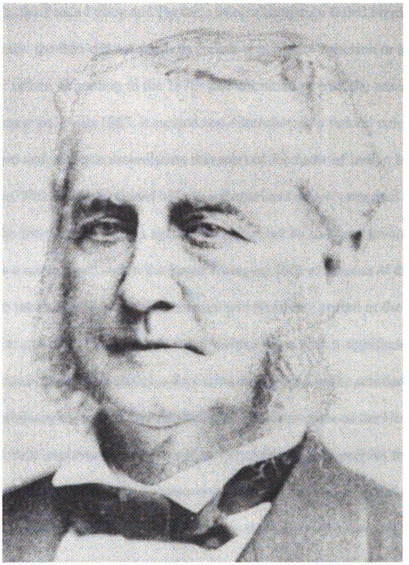

Figure 12: William Welsh (1810-1878)
Source: William Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 153

policies of 1880s and 1890s did not. Like developments related to the Reconstruction project, though, the Peace Policy and Parker's reform campaign failed on many levels. Most importantly, the BIA did not promote Indian community cohesion or self-determination; rather, beginning in the 1870s and culminating with the passage of the General Allotment policy in 1887, it created and administered a federal colonial program of dispossession and coercive assimilation that marked the nadir of Indian history.

William Welsh and the Board of Indian Commissioners represented a group of individuals who developed a reform agenda characterized by its focus on coercive assimilation as a component within the larger emerging federal schema of dispossession. They looked to take advantage of this important and transitory period in the development of Indian affairs and the federal government provided them with a significant amount of power in the execution of their duties, a fact often overlooked in the scholarly literature. Their driving philosophy argued that the Christian philanthropists of the United States understood the best interests of Indian peoples, better than Indian peoples themselves. As they worked within the Peace Policy framework to monitor Indian appropriations and the purchase and dispersal of goods and supplies, they also pushed a reform agenda that was characterized by its Christian, conservative, coercive, civilizing character.

The 1871 House of Representatives investigation represented a significant moment in the development of Indian policy. Through the testimony it heard and through its findings, it became clear that the federal government supported dispossession and coercive assimilation for Indian people as a means to foster western settlement. The reform agenda supported by Welsh and the Board of Indian Commissioners appealed to broader elements in politics and society, particularly western settlers and politicians, who

sought land and Indian removal, and eastern humanitarians, who sought coercive assimilation through isolation on reservations. These non-Native reformers used the language of racial prejudice to destabilize Parker's position, and thus the position of Indians, in the federal government. They rejected the idea that Indians should be involved in the process of Indian policymaking at all. The years after the investigation also revealed an unintended consequence of Parker's efforts to expand the bureaucracy of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. His efforts, though well-intentioned, actually helped establish the mechanisms necessary to allow for the creation of the allotment policy, a program that would not have been possible without a well-developed bureaucratic structure.

This chapter takes as its primary sources of evidence, the writings, both published and unpublished, of the various reformers and policymakers, Congressional and other government documents related to policy development, and the House of Representatives investigations of fraud and corruption, as well as newspaper accounts and commentaries from the time period. I contend that the early Peace Policy era represented a moment when radical change in the direction of Indian affairs, through the reform agenda of a significant Native American leader, and through public oversight of policy administration, was possible. Ultimately though, the contentiousness of the conflicting visions for the role and responsibilities of the Bureau of Indian Affairs that emerged in the creation and administration of this policy effectively ended this optimistic period for Indian communities and provided the foundation for the allotment program in the late-nineteenth century. While the mechanisms of the Peace Policy appeared disjointed and sometimes contradictory, it is clear that two overarching reform agendas developed, one

championed by Parker, the other by William Welsh and the Board of Indian Commissioners. These reformers all operated within the larger framework of late-nineteenth-century reform, but the goals of the latter group hinged upon an expectation of complete Indian confinement, while the former did not.

Coercive Assimilationists: William Welsh and the Board of Indian Commissioners

Following the 1862 United States-Dakota War in Minnesota, Episcopal Bishop Henry Benjamin Whipple outlined before Congress an idea for a "council of appointment," in an effort to end the corruption and problems in Indian affairs. Whipple, at first interested only in establishing an Episcopalian Diocese in Minnesota, became an outspoken critic of the federal government's policies and treatment of Native people. He also aided the convicted Dakota "hostiles" and fought to have many of them pardoned prior to the 1862 mass execution. Through the 1860s Whipple, William Welsh, the Episcopal philanthropist, as well as the Society of Friends argued that the federal government create a national board of inspectors to monitor the BIA. They cited as precedents both the Freedman's Bureau and the United States Christian Commission that operated during the Civil War.[9] The government had financed both of these hybrid public and private organizations and both worked with civilian and military officials.[10] These proposals differed in at least one significant way from those that Parker set forth in his 1867 program of reform, though. While he sought to utilize both Native and non-

[9] In addition, the Doolittle Commission of 1867 recommended inspection boards to oversee the work of the BIA. The work of the New York Indian Board in the 1820s and 1830s also served as motivation. There is no consensus in the literature as to which, if any, of these recommendations was most significant in the establishment of the BIC, rather, it seems as though the idea emerged and evolved organically through the series of recommendations. See Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 32-34, and Keller, *American Protestantism*, 20-21.

[10] Keller, *American Protestantism*, 20-21.

Native individuals to work with Indian communities in an effort to maintain community solidarity and inspire confidence in the government's willingness to help them, these men envisioned the control of Indian policy in the hands of overtly Christian individuals who would actively proselytize and apply a coercive approach to "civilization" programs.

In 1868 William Welsh called a meeting of interested philanthropists and developed a committee of representatives from various Protestant religious bodies. This committee met with President Grant and the Secretary of Interior Jacob Cox throughout 1868. One of the prominent members of this committee was George Stuart, a friend of Grant's and a wealthy Philadelphia merchant. Stuart had been an active anti-slavery and temperance crusader, as well as a leader in the Young Men's Christian Association and in the Sunday school movement. Stuart's autobiography characterized him as "zealously Christian and diligently a man of business."[11] As a result of the lobbying effort, Congress, on April 10, 1869, authorized the president to appoint a committee of men "eminent for their intelligence and philanthropy," to work with the Interior Department to monitor treaty appropriations.[12]

It was clear that the Board of Indian Commissioners approved by Congress in 1869, resembled Whipple's, Welsh's, Stuart's proposals much more closely than Parker's. Because of his previous work with the Christian Commission during the Civil War and because of his role as a lobbyist for this development, Grant asked his friend Stuart to help his appoint the board. He told Stuart, "you and Welsh have got me into some difficulty by the passage of this bill...I want you to name some likely men...who

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[11] Robert E. Thompson ed., *The Life of George H. Stuart: Written by Himself* (Philadelphia: J.M. Stoddart and Company, 1890), 20-21, quoted in Prucha, *The Great Father,* 503.

[12] 16 *United States Statutes* 40, quoted in Prucha, *The Great Father*, 503.

will be willing to serve the cause."[13] Stuart suggested several men whose personal accomplishments included success in business, politics, education, and within various religious organizations. They hailed from different regions of the United States, though only as far west as Missouri, and were affiliated with the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Methodist, and Baptist churches. The group included Felix Reville Brunot, a Pittsburgh businessman who worked on the Sanitary Commission during the Civil War, and had fought for temperance and other conservative reforms as a college student.[14] It also included William Dodge, a former dry-goods merchant who was a partner in the firm of Phelps, Dodge & Company, a prominent dealer in copper and other minerals. He earned a fortune in business and helped develop the copper industry in the Lake Superior region and the iron industry in Pennsylvania. He also bought large tracts of pine lands in Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and the South. As a philanthropist he was a staunch supporter of the YMCA and a leader in the Evangelical Alliance.[15] Stuart also recommended Robert Campbell, who amassed a fortune as a fur-trapper and competitor of the American Fur Company in St. Louis as a young man. Campbell then invested in extensive real estate ventures, a large dry-goods enterprise, the Southern Hotel, and several banks in Missouri. Throughout his life he maintained an interest in

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[13] Thompson ed., *The Life of George H. Stuart*, 239-241, quoted in Prucha, *The Great Father*, 505.

[14] For more on Brunot, see Charles Slattery, *Felix Reville Brunot* (New York: Green and Co., 1907).

[15] Allen Johnson ed. *Dictionary of American Biography*, vol 5 (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1930), 352-353.

Indian affairs and had previously served Millard Fillmore as a commissioner in the Fort Laramie councils in 1851.[16]

Stuart's list continued. He included John Farwell, another dry-goods merchant who had great success in New York and Chicago where he eventually sold his companies to both Marshall Field and Potter Palmer. He lived by a strict moral code and maintained a fiery religious fervor. He used a portion of his wealth to establish the first Methodist church in Chicago.[17] Stuart also tapped Vincent Colyer, a New York artist and activist who served as a colonel of an African American regiment during the Civil War. He was also an anti-slavery advocate and one of the lobbyists for the Christian Commission during the war.[18] Rounding out the list was Henry Lane, a former "Indian fighter" from Kentucky who moved to Indiana and there was elected as a state legislator, U.S. senator, and governor. He was also a founding member of the Republican Party in 1856.[19] Finally, Stuart selected Nathan Bishop from Boston, the former executive chairman of the Christian Commission, manager of the American Bible Society, and a member of the Evangelical Alliance, and William Welsh from Philadelphia.[20] Grant approved of this list, but also added George Stuart as well. Although Felix Brunot's biographer referred to it as "in every way a representative body of men," none of them were Native people and

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[16] Allen Johnson ed. *Dictionary of American Biography*, vol. 3 (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1929), 462-463.

[17] Allen Johnson ed. *Dictionary of American Biography*, vol. 6 (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1931), 295.

[18] *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* vol. 7 (New York: J.T. White, 1897), 541.

[19] *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* vol. 13 (New York: J.T. White, 1901), 270-271.

[20] Allen Johnson ed. *Dictionary of American Biography*, vol. 3 (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1929), 206-207.

aside from Campbell, Lane, and Welsh, none of them had much previous interaction with Indian communities.[21] Interestingly, almost all of the men maintained business interests in the dry-goods, mineral extraction, and transportation industries. All of these industries stood to gain from Indian confinement in the west and this fact suggests that perhaps their personal interests influenced the BIC's Indian policy work and their support of coercive reservations. The initial BIC elected William Welsh as its first president.

Conflicts and controversies between Parker, Interior Secretary Delano, and the Board of Indian Commissioners emerged almost immediately. In Parker's first letter to the BIC, outlining their responsibilities and power, he reiterated Congress's statement that as a board, their primary function would be to exercise "joint control" with the Secretary of the Interior and monitor the distribution of the treaty appropriations laid out in the Indian appropriation bill of 1869.[22] Historically, the Bureau of Indian Affairs served as the central agency in control of procuring and distributing treaty goods, so from the perspective of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the BIC would fit into this system as an advisory board with a secondary role. Parker though, was willing to work with them and asked for their "suggestions, recommendations, and reports" regarding the development of Indian policy.[23] These powers did not satisfy Welsh and he believed that the BIC should hold a central position in the Interior Department. In a pamphlet written later, he argued that the act of Congress that established the BIC characterized its role as one of "joint control." He asserted that "instead of giving the Board the joint control as indicated in the Act of Congress, its powers were limited to that of a mere council of

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[21] Slattery, *Felix Reville Brunot*, 143.

[22] Bureau of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, Accompanying Papers, 1870, 485.

[23] Bureau of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, Accompanying Papers, 1870, 486.

advice."[24] Welsh believed that President Grant sided with Parker, who did not want the BIC to exercise more power and influence than he did, and after only a month as the Chairman of the BIC, Welsh resigned.[25] He publicly pledged to "serve the cause as a private citizen," but privately he also vowed "Col. P[arker] will have to leave."[26]

William Welsh, a staunch Episcopal layman who amassed a fortune in Philadelphia though the importation of West Indian sugar, worked for various philanthropic causes throughout his life.[27] He founded several Episcopal churches and a hospital in Philadelphia. He also authored several books about home missions and the role of laymen in the Episcopal Church, and owned the *North American* and *Philadelphia Gazette*.[28] He suffered a heart attack in 1861 and afterwards, devoted himself to becoming an outspoken and influential voice in the development of Indian policy, due to his friendship with Bishop Henry Whipple. Although Welsh was considered one of the "most earnest and devoted" of all the Indian reformers, he also had major conflicts at one point or another with many significant Indian policy reformers. His conflict with Parker was not an anomaly; he also clashed with President Grant, Secretaries of the Interior Jacob Cox and Columbus Delano, the second BIC Chairman, Felix Brunot, and even his

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[24] William Welsh, *Indian Office: Wrongs Doing and Reforms Needed* (Philadelphia, 1874), 2.

[25] Minutes of November 17, 1869, Records of the Board of Indian Commissioners, Minutes of Board Meetings, vol. I, 40-41, MS 907, Edward E. Ayer Collection, NL.

[26] Welsh, *Indian Office*, 2, and E.P. Smith to George Whipple, December 15, 1870, American Missionary Association Archives, Amistad Research Center, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, quoted in Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 154.

[27] Prucha, *The Great Father*, 502.

[28] Keller, *American Protestantism*, 73-74.

close and trusted friend, Bishop Whipple.[29] From 1869 through the end of his life Welsh channeled his energies into a reform agenda that attempted to mold Indian people into his conservative, Christian vision of "civilization" by eliminating tribal autonomy and by destroying Indian communities.

In a short 1869 book entitled *Taopi and Friends, or the Indians' Wrongs and Rights*, Welsh laid out his ideas for Indian reform. He argued that Indian policy in the nineteenth century had not successfully promoted "civilization" among the Indians. He believed that treaties should no longer be made with Indian communities, and that those "which allow Indians to retain large tracts of land...must, of necessity, be broken."[30] Welsh also saw corruption in Indian appropriations as a major problem and asserted that nepotism and political patronage within the Indian Office "render every attempt to civilize the wild Indians utterly abortive."[31] It was this component of his reform agenda that led Welsh to charge Parker with fraud and corruption, and demonstrated one of Welsh's major downfalls, his almost obsessive suspicion.

A cornerstone of Welsh's reform agenda was a belief in the process of Christianization, however, he believed that if Indians were to embrace Christian civilization, they had to be dispossessed and held coercively on reservations.[32] "It is apparent that the efforts thus far made to extend the saving influence of the Christian religion to the Indians in their nomadic condition," he wrote, "have generally been so

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[29] Keller, *American Protestantism*, 74-75.

[30] William Welsh, *Taopi and his Friends, or the Indians' Wrongs and Rights*, (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, 1869), xii-xii.

[31] Welsh, *Taopi and his Friends*, xiii.

[32] Welsh, *Taopi and his Friends*, xiv.

unsatisfactory as to dishearten most of those who have undertaken this work."[33] Confinement was the key and Welsh argued that Indians who would not go willingly to the reservations, "would be driven by force or exterminated in the process."[34] He even supported the creation of the North Pacific Railroad in 1872 because, he asserted, it would allow "the War Department to bring the lawless Indians of the North into subjection, and thus aid effectively the religious bodies charged with bringing Christian civilization to bear upon the Northern Indians."[35]

Welsh lobbied Congress in an effort to advance his agenda and he vigorously challenged anyone who championed different programs of reform. His "greatest weakness was a nagging suspicion of conspiracies, a trigger judgment that anyone who disagreed with him on Indian affairs was a member of the Indian Ring."[36] The "Indian Ring," in Welsh's mind, was a shadowy and nefarious group of politicians and suppliers that sought to defraud the government by providing insufficient or inadequate goods for treaty appropriations at exorbitant rates. His suspicious personality and his policy framework led Welsh to challenge, charge, and ultimately ouster three significant Indian policymakers in the 1870s, including Commissioners of Indian Affairs, Ely Parker and

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[33] Welsh, *Taopi and his Friends*, xvi.

[34] William Welsh wrote many other pamphlets and reports on Indian issues, but they did not tend to deviate from his assertions in the *Taopi*. For other examples see William Welsh ed., *Journal of the Rev. S.D. Hinman, Missionary of the Santee Sioux Indians and Taopi, by Bishop Whipple*, (Philadelphia: McCalla and Stavely Printers, 1869), William Welsh, *Reports to the Missionary Organizations of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and to the Secretary of the Interior, on Indian Civilization*, (Philadelphia: McCalla and Stavely Printers, 1870), William Welsh, *Report of a Visit to the Sioux and Ponka Indians on the Missouri River, made by William Welsh to the Secretary of the Interior*, (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1872), and Welsh, *Indian Office*. See also Fritz, *Movement for Indian Assimilation*, 81.

[35] Welsh, *Report of a Visit to the Sioux*, 28.

[36] Keller, *American Protestantism*, 74.

one of his successors E.P. Smith, as well as Secretary of the Interior, Columbus Delano. As a private citizen though, Welsh required insights, access to information, and support, and the Board of Indian Commissioners frequently provided these between 1869 and 1874.

Secretary of the Interior J.D. Cox and President Grant encouraged the BIC to function similarly to the United States Christian Commission that operated during the Civil War. This hybrid, public and private organization received funding from the government, but the Young Men's Christian Association ran its day-to-day activities, providing Union soldiers with religious reading, church services, food, and supplies.[37] Several of the BIC members served directly in the Christian Commission, including Stuart who was its chairman, as well as Farwell, Dodge, Bishop, and Colyer who were members or involved to a lesser extent.[38] With their experience in this earlier commission as a framework, the BIC began their work in Indian affairs in May 1869.

During the first meetings of the BIC, federal officials met with and expressed optimism in the power and influence of the group. On May 27, 1869, President Grant, William Tecumseh Sherman, the Commanding General of the United States Army, who led many military campaigns against Plains Indians, and the Secretary of War, John Rawlins, all visited with the commissioners and confided in them the importance of their work. Grant stated that both he and Secretary of the Interior Cox would provide the BIC with "the fullest authority over the whole subject [Indian affairs] that could be given,"

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[37] See Keller, *American Protestantism*, 21 and Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 34. Richard Levine argued that the BIC was also modeled after the Sanitary Commission, an unpaid commission that worked with the government during the Civil War to help improve the health, diet, and living conditions of Union soldiers. See Levine, "Indian Fighters and Indian Reformers," 334.

[38] Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 34-35.

and furthermore, that they had "their cordial support."[39] Grant later assured the BIC that they could have full access to the records of the Indian Office and that they could inspect and advise the Indian agents and superintendents in the West.[40] General Sherman and Secretary of War John Rawlins both offered to aid the BIC in any way they could.[41] At their second meeting, the BIC drafted a statement acknowledging their conceptualization of their power and responsibilities. The Board "considers itself clothed with full power to examine all matters appertaining to the conduct of Indian Affairs," they wrote, and "to act both as a consulting board of advisers, and through their sub-committees as inspectors of the agencies, etc., in the Indian country."[42] Historian Francis Prucha noted that the BIC, through a series of conflicts and controversies, lost power in the federal government later in the 1870s, and their role became more loosely defined.[43] It is true that many of the original members resigned in the mid-1870s and the new appointments bore the mark of political patronage, thus other Indian policy reformers lost confidence in the ability of the group to fight for reform.[44] For the period between 1869 and 1874, however, the BIC

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[39] Minutes of May 27, 1869, Records of the Board of Indian Commissioners, Minutes of Board Meetings, vol. I, 40-41, MS 907, Edward E. Ayer Collection, NL.

[40] Bureau of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, Accompanying Papers, 1870, 486.

[41] Minutes of May 27, 1869, Records of the Board of Indian Commissioners, Minutes of Board Meetings, vol. I, 40-41, MS 907, Edward E. Ayer Collection, NL.

[42] Minutes of May 28, 1869, Records of the Board of Indian Commissioners, Minutes of Board Meetings, vol. I, 40-41, MS 907, Edward E. Ayer Collection, NL.

[43] Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 46. The early power of the BIC is often ignored in the literature. Because they were less active in the 1880s and 1890s many scholars have overlooked their abilities to shape reforms in the 1870s.

[44] Mardock, *The Reformers and the American Indian*, 131.

exercised a considerable amount of power and influence, not just in their efforts to oversee appropriations, but through their efforts to lobby for policy reform.

When Ely Parker first addressed the BIC, he left them with several questions upon which the BIA sought their advice. He asked them what they believed the legal status of Indians should be. He also asked if they believed the federal government should continue making treaties with Indian nations, and if Indians should be placed on reservations. Finally, he asked them how best to approach the acquisition and distribution of treaty appropriations and if they supported a transfer of the BIA from civilian control in the Interior Department, to military control in the Department of War.[45] In their answers to these questions, the BIC outlined their policy agenda and not surprisingly it fit well with Welsh's coercive assimilative framework. In their first response to Parker's questions, the BIC stated that they "were unanimously of the opinion that the Indians should be gathered into reservations, and that legislation ought to discriminate between the civilized and localized Indians, and the wild roving Indians of mountains and plains."[46] As for the Indians' legal status, they believed that they "should be treated as wards of the United States government, which should exercise over them the care of legal guardians, with a view to prepare them to become citizens as soon as practicable."[47]

The BIC developed this agenda further. In a letter dated November 23, 1869, they stated that the "policy of collecting the Indian tribes upon small reservations...seems

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[45] Minutes of May 26, 1869, Records of the Board of Indian Commissioners, Minutes of Board Meetings, vol. I, 40-41, MS 907, Edward E. Ayer Collection, NL.

[46] Minutes of May 26, 1869, Records of the Board of Indian Commissioners, Minutes of Board Meetings, vol. I, 40-41, MS 907, Edward E. Ayer Collection, NL.

[47] Minutes of November 17, 1869, Records of the Board of Indian Commissioners, Minutes of Board Meetings, vol. I, 40-41, MS 907, Edward E. Ayer Collection, NL.

to be the best that can be devised." Once "upon the reservations they should be taught as soon as possible the advantage of individual ownership of property...and the tribal relations should be discouraged." Finally, they asserted that the "establishment of Christian missions should be encouraged...[because the] religion of our blessed Saviour is believed to be the most effective agent for the civilization of any people."[48]

The Board of Indian Commissioners, especially Felix Brunot, the new chairman, worked diligently to carry out this agenda. In July, 1870, the BIC met and adopted a proposal to "place the Indian nations and tribes under the care of the various christian [sic] denominations of the country and to secure men of high moral qualifications to be entrusted with the superintendencies and agencies."[49] After that meeting, the Board toured the West and outlined proposals in support of their reform program. After meeting with the Arapaho and Cheyenne, Brunot recommended that Congress force their permanent settlement along the North Canadian River.[50] Upon meeting with the Kiowa, Wichita, Comanche, and Apache at Fort Sill, Brunot, along with Dodge and Bishop, wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Interior stating that they supported the "plan of collecting these Indian tribes into the Indian territory with a view to civilize, educate, Christianize, and elevate them to the privileges of citizenship."[51] And, in September, 1870, Brunot visited the Utes in Colorado, and at a council there, "urged the Indians to go

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[48] Bureau of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, Accompanying Papers, 1870, 491-492.

[49] Minutes of July, 27, 1870, Records of the Board of Indian Commissioners, Minutes of Board Meetings, vol. I, 40-41, MS 907, Edward E. Ayer Collection, NL.

[50] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, Accompanying Papers, 1870, 500.

[51] Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, Accompanying Papers, 1870,, 508.

upon their reservation and place themselves in a position to receive benefits designed for them."[52]

The key feature of William Welsh's and the Board of Indian Commissioners' policy agenda sought to dispossess Indians of both their lands and undermine their sovereignty. In this crucial moment following the Civil War, when the federal government began experimenting with alternate types of compensatory legislation and social policymaking through the Reconstruction programs, when radical change in the history of Indian affairs was possible, these leading men advanced a body of suggestions that differed in no significant way from those for which earlier western politicians fought. All reformers and legislators in this period operated within a larger framework of colonialism, but these coercive assimilationists pursued some of the most disruptive and destructive policies.

The Board of Indian Commissioners was intended to create what many leading citizens believed was proper in a participatory democracy: transparency and public oversight in policymaking. Ironically though, the BIC sought to limit who had access to Indian policy and place it in the hands of a small circle of respected elite. When the BIA drafted its advertisements to receive bids for annuity goods in 1871, the BIC sought to add the words "under the supervision of the Board of Indian Commissioners" to the bottom of the advertisement.[53] Welsh and the BIC campaigned against and successfully removed federal officials who did not agree with their positions, particularly Ely Parker,

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[52] "Message of the President of the United States, Communicating the Second Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners," Senate, 41st Congress, 3rd Session, Ex. Doc. No. 39, 1871, 12.

[53] Minutes of May 15, 1871, Records of the Board of Indian Commissioners, Minutes of Board Meetings, vol. I, 40-41, MS 907, Edward E. Ayer Collection, NL.

E.P. Smith, and Columbus Delano. Most significantly, in 1874, the BIC proposed to separate the Bureau of Indian Affairs from the Interior Department and establish it as an independent, executive-level agency. While they argued that this would protect Indian Affairs from political patronage, their suggestion bore the marks of an effort to control further who had access to the mechanisms of political power. This proposal failed and in response, six of the original members resigned en masse.[54] This mass resignation demonstrated the conviction these men held toward their cause. Prior to this action though, Welsh and the BIC established a policy framework that held at its foundation, a staunch Christian affiliation, a belief in coercive assimilation, and a conservative, elitist approach to policymaking. Advancing their agenda between 1869 and 1874, these coercive assimilationists effectively ended this moment of optimism for Indian communities and secured, for the next several generations, the idea that non-Native people understood the best interests of Native communities, and that the federal government could, in a short period of time, destroy Indian autonomy and distinct indigenous communities for the betterment of Indian people and the United States. The question remains though: how were they able to accomplish all of this?

Indian Policy On Trial: The 1871 House of Representatives' Hearing

When William Welsh filed charges of fraud and misconduct against Ely Parker in late-1870 there was an element of personal vendetta to his actions. Welsh believed that Parker represented a stumbling block to the work of the Board of Indian Commissioners, and that his position had been upheld because of his close friendship with the president. Welsh's charges also demonstrated his suspicious nature, his fear of conspiracies, and his

[54] Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 45.

underlying belief that Christian activists and elite philanthropists understood the best interests of Indian people, better than Indian people themselves. At a meeting with Indian agent Edward Smith in December, 1870, Welsh suggested that Parker was "very closely in with the [Indian] ring." Although Smith believed that Welsh's actual complaints originated in the fact that Parker did not consult with him or support his agenda. Smith concluded that, in any case Welsh believed that it was "quite possible that Col. P[arker] will have to leave."[55] It was true that Parker saw Welsh as "a presumptuous person who would use any pretext to gain private ends."[56] Parker also asserted that the charges were "but a determination to carry out certain theories put forth by Mr. Welsh in 1869."[57] Most scholars have interpreted Welsh's charges and subsequent House of Representatives' investigation as an outcropping of the distaste the two men shared for each other. Several larger issues, however, drove these events.

The House of Representatives' investigation served as a turning point in the conflicts between the competing reform agendas of the Peace Policy era. It also sealed the fate of many Indian communities because it helped establish Welsh's and the BIC's coercive assimilative approach that would drive federal Indian policy for the next several decades. The House investigation and subsequent hearing revealed the ways in which Parker's and Welsh's oppositional agendas appealed to disparate political factions and created larger political alliances that held disproportional power and authority within the

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[55] E.P. Smith to George Whipple, December 15, 1870, American Missionary Association Archives, Amistad Research Center, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, quoted in Armstrong, *Warrior in Two Camps*, 154.

[56] Keller, *American Protestantism*, 74.

[57] Ely Parker, *Report of Hon. E.S. Parker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to the Hon Secretary of the Interior, on the Communication of William Welsh, Esq., Relative to the Management of Indian Affairs*, (Washington D.C.: Joseph L. Pearson, Printer, 1870), 4.

national polity. In this way, these developments supported the assertions of American Political Development scholars concerning the ways that certain social policy agendas found success on the national level, while others failed.[58] In other words, this investigation and hearing demonstrated how, by 1871, Welsh and the BIC managed to eclipse Parker's policy paradigm.

Through his association with U.S. Grant and through his involvement in Indian affairs in the 1860s, Parker developed his own unique reform agenda in the post-Civil War era. His policy program, based on providing secure land rights for Indian communities and opportunities for Indian people to compensate for previous land loss and continuing colonialist practices, appealed primarily to Indian people themselves, a politically insignificant group because they lacked suffrage and other rights related to citizenship, and to a disparate and loosely aligned group of former abolitionists and anti-slavery advocates whose attention in this period focused on the Freedman's Bureau and the Reconstruction program.[59] Unfortunately for Parker and many Indian communities, his agenda failed to unite diverse political factions, furthermore, it did not "fit"

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[58] In her study of Civil War and Mother's pensions, Theda Skocpol argued that "the overall structure of political institutions provides access and leverage to some groups and alliances, thus encouraging and rewarding their efforts to shape government policies, while simultaneously denying access and leverage to other groups and alliances in the same national polity." Thus she concluded, "degrees of success in achieving political goals - including the enactment of social legislation - depend on the relative opportunities that existing political institutions offer to the group or movement in question (and simultaneously deny to its opponents and competitors)." She also asserted that "U.S. political structures allow unusual leverage to social groups that can, with a degree of discipline and consistency of purpose, associate across many local political districts." Finally, in her examination she found that successful reform campaigns are usually able to demonstrate a "fit" between the ideological framework of their movement and that of political officials. See Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers*, 54-55.

[59] Although Parker is a main focus of this study, other individuals, particularly those that had been associated with abolition also made suggestions that opposed those of Welsh and the BIC. John Beeson, Alfred Love, Lydia Marie Child, and Wendell Phillips all became involved in Indian affairs after the Civil War and worked to uphold Indian land and sovereignty rights. Their main focus, however, looked to the South and Reconstruction. See Levine, "Indian Fighters and Indian Reformers" and Mardock, "Anti-Slavery Humanitarians and Indian Policy Reform."

ideologically with the ideas of a broad range of political officials. The coercive assimilation model, supported by Welsh and the BIC, with its focus on concentrating Native groups on reservations, found wide appeal, especially from western politicians. These men represented settlers, railroads, and mineral extraction interests with designs on Indian-controlled territories. This framework also appealed to eastern, Christian philanthropists, who saw in the Indian population, tens of thousands of possible converts that would become more readily available within the reservation setting. This assimilationist model united diverse political interests and provided an ideological "fit" with political officials.

In early January, 1871, William Welsh assembled and filed his official report outlining charges against Parker in his capacity as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. He asserted that Parker purchased cattle, flour, and other food without publicly advertising for bids, violating federal protocol. He also charged that Parker's purchases violated an Indian appropriations bill, and resulted in a considerable waste of federal funds for both the purchase and transport of these goods. Finally, he argued that because he did not consult the Board of Indian Commissioners concerning the purchase of treaty appropriations, Parker had violated a congressional and presidential mandate. He concluded his charges by stating that Parker committed a "grievous wrong to the Indian service...by which the Government has been defrauded, or the welfare of the Indian retarded."[60] Welsh's charges against Parker implied three larger indications of fraud and mismanagement in Indian Office more generally. First, he argued that favoritism to

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[60] William Welsh, *Summing Up of Evidence before a Committee of the House of Representatives, Charged with the Investigation of Misconduct in the Indian Office*, (Washington D.C.: H. Polkinhorn & Co., Printers, 1871), 4-9.

certain contractors, agents, and suppliers in the issuance of government contracts for annuity goods, had allowed Parker or the contractors to profit unfairly. Second, he charged that Indian agencies had been insufficiently supplied, or supplied with inadequate goods. Finally, Welsh attempted to demonstrate that Parker and the BIA engaged in secretive practices, failed to consult the BIC, and failed to publicly list bids and contracts. During the hearing Parker responded to these charges and stated "I do not claim that I have made no mistakes...[however] I have never profited pecuniarily, or indeed otherwise, by any transaction in my official capacity while I have been serving as Commissioner of Indian Affairs." "I have never sought to defraud the Government out of one penny, or have knowingly lent my aid to others with that view," he added.[61]

The House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations listened to testimony and gathered evidence in late-January and early-February. They called upon several contractors, federal officials, including Parker and ex-Secretary of the Interior Jacob Cox, as well as members of the BIC, military leaders, and Indian agents. William Welsh had the opportunity to question these individuals and build his case, but it was N.P. Chipman, Parker's attorney, who ultimately persuaded the House Committee. When he questioned BIC Chairman, Felix Brunot, Chipman demonstrated that no one called Parker's attention to any of these problems or inconsistencies, but that the BIC, at Welsh's request, kept records and worked to build a case against him.[62] During his examination of J.W. Bosler,

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[61] *Investigation into Indian Affairs, before the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, Argument of N.P. Chipman, on behalf of Hon. E.S. Parker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, (Washington D.C.: Powell, Ginck & Co., Printers, 1871), 1-2.

[62] *Affairs in the Indian Department*, House of Representatives, 41st Congress, 3rd Session, Report No. 39, 1871, 12-14. In an 1876 investigation, additional evidence came to light that the coercive assimilationists conspired had against Parker. During that investigation W.J. Kountz, a contractor and supplier of Indian goods stated that his "unpardonable offense against the Indian Bureau," was that he "was the cause of the removal of Indian Commissioner Parker." Kountz may have been one of the contractors

the contractor who fulfilled one of Parker's allegedly fraudulent contracts, according to Welsh's assertion, Chipman showed that the prices Parker paid for beef and other foods were acceptable in this case, as the agencies that he supplied along the Missouri river had run out of these and the Indians there were in danger of starvation. Parker believed that there was a danger of these Indians leaving the reservations to search for food, and if so, a potential for a military conflict. Chipman told the Committee that Parker's actions were completely consistent with BIA policy that "contemplates feeding rather than fighting the Indians."[63] Upon completion of testimony, the Committee published its findings and exonerated Ely Parker, though the tone of their statement was far from positive. They wrote, "the testimony shows irregularities, neglect, and incompetency...[but, we] have not found evidence of fraud or corruption on the part of the Indian Commissioner." Furthermore, there was "no evidence of any pecuniary or personal advantage sought or derived by the Commissioner, or anyone connected with his Bureau."[64] Although it would seem that Parker was now free to pursue his reform agenda without further interference, in fact, a closer examination of the testimony and events of this time demonstrates that quite the opposite was true.

When J.W. Bosler testified before the House Committee, he revealed an issue that pervaded the coercive assimilationist reform agenda. Welsh and the BIC believed that only the wealthy, educated elite should direct policy and through their attacks on Parker

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that Welsh worked with to entrap Parker. However, as it seemed in this investigation that Kountz was trying to make an argument that he had been unjustly denied a contract; his comment should be read with some skepticism. See "Testimony taken before the Committee on Indian Affairs concerning the Management of the Indian Department," House of Representatives, 44th Congress, 1st Session, Misc. Doc. No. 167, 1876.

[63] *Investigation into Indian Affairs*, 14.

[64] *Affairs in the Indian Department*, ii.

sought to destabilize the position of Indians in Indian policymaking. Indeed, Welsh told Bosler that if the other BIC members had followed his lead when he resigned in 1869, "they would have had Parker out of office at that time; that the matter would have been ended there."[65] Bosler also stated that Welsh spoke to him before the trial and while he assured the contractor that his charges were not meant to reflect poorly on him, "he spoke of General Parker, and said that his connection with those parties in New York [referring to the shadowy "Indian Ring"] was not very creditable." Welsh also gave Bosler some insight into his own racial prejudices and expectations about Indian people and said that Parker was "the representative of a race only one generation removed from barbarism" and that "he did not think that he should be expected to be able to withstand the inducements of parties who were his superiors in the matters of business."[66] Bosler remembered that Welsh "said something about the President's desire to serve General Parker" and concluded that it had nothing to do with the latter's abilities, instead, "he attributed it to the President's goodness of heart."[67] Welsh later reiterated this point in an open letter to Grant in which he stated that "Your protection of Gen. Parker . . . seems wholly unaccountable except on the hypothesis that love in you is blind."[68] Finally, the witness testified that Welsh asked if he "had ever seen General Parker drunk." The philanthropist's suspicious nature was once again revealed through his belief that the contractors and supply companies looking to defraud the government "feasted and

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[65] *Affairs in the Indian Department*, 62.

[66] *Affairs in the Indian Department*, 62.

[67] *Affairs in the Indian Department*, 62.

[68] "Indian Affairs," *New York Times*, 13 August 1875.

wined" Parker, and playing off the expectation of Indian alcoholism, Welsh concluded that because Parker was an Indian, he "did not have the moral courage to withstand temptation."[69]

Parker and his lawyer used the hearing to draw attention to the larger implications of Welsh's and the BIC's assertions. In his concluding remarks to the House Committee Chipman argued that, "[i]f Mr. Welsh desires to keep the Indian office free from outside rings and corrupt combinations, heaven help him." "[B]ut if he expects to reform our public service by wholesale charges of corruption that have no foundation except in his own fertile brain," he continued, "if he hopes to elevate the Indian by openly declaring, as he has, that the President put into office...one who is but a remove from barbarism, thus stigmatising the whole race...if in short, he intends to work out certain theories of his own, under cover of Christian [sic] philanthropy...he will find he has undertaken that which will recoil fearfully upon him."[70] Unfortunately for Parker and for the Indian communities he represented, the agenda that Welsh and the BIC advanced did not recoil upon them, rather it presented an ideological "fit" with many political officials.

A senate debate over an Indian appropriations bill revealed that several western politicians shared Welsh's and the BIC's racial expectations and political philosophies. Speaking at length, one of the coercive assimilationist camp's allies, Senator Thomas Tipton, a Republican from Nebraska, argued that the only wise Indian policy involved placing Native people on "reservations guarded around by bayonets; reservations over the

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[69] "Indian Affairs," *New York Times*, 13 August 1875.

[70] *Investigation into Indian Affairs*, 114. The "certain theories" Chipman mentioned clearly referred to Welsh's belief that Indian people did not understand what was in their ow best interest as well as educated, elite, Christian philanthropists.

limits of which the Indians shall not pass... reservations with walls as high as necessary, and with pitfalls as deep as necessary."[71]

The senators then turned to a discussion of Parker and revealed the racial expectations they shared with Welsh and the BIC. Senator Joseph Fowler stated that the goal of the federal government was to "Christianize, and thus render a permanent contribution to the world's civilization...[but, at] the head of this fountain of spiritual light is placed," referring to Parker, "not one of the highest, but the lowest types of humanity," he asserted. Further, Fowler argued that even as an Indian man, Parker was never a "respectable specimen of his race." And finally, he concluded that, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs' office "is to flow this flood of Christian light that is to civilize these wild Indians," however, he exclaimed, Parker "is a wild man himself!"[72] Fowler further demonstrated the belief that many politicians shared with the coercive assimilationists at the time - that only elite Christian philanthropists understood the best interests of Indian people. He stated that he did not think Parker was "capable of inaugurating a great policy that is to illuminate these benighted creatures," because he was not even "at all equal to the very humblest of the Quaker sect."[73]

Welsh and the BIC, through their language and philosophies of racial prejudice, successfully unsettled Parker's position in the federal government and called into question the position of Native people in policymaking. After the House of Representatives investigation, Parker, though exonerated, realized that within the

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[71] *Congressional Globe*, 41st Congress, 2nd Session, 1870, 4080.

[72] *Congressional Globe*, 41st Congress, 2nd Session, 1870, 4083.

[73] *Congressional Globe*, 41st Congress, 2nd Session, 1870, 4084.

contemporary political environment, his agenda based on compensatory legislation and the protection of Indian communities could not succeed. Coercive assimilationist reformers and their political allies expected Indian people to be subjects of federal policy, but not voices in its creation. In his resignation letter, he drew attention to the fact that the elitist reformers had been successful in wresting control of policymaking away from him and those he thought shared his reform agenda. Parker asserted that the Indian Bureau had been divested of "all its original importance, duties, and proper responsibilities." Furthermore, he argued that the "Commissioner of Indian Affairs, under the present arrangements, is merely a supernumery officer of the Government, his principal duties being simply those of a clerk to a Board of Indian Commissioners, operating wholly outside of and almost independent of the Indian Bureau."[74] "The snake has been scotched [referring to the Indian Ring]," *The Nation* concluded.[75] The corrupt influences that Parker could not avoid because of his Indian heritage, at least according to Welsh's argument, would now have to contend with a Commissioner whose views were completely consistent with his and the BIC's. In fact, many suggested Felix Brunot, the current chairman of the BIC, as a suitable replacement Commissioner, although he turned down the position. While it appeared that Parker's reform agenda had been bested, the elitist reformers were not yet satisfied that they had solidified their position.

Between 1873 and 1875, Welsh and the BIC continued to use tactics like those they employed against Parker, including filing groundless charges of fraud on the part of public officials, insinuating that they colluded with shadowy contractors and suppliers,

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[74] "Resignation of Gen. Parker as Indian Commissioner," *New York Times*, 18 July 1871.

[75] "The Recent Change in the Indian Bureau," *The Nation*, 17 August 1871, 100-101.

and that they suffered from a general ineptitude. In 1873 Welsh began to attack Secretary of the Interior, Columbus Delano, a man who had supported and defended Parker a few years earlier. Welsh argued that the Secretary approved $300,000 worth of vouchers for supplies that he viewed as fraudulent. In 1874, William Dodge, a prominent member of the BIC testified before Congress that the Indian Ring was still operating, but could not provide specific names or examples of fraud. Welsh also attacked the new Commissioner of Indian Affairs, E.P. Smith, a man that he believed misrepresented events at the Red Cloud agency in an effort to discredit the Episcopal agent, J.J. Saville. Even though all of the original BIC members resigned en masse in 1874, the events they and Welsh set in motion came to fruition in 1875 when both Commissioner Smith and Secretary Delano resigned out of humiliation and anger as Parker had four years before.[76]

Although Parker no longer directly influenced policymaking on the federal level after 1871, one of the central tenets of his reform agenda had critical significance in the development of Indian affairs in the late-nineteenth century. By encouraging the development of an efficient bureaucracy in Indian affairs, in an effort to protect Indian policymaking from the influence of land speculators and business interests, Parker actually contributed to a larger trend of expanding the administrative capacity in Indian affairs. This trend would ultimately provide coercive assimilationist reformers with the mechanisms necessary to institute the allotment policy which dispossessed Indians of

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[76] Robert Keller, "Episcopal Reformers and Affairs at Red Cloud Agency, 1870-1876," *Nebraska History* 68(3), 1987: 116-126, 122-125. See also Keller, *American Protestantism*, 86-93. There were numerous published reports created as a result of the efforts of the coercive reformers in the 1870s. In particular see *Documents Relating to the Charges of Professor O.C. Marsh on Fraud and Mismanagement at the Red Cloud Agency*, (Washington D.C., 1875), *A Statement of Affairs at the Red Cloud Agency made to the President of the United States, by Professor O.C. Marsh*, (Washington D.C., 1875), and *Report of Commission Appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to Investigate the Charges Against Hon. E.P. Smith, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, (Washington D.C., 1875).

much of their remaining communal lands, broke down tribal relations, and in many ways represented the nadir of Indian history.

When he fought to transfer the BIA to the War Department after the Civil War, Parker sought to place it within the most complex and efficient bureaucratic structure in the executive cabinet at the end of the Civil War. After the passage of the General Allotment Act in 1887, the BIA itself expanded to incorporate more clerks, agents, and officials than ever before. By establishing oversight committees, Parker's policies focused on the importance of monitoring and verifying appropriations and supplies. As the allotment era progressed, the BIA itself took over this responsibility and began to create and maintain meticulous records that tabulated every aspect of Indian life on the reservations. It created tribal roles that standardized Indian names and often translated them into English. It also recorded demographic information including genealogical records, dates of baptisms, confirmations, and deaths. As part of his reform agenda Parker sought to "make the government the purchaser of all articles usually brought in by the Indians." Among other things, he argued that this would make it "an easy matter to regulate the sale or issue of arms and ammunition to the Indians."[77] The allotment program in its most extreme form ultimately tabulated every aspect of Indian life on the reservations, from agricultural output, to purchases of supplies, even those as inconsequential as shoes and socks, or hammers and nails. Regulating the sale of Indians goods and the purchase of supplies and materials became one of the important functions of the BIA in the allotment period and an early incarnation of that responsibility was clearly present in Parker's reform agenda. Historian Philip Deloria characterized these

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[77] "Letter from the Secretary of War," 2.

developments as efforts to "transform Indian people from conquered enemies into colonial subjects, people who were – and who saw themselves as – part of the American state." The knowledge contained in these meticulous records "could be translated into power over Indian people." "To be known by name, date and location of baptism, rations drawn, and enrollment number," Deloria wrote, "was to be made visible to the colonial bureaucracy." Among other things, this process "made it easy to locate a particular person in time and in space," and to regulate "education, discipline, containment, or shunning."[78] In a word, the expansion of the BIA bureaucracy and administrative capacity made Indian communities "legible."[79] Although Parker certainly could not foresee it, his reform agenda would help to develop one of the most disastrous state-run projects in United States history.

Historian Robert Keller once wrote that just "as United States history too often is written omitting Indians, Indian history can be written as if it were central to America's past. It

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[78] Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*, 25-26.

[79] In his study of global colonial state development, entitled *Seeing like a State*, James C. Scott described the components of state projects that ultimately failed to help the people for whom they were designed. His observations have influenced my understanding of the allotment program in important ways. First, Scott stated that all of these failed projects began with the process of finding "legibility." This was "a state's attempt to make a society legible, to arrange the population in ways that simplified the classic state functions of taxation, conscription, and prevention of rebellion." He noted that problems arose in states where the population became legible, and the state valued a "high modernist" ideology, one that demonstrated a "version of self-confidence about scientific and technical progress...the mastery of nature (including human nature), and, above all, the rational design of social order commensurate with the scientific understanding of natural laws." If such a state was "willing and able to use the full weight of its coercive power to bring these high-modernist designs into being," and if the society under scrutiny lacked "the capacity to resist these plans," then the state-run project was likely to fail. One would be hard pressed to find a more accurate description of the coercive assimilation reformers in the late-1860s and 1870s. The history of Indian affairs demonstrated that the work these men carried out during the Peace Policy era effectively drew to a close a moment when alternate frameworks for Indian policymaking were possible and the program they established instead, led to decades of suffering among Indian communities. See Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 2-7, 343.

was not."[80] This statement reveals that scholars and other American citizens with a presentist orientation often tend to dismiss the significance of Indian history and the development of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the nineteenth century. However, the preceding examination of the Peace Policy era has suggested that policymakers, reformers, and journalists invested a significant amount of time and energy in Indian issues. Politicians who directly shaped Indian policy, such as the senators who debated Parker's strengths and weaknesses in the halls of Congress, the United States representatives who investigated the charges of fraud against the BIA, the conservative, Christian philanthropists who fought for their reform agenda, as well as the members of two executive departments, War and Interior, the President himself and his close Seneca friend were all consumed with Indian affairs, but so too were other politicians, far removed from Washington, and not directly influential in policymaking. These men and women also followed and commented upon developments in Indian Affairs. In 1870, the U.S. minister to France, E.B. Washburne, forwarded a letter to Parker at the BIA from his colleague, C.C. Andrews, the U.S. minister to Sweden. In the letter, Andrews complimented Parker and the Grant administration on their efforts to reform Indian policy and wanted to "urge upon the Administration the great importance of at once setting in motion" additional reforms.[81] *The Nation* poignantly described elements of the Peace Policy as "a revolution in a most important branch of public affairs."[82] When

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[80] Keller, *American Protestantism*, 15.

[81] Letter from Christopher Columbus Andrews, Minister to Sweden to E. B. Washburne Minister of the United States in Paris, May 25, 1870, forwarded to Ely S. Parker, Miscellaneous Letters, Ayer MS 22, Edward E. Ayer Collection, NL.

[82] "The Recent Change in the Indian Bureau," *The Nation*, 17 August 1871,100.

viewed within this context, the larger significance of the policy debates and conflicts between Parker, Welsh, and the Board of Indian Commissioners becomes clear.

The contentiousness between these men extended beyond differences in personality or issues of personal gain. When Ely Parker argued that the most important role and responsibility of the federal government in regard to Indians was to compensate financially and socially for an economic and political system of domination that had dispossessed Indian peoples of land, resources, opportunities, and sovereignty, he was suggesting nothing short of a reorientation of the national state. His work to expand the bureaucracy and administrative capacity of the BIA to protect it from the influence of land speculators and business interests beyond the official mechanisms of governance, actually suggested that politicians in Washington DC take a more active approach to the social welfare of a portion of the population. When the coercive assimilationist reformers argued that they understood the best interests of Indian people and that only a small subset of elite citizens should drive policymaking, they too sought to impose their vision of the role of the state in the everyday lives of its citizens. They saw that the federal state would likely move to confine Indians further and wanted to use it as a tool which the conservative, Christian element of society could use to create their vision of the ideal society.

This chapter has suggested that the early Peace Policy era represented a moment of opportunity, when radical change in the direction of Indian affairs seemed possible. At the end of the Civil War, the reformist spirit of the Reconstruction program, as well as the legacy of the wartime experience and developments in the borderlands of Indian-white contact inspired some individuals to work to create a significant break from the history of

dispossession, colonization, and inconsistent government policy in Indian affairs. Through the reform agenda of a significant Native American leader and through public oversight of policy administration, this break with tradition seemed very reasonable. This chapter has also contended that, while the mechanisms of the Peace Policy appeared disjointed and contradictory, it is clear that there were two overarching reform agendas, one supported by Parker, and the other, championed by William Welsh and the Board of Indian Commissioners. These reformers fought bitter and complex debates, but at a most basic level, they each contested the other's notions of who could best speak for Indian people. Unfortunately for many Indian communities, the contentiousness of the conflicting visions for the role and responsibilities of the Bureau of Indian Affairs that emerged in the creation and administration of the Peace Policy effectively ended this optimistic period and provided the foundation for the allotment program in the late-nineteenth century.

Perhaps the ultimate tragedy of these events though, is one in which scholars of American Indian history are actually quite familiar. The well-intentioned efforts of Ely Parker to end corruption in Indian affairs through a process of bureaucratic expansion and to compensate for dispossession had the unintended consequence of facilitating the allotment policy. The scope of the allotment program, which sought to govern every aspect of Indian lives in an effort to speed along assimilation, would not have been possible without the well-developed bureaucratic framework that Parker's reform efforts helped to create. Scholars of American Indian history, however, might also recognize a significant difference between this case and other cases of well-intentioned efforts in Indian affairs that resulted in unintended consequences. In this case, the well-intentioned

reformer was a Native person himself, not some misguided philanthropist. The fact that Parker's best efforts helped to bring about the allotment program should help make apparent the power and influence of his opposition.

The outcome of these events was not completely negative. Parker's framework of dissent against coercive assimilation within mainstream systems of governance, though overcome in the early-1870s, did not die out. The underlying assumptions of the arguments he created during the Peace Policy era emerged again in the work of Thomas Bland, the physician, philanthropist, and defender of Indian rights. In the 1880s, Bland mounted a campaign of resistance against the next generation of coercive assimilationist reformers. John Collier's efforts in the early-twentieth century, to maintain Indian cultural practices and distinct Indian communities, also reflected Parker's earlier influence. While scholars have interpreted both of these men as innovators and creators of a position of dissent against coercive assimilation, both drew from an older, richer, and Indian-centered tradition. The next chapter addresses the ways in which the competing reform agendas that emerged in the Peace Policy era evolved into the conflicts over the creation and passage of the allotment policy and broader state development. In the late-1870s and 1880s, Thomas Bland stepped into Parker's role as the leader of a dissenting opposition as Herbert Welsh, William Welsh's nephew, led the coercive assimilationist reformers.

Chapter 6

Ex/tensions of Reform: Thomas Bland, the Welsh Family and the Allotment Controversy

The manifest duty of the Government is to protect the Indians in their reservation rights, aid and encourage them in stock raising and farming, [and] establish schools on or near the reservations for the education of all the children...
Thomas A. Bland, 1885[1]

In the early-1880s, events at the Pine Ridge Reservation in the Dakota Territory made it a crucial battleground in debates about evolving United States Indian policy and state development. A strong-minded army surgeon named Valentine T. McGillycuddy served as the federal agent at the reservation and his actions, particularly his efforts to undermine the customary leadership of the Oglala Sioux served to polarize interested philanthropists and reformers. As a supporter of coercive assimilation, McGillycuddy employed all possible techniques to pressure the Oglala to abandon customary social, cultural, and political practices, including reducing treaty-stipulated rations. Doing so, he believed, would facilitate the process of dispossession and provide land and financial opportunities for non-Native settlers.[2]

Herbert Welsh, William Welsh's nephew and founder of the Indian Rights Association (IRA), an innovative reform organization based in Philadelphia, and one of the driving forces behind the movement for coercive assimilation, saw in McGillycuddy an aggressive supporter of his cause and exactly the type of Indian Agent that could

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[1] Thomas A. Bland, "Intemperate and Ill-Directed Zeal," *The Council Fire* 8 (September 1885): 122.

[2] For more on McGillycuddy see the biography writed by his second wife, Julie B. McGillycuddy, *McGillycuddy Agent: A Biography of Valentine T. McGillycuddy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1940).

control customary chiefs and destroy tribal/community relations. Welsh would later refer to the agent as "a man of remarkable ability" and particularly praised his capacity to discourage to "the non-progressive element at the Agency."[3] During a visit to the reservation in 1883 McGillycuddy invited Welsh to stay at his house and upon returning to Philadelphia, the reformer complimented the agent's ration reduction strategy, stating that treaty appropriations led to "idleness and pauperism."[4]

Dr. Thomas A. Bland publicly challenged McGillycuddy's approach. Bland was a physician, philanthropist, author, editor of the *Council Fire*, an Indian policy reform newspaper, and soon-to-be founder of the National Indian Defense Association (NIDA), a reform organization that fought against the IRA in the 1880s. Like Ely S. Parker before him, Bland believed that the federal government's main responsibilities involved protecting Indian communities as distinct entities and providing education and employment opportunities to compensate for dispossession and the history of colonization. In 1882 Bland supported Chief Red Cloud and other Oglala leaders, who issued complaints and sought McGillycuddy's removal. In the pages of the *Council Fire* Bland criticized the agent, calling him "a petty, vindictive, revengeful tyrant, who was robbing the Indians...[and] enriching himself at their expense."[5]

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[3] Herbert Welsh to William F. Vilas, 3 July 1888, Indian Rights Association Papers (subsequent citation IRAP), Series I-C, Letterpress Copy Books, 1886-1943, Reel 69 - 1888, January 25 - 1889, June 8.

[4] William T. Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association: The Herbert Welsh Years, 1882-1904* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985), 28. See also Herbert Welsh, *Report of a Visit to the Sioux Reserve*, IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 - Subseries A.

[5] Thomas A. Bland, "Our Visit to Red Cloud and his People," *The Council Fire* 7 (July-August 1884): 97.

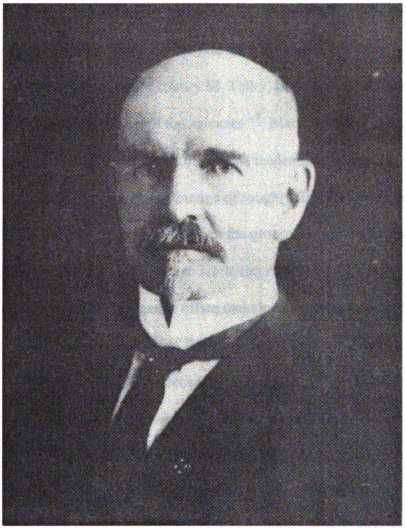

Figure 13: Dr. Valentine T. McGillycuddy
Source: Julia McGillycuddy, *Blood on the Moon*, inside cover

This conflict between Bland and McGillycuddy boiled over in the summer of 1884 when Bland traveled west from Washington DC to meet with Red Cloud and the Oglala at Pine Ridge.[6] In the spring of that year Bland received permission to visit the reserve from Secretary of the Interior, Henry M. Teller, however, he cautiously warned Bland not to "interfere in the affairs of the agencies."[7] Bland and Red Cloud were close friends and during his visits to the capital the Oglala leader had frequently been a guest in the Blands' home. Red Cloud and an entourage of roughly fifty followers greeted Bland upon his June 28th arrival at Pine Ridge. When the group stopped for lunch McGillycuddy sent Indian police officers to arrest the visitor. McGillycuddy and Bland engaged in a heated debate in the agency office that almost resulted in a fistfight. When McGillycuddy threatened to remove him, Bland reportedly stated, "I'm a citizen of the United States with a letter from the Secretary of the Interior giving me permission to come here." McGillycuddy replied that the United States was not the issue; rather they "were talking about the Indian country where affairs had to be handled according to a code of their own."[8] The agent ignored the letter and ordered the police officers to escort Bland, with loaded rifles, off the reserve. Bland reportedly left the office screaming, "My wife said I was a fool for visiting your agency."[9] In response, the commissary clerk,

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[6] Several scholars have also written about this confrontation. See George E. Hyde, *A Sioux Chronicle* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), 96-99, James C. Olson, *Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), 294-295, McGillycuddy, *McGillycuddy Agent*, 221-225, and Thomas W. Cowger, "Dr. Thomas A. Bland, Critic of Forced Assimilation," *American Indian Culture and Research* Journal 16, no. 4 (1992): 77-97, 80-81.

[7] Quoted in McGillycuddy, *McGillycuddy Agent,* 222.

[8] McGillycuddy, *McGillycuddy Agent*, 223.

[9] McGillycuddy, *McGillycuddy Agent*, 224. Bland's wife, Cora, was also an editor (first in Chicago for a journal called *Ladies Own Magazine* and later for the *Council Fire*), a physician, lecturer, and Indian policy reformer. She played a crucial role in the development of Thomas' and the NIDA's ideas

Frank Stewart replied, "Well, all I've got to say is that your wife has a damn sight more sense than some people."[10]

This confrontation was not simply the result of a conflict between two intense, egotistical men, rather, it developed because Bland was able to exercise influence amongst Indian leaders. His effort to promote compensatory legislation and to protect Indian communities (like Parker's before him) appealed to people such as Red Cloud. McGillycuddy's coercive assimilative approach, championed by Herbert Welsh and the IRA (and William Welsh before them), and his efforts which often bordered on physical violence demonstrated the level to which individuals interested in coercive assimilation were willing to engage to ensure that their agenda won out. This confrontation characterized the severity of the conflicts that occurred in this critical moment in the development of Indian policy and revealed the level of investment the competing individuals and organizations had in its outcome.

The late-nineteenth century in Indian policy history is commonly known as the Allotment Era and is characterized by the build-up to and passage of the General Allotment Act of 1887, as well as its early implementation. The General Allotment Act, or Dawes Act, so named because Massachusetts Senator Henry L. Dawes introduced the bill, authorized the division of reservation lands into 40, 80, and 160 acres plots for individual and family ownership. The allotments would be held in trust by the federal government for twenty-five years. The act's stated purpose was to encourage individual property-ownership and an adherence to free market economic values among Indian

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about reform. Unfortunately, the historical record provides even less insight into her life and contributions than it does for her husband.

[10] McGillycuddy, *McGillycuddy Agent*, 224.

people.[11] The existing literature argues that in this era, "to be pro-Indian...was to be pro-allotment and pro-assimilation."[12] Scholars have focused on the ways that the reformers shared social, religious, and economic backgrounds: including the "Friends of the Indians," the Indian Rights Association, the Women's National Indian Association, the Boston Indian Citizenship Committee, and the attendees at the annual Lake Mohonk Conference in upstate New York.[13] For a variety of reasons, however, this literature has ignored the important and numerically significant group whose membership argued

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[11] The act itself was the result of a lengthy legislative evolution that began much earlier. An earlier version of the allotment program was embodied in the Coke Bill, legislation introduced by Senator Richard Coke in 1880, 1882, and 1884. Dawes revised the bill, re-introduced the legislation in 1886 and in passed in 1887. At several points after 1887 the program was amended, significantly in 1891 and 1906. These amendments applied the program to additional reservations previously excluded from its jurisdiction and allowed Indian people to legally lease their allotments to non-Native people. The latter development seemingly undercut its ability to encourage Native farming.

[12] Senier, "Allotment Protest and Tribal Discourse," 422. See also Senier, *Voices of American Indian Assimilation and Resistance*. In it, Senier asserted that some of the most significant critics to coercive assimilation were Native women writers.

[13] In his seminal study *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, Francis Prucha argued that the "harmony that marked the Lake Mohonk conferences was based on a common philanthropic and humanitarian outlook expressed in Christian terms, for the reform organizations represented there had a strong religious orientation." Prucha framed this movement within a larger context of nineteenth-century evangelism, asserting that the "decades at the end of the century in which Indian reform flourished were marked by an intensification of the desire on the part of zealous evangelicals to create a 'righteous empire' in America, and the Indians were caught up in that thrust." "Only a few men spoke out [against these organizations]...and they were quickly overwhelmed," he wrote. See Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 147; Prucha, *The Great Father*; and Francis P. Prucha ed., *Americanizing the American Indian: Writings by the "Friends of the Indian" 1880-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 8. The idea that the reformers were "well-intentioned" runs throughout this literature. In the 1930s two books began this trend. In the first, D.S. Otis asserted that it was not private interests that motivated the development of the allotment program, but rather that it came out of the idealism of Congress and the reformers who wished to protect and "civilize" Indians. J.P. Kinney argued that the late-nineteenth century reformers represented the culmination of two hundred years of efforts to assimilate and "civilize" the Indians. See Otis, *The Dawes Act and the Allotment of Indian Lands*; and Kinney, *A Continent Lost – A Civilization Won*. Henry Fritz suggested that there were some conflicts during that Lake Mohonk conference, but these involved the timetable and intensity of coercive assimilation plans, not the coercive/assimilative ideology itself. See Fritz, *The Movement for Indian Assimilation*. Wilcomb Washburn was not as kind to the humanitarians and argued that when the allotment program failed to create types of solutions the reformers initially hoped, they focused blame on the settlers who pressured to divest Indians of their land base and BIA officials who were unable to oversee the allotment process carefully. However, he concluded that it was actually the over-zealous reformers and policy-makers who should be blamed for the choices and judgments they made. See Wilcomb Washburn, *The Assault on Indian Tribalism: The General Allotment Law (Dawes Act) on 1887* (New York: Lippincott Comp., 1975).

against this policy orientation. Furthermore, the existing literature has not fully situated the debates about allotment within the longer reform traditions from the Peace Policy era, nor has it seated them within the larger framework of state development in the late-nineteenth century.[14]

This chapter contends that the generation of reformers who emerged after the Peace Policy era adopted and expanded the reform agendas and policy platforms of the previous period. In these debates Thomas Bland and the National Indian Defense Association adopted an ideology that focused on compensatory legislation and the protection of Indian communities as distinct entities, while Herbert Welsh and the Indian Rights Association supported the conservative, coercive assimilationist ideology that sought to confine Indians spatially on increasingly smaller plots of individually-held land, and socially within prescribed roles. Both groups though, beginning in the 1880s situated their arguments about Indian policy within a framework that connected developments in Indian Affairs with larger concerns about the role and nature of the state, as well as the relationship between the government and its citizens and wards. Bland and the NIDA asserted that the land allotment legislation could either strengthen or undermine the power of Congress and the federal government in significant ways, threatening the

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[14] Historian Frederick Hoxie represented an exception to this interpretation. He noted that the reformers of the 1880s "bore a surface similarity to the antislavery groups of the 1840s and 1850s and to the previous decade's peace policy advocates." He asserted that like "their predecessors they campaigned for 'equal rights' for Native Americans and declared that they were driven by a sense of Christian mission." He also argued that many of the reformers framed their ideas within an almost "proto-progressive" framework which recognized that society was becoming increasingly interdependent and Indians would no longer be able to remain isolated. However, like Prucha, Hoxie also suggested that the reformers "were marked by a minimum of factionalism and a general willingness to shape contrasting interests into common proposals." See Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 11-13. In his study of Indian policy reform, Robert Mardock also focused on the similarities between these reformers and the antislavery advocates before them. Like Prucha, he also asserted that a certain social-gospel Christianity motivated their actions and shaped their philosophies. See Mardock, *The Reformers and the American Indian.* Hoxie was clearly influenced by Robert Wiebe's modernization thesis which interpreted the development of the United States in this period as an evolution from "island communities" to a coherent nation. For more see Robert Wiebe, *The Search For Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967).

balance between state and federal authority to the detriment of all citizens. As they made these arguments, Bland and NIDA members hoped to create legislation that would slow the assimilation process and allow Native people to embrace mainstream culture and societal values at their own pace, while simultaneously suggesting that the state itself should serve a compensatory role for the nation's most needy and disenfranchised citizens and wards. Welsh and the IRA attempted to situate the professionalization of the BIA within a larger framework of Civil Service reform in the federal government, and to demonstrate the importance of federal regulation in the economy. They hoped to use the federal government to create a society that fit their visions of a proper polity with economically-motivated, religiously-devout, and politically-homogenous citizens. Thus, in the late-nineteenth century, Indian policy reform and the Bureau of Indian Affairs specifically became critical sites where reformers developed and debated ideas about the evolution of the state.

Critics of Coercive Assimilation: Thomas Bland and the National Indian Defense Association

In the 1870s and 1880s Thomas Bland and the NIDA supported the idea of assimilation in the same way as Ely S. Parker had a decade earlier, but like Parker, they also saw this as a slowly evolving process and one that should involve a focus on the protection of community and state compensation for dispossession. These ideas emerged out of Bland's and the NIDA's interactions with Native people, the minimal influence of direct political connections (they were not allied with congressmen who represented land/resource-hungry constituencies), and their vision of the state as a protective tool for its citizens and wards. Rather than simply representing an eccentric and peripheral

group, these individuals and their organization posed a real and significant challenge to the coercive assimilationist reformers.

Thomas A. Bland was not initially drawn to Indian policy reform. He was born in 1830 to parents who were members of a North Carolina Quaker colony that settled in Indiana in 1817. He had seven years of formal education as a youth and in 1852 he married a Virginian woman named M. Cora Davis. As a young man Bland farmed, but after his marriage he studied medicine with particular interests in physiology and phrenology. After completing his degree, he opened a practice six miles from the village of his birth. He served a commission as an army surgeon during the Civil War, then with his wife Cora, who had been studying medicine in New York, embarked on a joint career divided between medical, literary, and philanthropic interests. The couple established several journals including *The Home Visitor* in Indianapolis, *The Northwestern* which became *The Indiana Farmer*, and *Ladies Own Magazine*, for which Cora served as editor-in-chief. They moved to Chicago in 1872 and New York in 1874, where they sold *Ladies Own Magazine* and Cora entered medical school again, this time completing her degree. In 1878 the Blands moved to Washington DC. Cora practiced medicine, lectured on health, and endorsed personal fitness products like the "Pocket Gymnasium," which she believed was the "most complete and perfect system of physical exercise ever invented."[15] Thomas focused on his literary and reform work, publishing ten books between 1870 and 1906, and advocating against railroad monopolies, the establishment of a national bank, and in support of populist causes, the greenback party, and medical as well as religious reform. In 1875 he attended a Boston lecture given by former

[15] Advertisements for these products ran in issues of *The Council Fire* throughout the 1880s.

Superintendent of Indian Affairs in Oregon and ex-Peace Commissioner, Alfred B. Meacham. This lecture and subsequent conversations with Meacham sparked an interest in Indian affairs - an interest that would help shape the debates over coercive assimilation, to which Bland devoted ten years of his life.[16]

In 1875, having recently survived a battle with Modoc Indians in northern California, Alfred Meacham toured the northeast delivering a lecture entitled "The Tragedy of the Lava Beds." Although Meacham had been severely injured during the melee and had not yet fully recovered - he was shot four times and left for dead, partially scalped - he argued that he felt compelled "to do something for these poor despised down-trodden misunderstood people [Indians]."[17] Meacham became a proponent of tribal sovereignty and believed that more than anything else the Indians should be allowed to express their own opinions and ideas about the allocation of treaty annuities and issues of federal governance.[18] The tour failed as a financial venture and his health deteriorated, however, after attending Meacham's lecture at Cooper Institute Hall,

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[16] Unfortunately there is no extant manuscript collection of Thomas or Cora Bland papers. There is a brief biography in the introduction to his edited volume entitled *Pioneers of Progress* (1906), penned by Rev. H.W. Thomas, D.D. There is also some biographical information in an M.A. thesis completed in 1992 by Jo Lea Wetherilt Behrens. See Thomas A. Bland ed., *Pioneers of Progress* (Chicago: Blakely Printing Company, 1906), 10-15 and Jo Lea Wetherilt Behrens, "In Defense of 'Poor Lo': *The Council Fire's* Advocacy of Native American Civil Rights, 1878-1889" (M.A. thesis, University of Nebraska, Omaha, 1992), 78-81. See also Cowger, "Dr. Thomas A. Bland."

[17] Memo, September 21, 1873, Meacham Papers, quoted in Edward S. Phinney, "Alfred B. Meacham: Promoter of Indian Reform" (Ph.D. diss, University of Oregon, Eugene, 1963), 228. See also Behrens, "In Defense," 63-65 and Thomas A. Bland, *The Life of Alfred B. Meacham* (Washington DC: T.A. and M.C. Bland Publishers, 1883), 42. Meacham actually considered serving as legal counsel for the Modoc Indians charged with his assault because he believed that the government had put them is a position where there was no other option than violence.

[18] Behrens, "In Defense," 59. See also Phinney, "Alfred B. Meacham," 109-110.

Figure 14: Advertisement for the "Pocket Gymnasium." Unfortunately, no photographs of Thomas or Cora Bland exist.
Source: *The Council Fire*

Thomas Bland pledged he and his wife's medical, literary, and oratorical talents, as well as monetary support to Meacham's cause.[19] Indian land issues appealed to Bland's anti-monopoly ideology, as he believed that it was railroad companies who provided the strongest influence to divest Indian communities of their lands.[20] Over the next several years, with the Blands' assistance, Meacham continued lecturing and began to publish an Indian reform journal called the *Council Fire*, as a corollary medium to educate the public on Indian issues.

As editor of the *Council Fire*, Meacham upheld a fierce devotion to the tenets of the Peace Policy. While other reformers began to advocate a movement away from the slow-paced, community-oriented, "civilizing" process of the programs initiated by Parker and Grant, Meacham argued that up to that moment, it was "the best one ever attempted by this Government."[21] In the last years of the 1870s and the early 1880s, Meacham and Bland used the journal to fight the transfer of the BIA to the War Department, to support the reservation system as a method of protecting Indian communities, to support Standing Bear and the Ponca in their opposition to federal removal policies, and to support an assimilation process carried-out only at a pace dictated by Indian peoples.[22] When Meacham passed away in 1882 the Blands assumed co-editorship of the journal. As

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[19] Cowger, "Dr. Thomas A. Bland," 78.

[20] Behrens, "In Defense," 80.

[21] "To Churchmen," *Council Fire* 1 (January 1878): 3.

[22] Behrens, "In Defense," 69-77. For more on the Ponca issue see Valerie Sherer Mathes and Richard Lowitt, *The Standing Bear Controversy: Prelude to Indian Reform* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003). In it the authors argued that it was this event that helped to spark the intensified movement for Indian reform in the late-nineteenth century and that rather than the eastern humanitarians who are usually interpreted as the leaders of this movement, it was the western lawyers and policy-makers who provided much of the early leadership and ideas.

editors the Blands maintained Meacham's advocacy of gradual assimilation "through rational educative measures."[23] However, in the 1880s agitation for Indian policy reform intensified and through the *Council Fire*, Bland first invited other reform organizations to use the pages of the journal to spread their message, but then ultimately parted ways with them as it became clear that their expectations of Indian confinement and assimilation differed significantly.

In an 1883 *Council Fire* article, Bland noted that popular interest in Indian affairs had intensified in recent years, in fact, that it was "growing on public attention much faster than did the question of negro rights during the early years of anti-slavery agitation."[24] He celebrated the fact that many reform organizations emerged in "Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and other cities for the purpose of giving systematic force and effect to the sentiment of justice in the public treatment of the Indian question." Bland suggested that one of the most promising was the Indian Rights Association to whom he extended "fraternal greeting" and offered "the columns of the *Council Fire*, through which to communicate with each other and the general public."[25] It soon became clear though, especially through the controversies that developed at Pine Ridge between the Oglala Sioux and Agent McGillycuddy, that the IRA and other organizations differed greatly from the reform ideologies shared by the Blands and their allies. By 1884 and 1885 the editors of the *Council Fire* and the leaders of the IRA openly fought in the newspapers, and through pamphlet literature, including an article in the *Springfield*

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[23] M. Cora Bland, "From Savage Life to Civilization," *Council Fire* 2 (October 1878): 150.

[24] "Indian Rights Associations," *Council Fire* 6 (June 1883): 84. See also Cowger, "Dr. Thomas A. Bland," 79.

[25] "Indian Rights Associations," *Council Fire* 6 (June 1883): 84

Republican, penned by Henry Dawes, the Massachusetts senator, successor to Charles Sumner, and one of the leading political supporters of the IRA. In it Dawes stated that Bland was "a very strange man...making trouble and mischief with everybody who is trying to help [the Indians]."[26] Bland responded in the *Council Fire* that perhaps the name Indian Rights Association was a misnomer because they openly supported corrupt Indian Agents.[27]

As the McGillycuddy/Oglala Sioux controversy intensified, Bland and like-minded individuals recognized the significance of their challenge to the Indian Rights Association and in late-1885 founded the National Indian Defense Association in Washington DC "for the purpose of protecting and assisting the Indians of the United States in acquiring the benefits of civilization, and in securing their territorial and proprietary rights."[28] The membership of this organization, "friends of a sound and humane Indian policy," and "practical philanthropists" as Bland referred to them, expanded quickly.[29] They developed a platform that held at its heart many of the tenets of the earlier Peace Policy and especially those championed by Ely Parker in the late-1860s and early-1870s. However, their platform expanded these notions in many important ways, and in doing so broadened the scope of debates over Indian policy and the function of the Bureau of Indian Affairs exponentially. At the founding meeting of

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[26] Henry L. Dawes, *The Case of McGillycuddy* (Philadelphia: Indian Rights Association, 1884). This pamphlet was originally published in the *Springfield Republican*, 7 September 1884.

[27] "The Indian Rights Association - Is The Name A Misnomer?" *Council Fire* 8 (April, 1885): 49.

[28] "The National Indian Defense Association," *Council Fire* 8 (December 1885): 174.

[29] "The National Indian Defense Association," *Council Fire* 8 (December 1885): 173; "Truth And Justice Must Triumph," *Council Fire* 9 (February, 1886): 21.

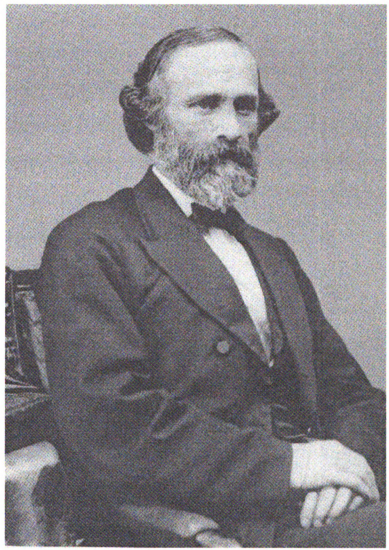

Figure 15: Senator Henry L. Dawes
Source: William Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 42

the NIDA, Bland and the other founders delineated three fundamental propositions to the organization's platform. Both in ideology and practice these three propositions represented an extension of Parker's earlier reform agenda. They resolved first that civil, criminal, and property laws of the United States should be used to protect Indian people within their communities against encroachments and actions of non-Native people. In addition they asserted that tribal sovereignty should be federally protected on a permanent basis. Second, they took the stance that the "tribal condition," which they defined as communal land-holding and customary practices of tribal governance, should be maintained until, at some point in the future, they could be incorporated "into some political institution in harmony with the general system of our Government." And finally, they contended that Indian communities should be given secure patents for their land to protect them from continued efforts toward dispossession.[30] The organization elected General James W. Denver, a former governor of Kansas Territory, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and member of Congress, as their president. The long-time pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Washington DC and current pastor to President Cleveland, Reverend Dr. Byron Sunderland, served as the first vice president. Judges A.J. Willard and E.J. Ellis, Reverend Alexander Kent, Professor Bernard Janney, and Thomas Bland rounded-out the first executive committee. Bland expressed his optimism for this organization stating that the "new association starts under favorable auspices, and will, we believe, be a potent factor in solving the Indian problem."[31]

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[30] "The National Indian Defense Association," *Council Fire* 8 (December, 1885): 175.

[31] "Constitution of the National Indian Defense Association," *Council Fire* 8 (December, 1885): 176.

In this critical moment of Indian policy reform, the National Indian Defense Association used historical examples to situate their reform arguments, and rather than simply outlining problems in the administration of Indian policy, they championed several specific policy correctives. They also appealed to and provided opportunities for Native people to present their ideas. Most significantly they vehemently opposed the ideology, methods, and goals of the Indian Rights Association and other self-styled "Friends of the Indian."

As they began their organized assault against the Indian Rights Association and the coercive assimilationist ideology, Bland and the NIDA used historical evidence to support their reform objectives. In an article entitled "Why Not Profit By Experience?" Bland argued that the United States had already found a satisfactory answer to the "Indian Question" when it gave patents in fee to the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles of Indian Territory. The term "patent in fee" refers to the title deed by which the federal government transfers land ownership to different people. Receiving a patent in fee nullified the trust relationship or "trust patent" previously established between the government and Indian nations. Patents in fee could be granted to entire communities as Bland suggested. This property law concept is different from that of "fee simple." Under fee simple ownership, an individual, not a community, holds a title to specific property. Ending the trust relationship in land ownership, Bland and the NIDA believed, would empower Indian communities, protect tribal sovereignty, and help insulate them against additional land loss. "Those five tribes," Bland continued, "still own and occupy the lands then secured to them...and they have solved the problem of

civilization for themselves and in their own way."[32] He later wrote that the Indian Territory experience suggested that "if the policy of uniting tribes with internal powers of self-government is extended to the mass of the Indians, it will produce the long desired outcome of the Indian question."[33] Bland further asserted that the experiment of negotiating forced land allotment treaties with individual Indian communities such as the Delaware had been a failure. He concluded that "the greed and shrewdness of their white neighbors proved too strong for the Indians...[t]hey were cheated out of their lands."[34]

Bland and the NIDA leaders, like Ely Parker before them, saw education as the key for Native communities to succeed in the late-nineteenth century and beyond, and they filled the pages of the *Council Fire* with pleas for expanded educational opportunities. Bland once wrote that education was "the primary factor in a true system of Indian civilization." He believed that a well-rounded and liberal education should serve as the first step of any policy reform and that no significant changes should be made to the legal status or property of Native people until after a new system of Indian education had been implemented.[35] NIDA leaders recognized the educational potential among the Indians, but also believed that this would be a slow process and that "until then the Indians must have special protection against the avarice and dishonesty of the white man."[36] Later, in the aftermath of the allotment controversy, Bland found one

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[32] "Why Not Profit By Experience?" *Council Fire* 8 (January 1885): 1.

[33] "Shall We Now Adopt A Wise Indian Policy?" *Council Fire* 9 (July, 1886): 102.

[34] "Why Not Profit By Experience?" *Council Fire* 8 (January 1885): 1.

[35] "Intemperate and Ill-Directed Zeal," *Council Fire* 8 (September 1885): 122.

[36] "Meeting of the Indian Commissioners," *Council Fire* 8 (February 1885): 20.

positive effect of the new legislation. A "hopeful feature of the present situation is found in the fact that...the present administration is preparing to do what the *Council Fire* has from the first urged should be done - educate every Indian child," he concluded. Though he also lamented, "this is the only ground of hope."[37]

Next to education, NIDA leaders championed the protection of Indian communities, the fulfillment of treaty obligations, and the expansion of sovereignty rights, all tenets of Parker's reform agenda, as the most significant, specific reforms to Indian policy. In his critique of the 1885 Lake Mohonk platform, Bland passionately stated that "what the Indian stands in need of to-day is the faithful fulfillment of the obligations of the Government toward him." These obligations included protection of reservation lands, a federal investment in farming and employment opportunities, the creation of reservation schools, and "the exercise of genuine friendship."[38] A.J. Willard, a former Chief Justice in the South Carolina Supreme Court and executive committee-member of the NIDA wrote that if "the Indians are entrusted with a suitable degree of the power of self-government, and have the title to their lands, they can protect themselves against injurious intrusions." Furthermore, using language that echoed Parker's, Willard stated that "tribal relations should not be hastily or suddenly ruptured," and that land titles

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[37] "Then and Now - A Review of Indian Policies," *Council Fire* 12 (December 1889): 100.

[38] "The Mohonk Platform," *Council Fire* 8 (November 1885): 157. See also "Status Of The Indians, Political And Proprietary," *Council Fire* 9 (October 1886) in which Bland stated that " Our first duty toward the Indian is to do what we have engaged to perform towards him. Having done this we may do him all the good in our power. To disregard the right of another in order to force upon him that which we regard for his good and against his inclinations is of the worst form of tyranny, usually blended with hypocrisy." (136)

needed to be secured.[39] Bland also reminded readers of the *Council Fire* that through "solemn treaties," the federal government had already recognized Indian land title and had agreed to protect it. "To ignore this title... and break up the system of holding land...all supposed to be protected by the solemn covenants entered into between the Indian tribes and the United States Government," Bland stated firmly, "would be an act of bad faith."[40]

As a policy platform though, NIDA leaders realized that their ideas could be criticized as an effort to promote racial difference and inhibit the incorporation of Indians into mainstream society. Many opposing reformers certainly did criticize the NIDA on these grounds. Reverend Alexander Kent, an NIDA executive committee-member, recognized this issue and wrote that the "opposition of the National Indian Defense Association to the land in severalty bill [allotment program]...has been characterized by the advocates of that measure as a fight against progress, an effort to perpetuate barbarism." Furthermore, he noted that some critics suggested that the NIDA sought "to keep the Indian perpetually in his present relations, and to prevent progress toward manhood and citizenship."[41] He assured the *Council Fire* readership, however, that the NIDA did support a notion of assimilation, but that they opposed the allotment program because it ignored "the Indian's wishes, feelings and convictions... [and was] a deliberate and intentional disregard of Indian rights."[42] It was this focus on the opinions, ideas, and

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[39] A.J. Willard, "A Brief of Objections to the Sioux Bill," *Council Fire* 9 (June 1886): 94. See also Jo Lea Wetherilt Behrens, "Forgotten Challengers to Severalty: The National Indian Defense Association and *Council Fire*," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 75, no.2(1997): 128-159, 135.

[40] "The Mohonk Platform," *Council Fire* 8 (November 1885): 157.

[41] Alexander Kent, "An Address to the Friends of Justice," *Council Fire* 10 (March, 1887): 37.

voices of Native people that perhaps most closely resembled Ely Parker's reform proposals from the 1860s and early-1870s and what made the NIDA an exceptional and forceful opponent to the supporters of coercive assimilation and dispossession.

In late-1886, Thomas Bland toured through the southeastern states to encourage membership and support for the NIDA. Nearly one-fifth of those who joined were Native people.[43] At NIDA meetings, Native people were given the opportunity to speak and Bland frequently published letters and submissions from Native writers in *The Council Fire*. In 1886, Bland published a letter written by Chief Red Cloud, the Oglala Sioux leader. In it, Red Cloud supported the NIDA agenda and spoke for Native people across the nation. He wrote that Indians opposed selling their remaining reservation lands through the allotment program.[44] Later, "a Cherokee" concurred that "all [Indians] are opposed to allotment."[45] The editors filled the pages of the *Council Fire* with letters and statements such as these.[46] Bland often disregarded BIA officials and counseled Native people to resist coercive assimilation tactics. In late-1886, a Peoria Chief named W.C. Lykins complained to Herbert Welsh about recent developments on his reserve. He noted that Commissioner of Indian Affairs J.D.C. Atkins met with the Peoria people and encouraged them to accept land in severalty. Then "Doctor T.A. Bland appeared and held a meeting in our school house...he urged us to hold our lands and never consent to

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[42] Kent, "An Address," 38.

[43] "Names Of Members," *Council Fire* 9 (November-December, 1886): 157-158.

[44] "Discussing The Dawes Sioux Bill," *Council Fire* 9 (March 1886): 39.

[45] "An Indian On The Allotment Bill," *Council Fire* 9 (June 1886): 96.

[46] See also, "Chief Brant's View of Civilization," *Council Fire* 9 (June 1886): 97; "Speech Of Col. G.W. Harkins Of The Chickasaws," *Council Fire* 9 (February 1886): 23; and "Speech Of Chief John Jumper Of The Seminoles," *Council Fire* 9 (February 1886): 24.

severalty, claiming that he and others would see that no laws were passed that would affect us in any way."[47] While some of the Indian leaders such as Lykins, who stood to profit from coercive assimilation legislation, complained, most Indian people appreciated and supported Bland and the NIDA.

In 1886, Senator Henry Dawes introduced legislation to restrict the reservation lands "occupied by the various tribes of the Sioux Nation...[and] transfer to the United States a large portion of the lands ceded to those tribes by the treaty of 1868...[to become] a part of the public domain of the United States."[48] Bland spoke out against this IRA-supported Sioux Bill in the House of Representatives and to the House Committee on Indian Affairs. He argued that it was unjust because it did not offer the Indians a choice in the sale of their lands. He also asserted that the amount of compensation was "far below" the value of these lands, and that the Indians themselves did not wish to sell. His organization, the NIDA, opposed the bill because the Sioux Reservation was for "exclusive use of the Sioux." During this meeting he read a letter from Chief Red Cloud to the assembled representatives. In it Red Cloud argued against the sale of his reservation and stated that he hoped "the entire Sioux Nation will unite and concur in my views." Never one to miss an opportunity to attack an opponent, Bland also added that it was "evident...that those who desire to break up the Sioux Reservation and rob these Indians of their lands regard McGillycuddy as an important agent in carrying out their

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[47] W.C. Lykins, Peoria Chief, to Herbert Welsh, 18 October 1886, IRAP, - Series 1-A - Incoming Correspondence, 1864-1968, n.d., Reel 2. Bland also engaged in similar actions with the Kiowas and Comanches. See Herbert Welsh to CC Painter, 16 February 1887, IRAP, - Series I-C, Letterpress Copy Books, 1886-1943, Reel 68 - 1886, March - 1888, January 25. In this letter, Painter, the IRA Washington DC lobbyist stated that "I certainly think that something must be done to counteract Bland's pernicious influence..."

[48] A.J. Willard, "A Brief of Objections to the Sioux Bill," *Council Fire* 9 (June 1886): 90.

Figure 16: Red Cloud, ca. 1880
Source: James Olson, *Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem*

selfish scheme."[49] A political victory followed this meeting and also bolstered Bland and the NIDA. In the aftermath of a federal investigation that found evidence of fraud and mismanagement at Pine Ridge, Secretary of the Interior Lamar permanently suspended the Agent McGillycuddy.[50] While the NIDA objected to the proposed Sioux Bill, they suggested that if it was absolutely necessary for the United States to buy land from the Sioux, the Indians themselves should name the price. Such an action would have been a natural extension of the sovereign rights the NIDA advocated in the 1880s.

Most of the existing literature does not recognize the significance of the NIDA's opposition to the IRA and to the coercive assimilative approach. But, Thomas Bland understood the far-reaching impact of his organization and in 1886 he claimed that they had a larger membership than any other Indian reform group and almost equal numbers to all the others combined. He noted that the NIDA "embraces over 200 of the most intelligent Indians of Indian Territory, including the governors and other public officials of all the five civilized nations, and also over 40 white Christian missionaries, who have spent years among those people and whose opinion of Indian policy is entitled to respect." In addition, he reminded readers of the *Council Fire* that the NIDA had "a large membership in Boston and other cities of the East as well as Washington."[51] The actual NIDA membership was approximately 1,000 in 1885.[52] That year the IRA claimed only

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[49] "Discussing The Dawes Sioux Bill," *Council Fire* 9 (March 1886): 38-39.

[50] "Agent McGillycuddy Removed from Office," *Council Fire* 9 (June 1886): 86.

[51] "Misrepresenting the President's Policy," *Council Fire* 10 (January 1887): 10.

[52] Behrens, "Forgotten Challengers," 153, n.5. See also "Annual Meeting of the N.I.D.A.," *Council Fire* 10 (February 1887): 18.

250 and their numbers did not breach 1,000 until 1888 or 1889.[53] The editor acknowledged though, that even if the NIDA had significant numbers, they faced an uphill battle against the older and well-entrenched IRA. He appealed to his friends and readers stating that they were "engaged in a conflict of ideas and of interests with powerful combinations." "Our opponents are rich in material resources and strong in political influence...Our resources in those regards are not large," he concluded.[54]

Despite IRA opposition, Bland and the NIDA experienced several important victories in 1886 that frightened the IRA leaders. The first victory came in the form of a political compromise with the Board of Indian Commissioners which had continued its advisory work to the BIA through the 1870s and 1880s. At the January 21, 1886 meeting, Thomas Bland, along with Dr. C.C. Painter of the IRA, and Rev. M.E. Strieby, a representative of the American Missionary Association, were appointed to serve on the resolutions committee. The group was unable to agree on their resolution concerning the severalty bill proposed by Sen. Dawes and Bland submitted a minority report insisting that "patents...be issued by the Government to the Indian tribes, to be held in common until by education - literary, industrial, and political - they should be prepared to safely have the land divided and patented to them in severalty."[55] Bland's time frame and suggestion of educational opportunities to compensate for dispossession closely followed the ideologies of the NIDA. Painter and Strieby argued that education should follow

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[53] For IRA numbers see Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 45, 47. See also Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 142. Prucha stated that even by 1892 the IRA only counted 1,300 members nationwide. However, Prucha also noted that even though the membership numbers were low, Welsh, through the media, was able to appeal to a wide audience.

[54] "The Sinews of War are Needed," *Council Fire* 10 (February 1887): 27.

[55] "Conference of Indian Commissioners," *Council Fire* 9 (February 1886): 28.

allotment, not precede it. After heated discussions, the *Council Fire* editor agreed to support the majority view, only if they reworded their resolution to state that treaty rights would be maintained until, at some point in the future, when the Indians themselves deemed it appropriate, tribal relations could be dissolved and lands divided.[56] In effect, this restatement was intended to provide Indian communities a more comfortable time frame and a longer period of support from the federal government. Later, when the Dawes Allotment Bill moved through the forty-ninth Congress and senators excluded a critical clause requiring Indian approval of the allotment program prior to it being instituted on individual reservations, Bland and the NIDA pressured the House to amend it. They succeeded and the bill moved forward with an amendment "to prevent its enforcement upon tribes of Indians until two-thirds of the men shall have signified their consent."[57] In addition, the NIDA successfully blocked the IRA-supported Sioux Bill in March and in mid-1886, the allotment bill stalled-out in the House. Despite IRA efforts, it would not come up for a vote by the time the session ended in August.[58] Coupled with the permanent suspension of Valentine McGillycuddy, these developments demonstrated to the Indian Rights Association that they faced significant opposition. While it had already established itself as an influential reform organization, by late-1886 the IRA began to prepare for what they believed would be a significant battle over the future of Indian policy.

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[56] Behrens, "In Defense," 187-188.

[57] "The General Severalty Bill..." *Council Fire* 9 (May 1886): 74. See also Behrens, "In Defense," 188; "Senator Dawes' Bill to Allot Lands...," *Council Fire* 9 (March 1886): 48-49, "There is at this date..." *Council Fire* 9 (July 1886): 110, "A History of the Policy of Coercion," *Council Fire* 10 (December 1887): 92, and Hagan, 65.

[58] Behrens, "In Defense," 189. See also "Opposing the Dawes Bill," *Council Fire* 9 (April 1886): 55-60, and "There is at this date..." *Council Fire* 9 (July 1886): 110.

Coercive Assimilationists in the 1880s and 1890s: Herbert Welsh and the Indian Rights Association

Herbert Welsh and the Indian Rights Association supported a coercive assimilationist approach to Indian policy in much the same way as William Welsh and the Board of Indian Commissioners had in the early-1870s. These individuals argued that the Bureau of Indian Affairs was a corrupt and mismanaged agency and supported the movement for immediate land allotment, citizenship rights and responsibilities for Native people, the abrogation of treaty appropriations, and the opportunity to open reservation land for white settlement and economic development. These ideas emerged out of the reform traditions already established in the Philadelphia area, a strong religious (Protestant, Episcopalian, and Evangelical) bias, direct political connections to powerful legislators, and a vision of the state as a mechanism that should model the nation upon ideals and principles that fit their vision of a modern nation.[59] These ideals and principles were premised upon an expectation of the spatial, social, and political confinement of Indian communities. The Indian Rights Association employed a full-time lobbyist in Washington DC, which was an important innovation in Indian policy reform, but also in

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[59] The reform ideology of the Indian Rights Association can best be understood as a combination of traditional internal colonialism that involved economic exploitation and political domination with elements of a "social control" mindset. For an excellent discussion of the viability of internal colonialism as a analytic concept see Gordon, "Internal Colonialism and Gender." For two recent examples of scholarship that use the "social control" concept to explain social reform in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century see Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (New York: Free Press, 2003) and Shelton Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People": The Progressive Movement and the Class Problem, and the Origins of Modern Liberalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005). Earlier scholarship also portrayed progressives as social conservatives or "corporate liberals," including Samuel P. Hayes, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 55 (1964): 157-169; and Gabriel Kolko, *The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900-1916* (New York: Free Press, 1963). Other scholarship has presented many of the shortcomings of progressives, including their racist, imperialist, and sexist orientations. See Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1995) and Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000).

social policy reform more generally. They built relationships with senators and congressmen who represented land/resource-hungry constituencies and corporations.[60] Significantly, they did not disregard the National Indian Defense Association or Thomas Bland, as some scholars have assumed, but understood, particularly in 1886 and 1887, that these opponents posed a real threat to their vision of Indian policy, and as such, led a campaign in the newspapers and in the capital, to misrepresent them and their ideas. It is due to their success in this process that the NIDA and Bland have been ignored in the literature.

Born in 1851, Herbert Welsh grew up in a wealthy Philadelphia family. His father, John Welsh, and his grandfather were both successful merchants, and his brother, also named John, prospered in the railroad, steel, and banking industries.[61] While Herbert Welsh decided not to follow in the footsteps of his predecessors, he probably received early encouragement for his philanthropic interests from his aunt and uncle, William and Mary. William Welsh, the Episcopal missionary, served as the first president of the Board of Indian Commissioners, and Mary founded the Indian's Hope Association. Herbert's father too, was well-known in Philadelphia for his public work. He took a leading role in the creation of the Centennial Exhibition in 1876, and endowed

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[60] For more on the history of interest group lobbying see Clemens, *The People's Lobby*. Clemens work typifies some of the most interesting work being done in the American Political Development School of Political Science and she was heavily influenced by the work of Theda Skocpol and Stephen Skowronek. Clemens argued that in the late-nineteenth century interests were able to assert more influence because they changed their "organizational repertoires." They became less radical in their demands and more willing to compromise. They advocated specific policy reforms, monitored the behaviors of policy-makers, and educated their membership on how to vote. The Indian Rights Association fit this description; however, they made these innovations prior to the agricultural, labor, and women's lobbyist groups in her study.

[61] Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 2-3.

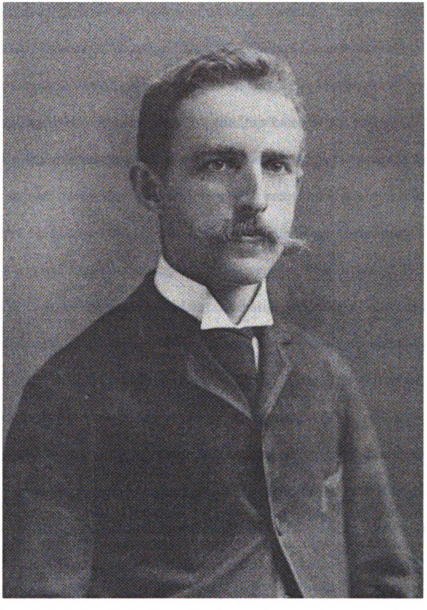

Figure 17: Herbert Welsh, ca. 1883
Source: William Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 2

a chair in literature at the University of Pennsylvania.[62] Welsh's elite upbringing and wealthy family background were typical of nineteenth-century, Eastern philanthropists.

In 1882, 31-year-old Welsh and his friend Henry Pancoast traveled to the Great Sioux Reservation and visited several agencies in Dakota and Nebraska.[63] Inspired by the poverty and hardships of reservation life and impressed by the potential forassimilation and interest they believed Native people had in mainstream society, Welsh and Pancoast returned to the East prepared to create an organization to pressure the government for changes in Indian policy. Welsh published a brief pamphlet that recounted his trip and suggested changes in the government's approach to Indian legislation. His account appeared to support the compensatory legislation and protection of Indian community that Parker and Bland championed. Welsh wrote that the "Government owes them such assistance [rations, etc.] in consideration of the many injuries inflicted upon them, and the wholesale appropriation of their land."[64] He followed this statement, however, by asserting that the government should hasten a movement away from this compensatory program and instead provide "the gift of severalty," a United States law code to supersede tribal sovereignty, and "sound

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[62] Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 4-5. For more on the significance of the Centennial Exhibition see Robert Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). Rydell argued that World's Fairs and Expositions serve as clear representations of America's imperial interests. It is interesting to note that Herbert's father served a leading role in the creation of the Philadelphia exposition, as it was the first in this tradition. Between his father's influence and the influence of his uncle William, it is not surprising that Herbert approached Indian policy from a perspective that supported continuing colonialism and coercive assimilation.

[63] Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 6-7 and Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 138-139.

[64] Herbert Welsh, *Four Weeks Among Some of the Sioux Tribes of Dakota and Nebraska, together with a Brief Consideration of the Indian Problem* (Germantown, PA: Horace F. McMann, Steam-Power Printer, 1882), 29. It may have been statements like this that encouraged Thomas Bland to offer the pages of the *Council Fire* to the IRA initially.

education."[65] While this final suggestion might seem, on its surface, to be a point of similarity between his, Bland's, and Parker's programs, Welsh believed in a specific kind of industrial or practical, and religious education that promoted immediate assimilation, rather than the more well-rounded liberal and classic education program supported by the others. Pancoast also wrote a pamphlet that recounted their trip, and like Welsh, he argued that severalty, industrial education, and the usurpation of tribal sovereignty served as the pathway through the barriers that separated Indians from mainstream society.[66]

These pamphlets attracted a wide readership and indicated an increased interest in Indian reform in several eastern cities, including Boston, New York, Washington DC, and Philadelphia. In 1882, Herbert Welsh and his father John invited like-minded individuals to found a reform organization based in their city.[67] The meeting brought together forty philanthropists, both young and old. The mayor of Philadelphia, Samuel G. King presided and many of the leading citizens of the city attended, including a large number of Episcopal and Quaker leaders. Interestingly, among the older attendees, many were leaders in merchant, steel, oil, and railroad industries, including John Wanamaker, H.H. Houston, and William Sellers, who was the president of the Midvale Steel Company and the Edgemoor Iron Company.[68] While it did not likely occur to the meeting

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[65] Welsh, *Four Weeks*, 30-31.

[66] Henry Pancoast, *Impressions of the Sioux Tribes in 1882, with Some First Principles in the Indian Question* (Philadelphia: Franklin Printing House, 1883), 6. The following year, Pancoast published a second pamphlet espousing very similar ideas, although he added that making Indians full and immediate citizens of the United States would help to terminate the difference legal status that he believed was such a hindrance. See Henry Pancoast, *The Indian Before the Law* (Philadelphia, 1884), 8-9 and 21.

[67] Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 139. See also *Constitution and By-Laws of the Indian Rights Association,* (Philadelphia, 1884), IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 - Subseries A, 3.

[68] Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 17.

attendees, this observation stands out. That much of the initial interest and financial support came from industrial leaders who profited from mineral and resource extraction, and transportation development, suggests that perhaps business concerns were one of the reasons why the IRA so vociferously supported allotment legislation and dispossession. They nominated a former Minister to Turkey and Attorney General, Wayne MacVeagh, as president. Herbert Welsh became the corresponding secretary and the executive committee included Henry Pancoast, and Quaker leaders, Dr. James Rhoads, and Philip Garrett.[69] This committee would serve as the vanguard for the organization.

The IRA made two decisions early in their development that proved significant both for their reform agenda, and for the broader history of social reform in general. The first involved an institutional innovation adopted from the Quakers. During the Grant administration they had employed a full-time agent in Washington DC to serve as a contact and liaison to Congress and the Indian Bureau. At the suggestion of Dr. Rhoads, Herbert Welsh contacted Charles C. Painter, an experienced activist for African American rights and previously a faculty member at Fisk University. Interestingly, Welsh and the IRA first considered purchasing the *Council Fire* from the Blands and installing Painter as the editor. Painter initially approved of this idea, provided that he could get it "away from the Cora Bland atmosphere and surroundings."[70] For financial reasons, however, the paper stayed with its current editors. Instead, the IRA hired Painter to serve as their contact in Washington DC, full-time, a position that he held until his

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[69] Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 18-19; Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 139-140.

[70] Painter to Armstrong, April 25, 1883, in Armstrong Papers quoted in Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 21.

death in 1895.[71] Though the IRA did not purchase the *Council Fire*, they decided that controlling and using the media would be one of their main tactics in shaping public opinion. This second innovation was also significant in the broader history of social reform. To build public support and influence popular opinion, the IRA created a Committee on Public Information. This committee served as one of the most important components of the IRA strategy and through it, they maintained an active engagement in public discourse through pamphlet literature, letters to the editors of national and regional newspapers, and lecture tours.[72] With these innovations in place, the organization developed and publicized their platform.

Despite all of their rhetoric to the contrary, the IRA platform represented a constellation of policy directives that was the product of earlier generations of coercive assimilationist reformers, including most recently William Welsh and the Board of Indian Commissioners. The general principles of their platform included support of allotment legislation, "practical" education, the extension of civil law to the reservations (resulting in the end of tribal sovereignty), and immediate citizenship – all premised upon Indian confinement. The marked difference between this program of reform and those championed by earlier generations, had more to do with a timetable than actual policy innovations. For the IRA, these reforms needed to be instituted immediately.

An 1885 pamphlet entitled, "What the Indian Rights Association is Doing," argued first that the legislation they supported included stipulations for the "assignment

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[71] Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 23. At this time the IRA also hired Matthew Sniffen, a seventeen-year-old Philadelphian to serve as clerk at their main office. This was significant because Sniffen was a very talented organizational manager and it is because of his painstaking work that scholars today have access to the complete file of the organization (which comprises 136 reels of microfilm).

[72] *Constitution and By-Laws*, 4, 7.

of land in severalty to the Indian under such restriction as will secure him the enjoyment of its title."[73] As a component of this plank, the IRA sought to break apart tribal communities. They suggested that the "organization of the Indians in tribes is, and has been, one of the most serious hindrances to the advancement of the Indian...every effort should be made to secure the disintegration of all tribal organization." To combat this they believed that the federal government needed to cease recognizing Indian "political bodies or organized tribes." They were also "thankful that at some agencies the issuing of rations is being diminished or has already ceased."[74] This practice, they believed, would force Native people to assimilate more readily.

The IRA considered "practical education" a program "of the highest moment."[75] It particularly supported the work of off-reservation boarding schools and publicly advocated for additional federal funding at the Carlisle, Hampton, and Lincoln Institutes. IRA leaders also supported reservation schools, and even argued in favor of allowing Indian children to use their native languages, but only when it aided missionaries in their efforts to teach the Gospel. Welsh argued "that promises of school-houses and teachers for these ignorant people already contained in existing treaties should be speedily

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[73] *What the Indian Rights Association is Doing*, (1885), IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 - Subseries A, 2.

[74] *Second Annual Address to the Public of the Lake Mohonk Conference ... In Behalf of the Civilization and Legal Protection of the Indians of the United States,* (1884), IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 - Subseries A, 6, 3.

[75] *What the Indian Rights Association is Doing,* 2; and *The First Annual Report of the Executive Committee of the Indian Rights Association,* (1884), IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 Reel 103 - IRA Printed Matter, Miscellaneous, 1885-1973, nd - Subseries C, 6.

fulfilled."[76] While this was most certainly a point at which the IRA and NIDA platforms intersected, Welsh and his organization believed that education should hasten the process of assimilation along a timetable established by the federal government, while Bland asserted that it should assist Indian communities so they might incorporate themselves into mainstream society at their own pace and on their own terms.

The IRA also argued that the state and territorial laws should be extended to Indian reservations. In their first annual report, Henry Pancoast argued that laws "be enforced upon these Indian reservations, so that the Indians finally should exist not as a separate and distinct people, but should become part of our own nationality."[77] While this might seem like a well-intentioned policy objective, what this suggestion asked for was nothing short of an end to tribal sovereignty. Not only was this unconstitutional, as had been addressed by the United States Supreme Court in several cases since the 1830s, but it also directly opposed the NIDA stance on sovereignty.[78]

In a brief pamphlet published in 1884, the IRA reaffirmed its goals and methods, but several statements made by various IRA leaders, as well as some of the affiliations they maintained calls into question their practices. The pamphlet stated that the IRA

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[76] *What the Indian Rights Association is Doing*, 2. See also Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 83-87.

[77] *What the Indian Rights Association is Doing*, 2.

[78] For more on sovereignty issues, see David Wilkins and Tsianina Lomawaima, *Uneven Ground: American Indian Sovereignty and Federal* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2001). In it the authors examined United States legal doctrines and argued that tribal sovereignty had been firmly established in legislative, juridical, and constitutional precedents. See also Jill Norgren, *The Cherokee Cases: Two Landmark Federal Decisions on the Fight for Sovereignty* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), and Sidney Harring, *Crow Dog's Case: American Indian Sovereignty, Tribal Law, and United States Law in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994). In the latter, Harring argued that in the late-nineteenth century, Indian communities experienced a comprehensive assault on tribal sovereignty and self-government, that included the passage of the Major Crimes Act of 1885, the establishment of Indian police by reservation agents, the creation of courts and codes of offenses by the BIA, and the Dawes Act itself.

aimed "to secure for these 'Wards of the Nation' education, law, and a protected and individual title to land." They also asserted that they sought "to make the Indian first a man and then a citizen, subject to the responsibilities and endowed with the privileges accorded to all other citizens of the United States." Finally, they asked that "the Government adopt toward the Indian a policy wise, firm, and continuous, neither capricious nor vacillating, cruel nor sentimental."[79] In their public rhetoric they argued that their reform agenda had Indian interests at its foundation and that they were motivated by altruistic philanthropic notions. As the debates with the NIDA developed, however, the IRA appealed to legislators by reminding them that, unlike the NIDA's plan, their policy agenda also stood to benefit non-Natives in significant ways. In an 1886 pamphlet distributed to congressmen, Welsh wrote that severalty was in "the interests, not only of the Indians, but of the white settlers contiguous to Indian Reservations."[80] An examination of other IRA statements to legislators and correspondence reveals similar examples. In 1885, the IRA sent a letter to President Grover Cleveland in an effort to create an amendment to the Sioux Bill. The amendment was designed to protect non-Native settlers whom had taken homesteads on the Crow Creek and Old Winnebago reservations. In the letter they wrote that urgent notices had arrived from settlers "to the effect that great injury will be done then when they are obliged to leace [sic] the lands where they have settled." The IRA leaders argued that it was, "a matter of the highest importance not only carefully to guard the rights of the Indians... but also to shield such

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[79] *The Indian Rights Association*, (1884), IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 - Subseries A, 1.

[80] *Synopsis of Three Bills Advocated*, (1886), IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 - Subseries A, 1.

settlers as have entered the reservation in good faith from pecuniary loss."[81] The fact that much of the early interest and financial support came from industrial leaders who stood to gain from severalty legislation also suggests that the IRA may not have been concerned strictly with Indian interests. Moreover, that much of the interest came from this group may help to explain the coercive assimilationist ideology and support for dispossession.[82]

Beyond simple interest and financial support, leaders in business and industry actively approached the IRA about ideas and tactics to pressure legislators for dispossession. Welsh and the IRA seemed open to these alliances. During the severalty debates, the President of the Pierre (Dakota) Board of Trade, B.J. Templeton, wrote to Welsh to discuss the upcoming legislative sessions involving allotment bills. Templeton wrote that they were "making preparations for a renewed effort to secure passage of the Dawes Bill." He told Welsh that his associates had "unlimited confidence" in his

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[81] Indian Rights Association to President of the United States, Grover Cleveland, 14 June 1885, IRAP, Series 1-A - Incoming Correspondence, 1864-1968, nd, Reel 1.

[82] Economic interest and political domination are the two key elements of internal colonialism and the IRA's program, as well as their supporters demonstrated this quite clearly. In her recent article historian Linda Gordon described internal colonialism as an analytical concept first developed by Lenin and Gramsci. For these theorists "it came to characterize intersecting economic exploitation and political exclusion of a subordinated group that differed racially or ethnically from the dominant group - and all this within a polity rather than across oceans or borders." (427-428) Furthermore, this concept is a metaphor that focuses on the "similarities between classical colonialism - in which countries of the global north occupied and exploited 'Third World' developing regions and peoples - and interanational relations of domination in which exploitation coincided with racism and national chauvinism." (428) For the purposes of this analysis it is important to recognize that this concept draws attention to the role racism played in the creation of cheap labor, or in this case, cheap and easy access to natural resources (i.e. land, oil reserves, minerals, etc.). In sum, it demonstrates the ways in which racism is at its most basic level an economic phenomenon. While many scholars abandoned this concept in the face of newer trends in social and cultural analysis, more recently a literature has emerged that attempts to revive and refashion these ideas to incorporate newer interpretive schema. For a broader discussion of the history and development of this concept, see Gordon, "Internal Colonialism and Gender," and Robert J. Hind, "The Internal Colonial Concept," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26 (July 1984): 543-568. For a discussion of how this concept can be applied to Native American history see Cardell Jacobson, "Internal Colonialism and Native Americans: Indian Labor in the United States from 1871 to World War II," *Social Science Quarterly* 65 (March 1984): 158-171. For a more recent effort to apply this concept to Native American history in a comparative framework see Christoph Strobel, "Contested Grounds: The Transformation of the American Upper Ohio Valley and the South African Eastern Cape, 1770-1850," (PhD diss, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, 2005).

judgment and that they wished to know if there was anything they could "do at the present time or at anytime prior to the convening of Congress?" He also let Welsh know that they had "lately arranged for an interview with the NW R. [Northwest Railway] officials to have a plain 'Medicine talk' on the R[ailroad] R[oad] clause in the Bill."[83] While the IRA found support and political alliances with business and industrial leaders, the NIDA associated primarily with retired politicians, judges, and intellectuals. Perhaps this was exactly what Bland and the NIDA meant when they told the *Council Fire* readers that their opponents were "rich in material resources."

The IRA supported several pieces of legislation that featured severalty and coercive assimilation among their main components. The Sioux Bill, the Coke Bill, and the Allotment Act were among their main legislative goals.[84] As they worked to build public support for these bills the IRA created many important alliances with other Indian reform groups, reform-minded individuals, and policymakers. Welsh, Rhoads, Painter, and other IRA leaders often spoke at the annual Lake Mohonk Conference of the Friends of the Indian, held in upstate New York at the behest of Quaker school teacher, Albert K. Smiley.[85] The IRA also worked closely with the Women's National Indian Association, the Boston Indian Citizenship Committee, and the Board of Indian Commissioners.[86]

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[83] BJ Templeton, President of the Pierre Board of Trade (Dakota) to Herbert Welsh, 20 October 1886, IRAP, Series IV. Herbert Welsh Papers, 1877-1934, nd, Reel 133 - 1877, Aug. - 1900, July.

[84] See *Synopsis of Three Bills Advocated*, (1886).

[85] For more on Lake Mohonk see Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 143-144. See also Prucha, *Americanizing the American Indians*; Larry Burgess, "We'll Discuss in at Mohonk," *Quaker History: The Bulletin of Friends Historical Association* 40 (Spring, 1971): 14-28; Hoxie, *A Final Promise,* 12; and Prucha, *The Great Father*, Chap. 24: The New Christian Reformers.

[86] These organizations often held joint conferences in addition to the Lake Mohonk affairs. See Circular, *Resolutions passed at a joint Conference of the Board of Indian Commissioners, Indian Rights Association, Woman's National Indian Association...* (1885), IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records,

The members of the latter often nominated Welsh and other leaders for sub-committee and advisory positions. Interested individuals like the Wahpetonwan Dakota physician, Charles Eastman and his non-Native wife Elaine Goodale Eastman supported the IRA's educational stance, as did Carlisle Institute director, Richard Henry Pratt (although he occasionally vacillated in his support of the organization).[87] The IRA also established close relations with powerful senators such as Richard Coke and Henry Dawes.[88] Together these individuals and organizations operated with a certain amount of unanimity, as they all supported a coercive assimilationist ideology. However, the NIDA represented a serious challenge to the success of their reform agenda and the IRA, through their control of the media, launched a campaign that not only impacted the immediate significance that Bland and his organization had, but also colored the historical record to such an extent that there still remains considerable misunderstandings to this day.

1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 - Subseries A. Founded by Amelia Stone Quinton and Mary Bonney, the WNIA played a significant role in the intensification of Indian policy reform efforts in the 1870s and 1880s. For more see Mathes and Lowitt, *The Standing Bear Controversy*. For a brief history of the organization see Victoria Mathes, "Nineteenth Century Women and Reform: The Women's National Indian Assocation," *American Indian Quarterly* 14, no. 1 (1990): 1-18; and Helen Wanken, "Woman's Sphere and Indian Reform: The Women's National Indian Association, 1879-1901" (PhD diss., Marquette University, 1981).

[87] For more see Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 36-37. The IRA often republished newspaper articles Elaine Goodale Eastman wrote and distributed them among other reformers and legislators. See for example Elaine Goodale Eastman, *The Senator and the School-House*, (1886), IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 - Subseries A [originally published in the New York *Independent*, 4 March 1886]. Pratt did not appreciate the IRA's support reservation schools, thus accounting for the occasionally strained relations.

[88] In his article "The End of the Savage," historian Frederick Hoxie wrote that between "1880 and 1900 the Senate was probably the most influential branch of American government, and its members among the most accomplished politicians of their day." See Frederick Hoxie, "The End of the Savage: Indian Policy in the United States Senate, 1880-1900," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 55, no. 2 (1977): 157-179, 158.

The IRA and their allies presented to the public, through newspaper articles and pamphlet literature, a notion of Indian policy reform that not only appealed to a broad array of non-Native interests, but also portrayed anyone who argued against them as eccentric, or as espousing an agenda that would adversely effect the financial interests of non-Native people and the well-being of Indian communities. This is significant in that it not only hindered Bland's and the NIDA's efforts to influence policy in the late-nineteenth century, but the IRA records and opinions of their opponents, meticulously maintained by clerk Matthew Sniffen, continue to shape scholarly interpretations of this period. While the NIDA could count on the *Council Fire* to support its campaigns for compensatory legislation, the IRA noted more broadly that the "newspapers of the country, both secular and religious, have not only commented favorably upon the aim and methods of the Association, but have lent their powerful influence in support of that reform in the management of Indian affairs which we are seeking to effect." Welsh attributed their success to "the cordial and practical sympathy which has been manifested by the editors of our leading papers."[89] As a recognition for the important role this part of the IRA tactics played, Welsh included a special thank you to newspaper editors in every IRA annual report.[90]

The IRA newspaper campaign proved significant at several key moments in the debates between the organizations and their leaders. During the McGillycuddy

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[89] *The Second Annual Report of the Executive Committee of the Indian Rights Association*, (Philadelphia, 1885), IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 Reel 103 - IRA Printed Matter, Miscellaneous, 1885-1973, nd - Subseries C, 12. The IRA frequently published and circulated pamphlets that either summarized or reprinted full articles from several prominent newspapers. See for example *The Opinions of the Press on the Need of Legislation for Indians by the Present Congress*, IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 - Subseries A.

[90] *The First Annual Report*, 9.

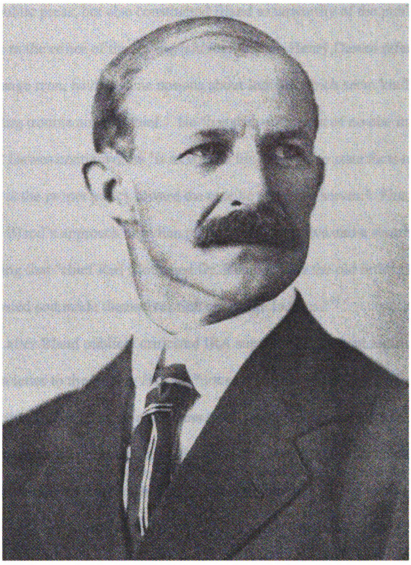

Figure 18: Matthew K. Sniffen
Source: William Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 27

controversy in the early-1880s, the IRA and their associates sought not only to defend the agent in the public press, but also constructed Bland as unworthy of the public trust. In an 1884 letter to the editor of the *Springfield Republican*, Henry Dawes referred to Bland as "a very strange man, having some notions about Indians which seem kind, but on the contrary making trouble and mischief." He "has the confidence of no one in Washington," Dawes continued, he "is as wild in his attempts to state facts as he is in his ideas of what is the proper policy toward the race he thinks he serves." Finally, Dawes characterized Bland's approach to Indian policy as conservative and a stumbling block to progress, stating that "chief Red Cloud and Dr. Bland are for the old order of things, when chiefs ruled and made themselves rich out of the Indians."[91]

Later, after Bland publicly criticized IRA support of allotment legislation, Herbert Welsh wrote a letter to the *Boston Herald*, "not so much for the purpose of correcting Dr. Bland's misstatements - this were an endless task - but to make clear an irreconcilable difference of opinion...which separates him and his association from Senator Dawes and other prominent defenders of Indian rights." He wrote that Bland wanted to keep "the Indian as he is, his tribal relations untouched, his reservations intact; and in opposing the sale of his unused lands, upon no matter how equitable conditions, for white settlement." While this was a very clear representation of Bland's reform program, one which followed in Parker's tradition, and which would prove to be quite significant in the twentieth century, Welsh disagreed and instead argued that NIDA "theory is prejudicial

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[91] Dawes, *The Case of McGillycuddy*, IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 Reel 103 - IRA Printed Matter, Miscellaneous, 1885-1973, nd - Subseries C, [originally published in the *Springfield Republican*, 7 August 1884].

to the best interests of the Indians... it is wholly impracticable."[92] It is hard to analyze the immediate impact of this newspaper campaign, but it must have seemed effective to Welsh and the IRA because they continued this tactic even after the Allotment Act became federal legislation.

After the passage the General Allotment Act of 1887, Bland and other members of the NIDA met with many Indian communities to strategize possible responses and the best course of action. The NIDA planned to test the constitutionality of the law in the Supreme Court and traveled to build support. After one of these receptions, the IRA published accounts in several newspapers alleging that Bland asked the Indian communities to support these efforts financially. In a *New York Tribune* article, Welsh claimed that the "Kiowas and Caddos, were glad to know they had friends in Washington, but were doubtful about a friendship for which they were asked to pay."[93] Welsh implied that the NIDA generally found little support among Indian communities and among policymakers in Washington. C.C. Painter, the IRA lobbyist, also published a pamphlet at this time, in which he argued that the NIDA was "managed and controlled by two or three white men, who, while they assume the role of special defenders of the Indians, appeal to them for support, and ask that a part of these same tribal funds shall be devoted to this purpose." He concluded that because it looked for financial support from

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[92] Herbert Welsh, *The Indian Problem*, IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 Reel 103 - IRA Printed Matter, Miscellaneous, 1885-1973, nd - Subseries C, [originally published in the *Boston Herald* 27 December 1886].

[93] Herbert Welsh, *Friendship that Asks for Pay*, IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 Reel 103 - IRA Printed Matter, Miscellaneous, 1885-1973, nd - Subseries C, [originally published in *The New York Tribune* 13 March 1887]. See also "Allotment of Lands. Defense of the Dawes Indian Severalty Bill," IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 Reel 103 - IRA Printed Matter, Miscellaneous, 1885-1973, nd - Subseries C, [originally published in the *Boston Post* 6 April 1887].

Indian communities directly, the NIDA could not be considered an unbiased organization.[94] Such actions were not typical of the NIDA and Thomas Bland, however. In 1879, during the Standing Bear controversy, Bland publicly criticized the western journalist Thomas Tibbles for creating undue discontent among the Poncas and for "using the situation to solicit funds [from Indian people] to pay for a court test."[95] Ultimately though, the validity of the allegations was probably not that important to the IRA, the allegations alone unsettled public opinions.

During this period, the IRA also propagated a story that three prominent members of the NIDA signed a declaration endorsing the allotment program. These three individuals included E. John Ellis, who, as a member of the House of Representatives, served as the chairman of the sub-committee on Indian appropriations, General J.W. Denver, a former commissioner of Indian Affairs and Colonel Samuel F. Tappan. In the *Boston Post*, Welsh reported that "the [National] Indian Defense Association is not harmonious in its membership." It brought together a committee of six members in an effort to create a resolution to help stop the president from signing the Allotment Act into law, but "three of the committee...signed a report declaring it an excellent measure."[96] Bland responded in the *Council Fire* that it was actually only Tappan who felt this way and that the Colonel tricked Ellis and Denver into signing the report. Tappan approached Denver while the latter made preparations for holiday travel and told him simply that the

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[94] C.C. Painter, *The Dawes Land in Severalty Bill and Indian Emancipation*, IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 Reel 103 - IRA Printed Matter, Miscellaneous, 1885-1973, nd - Subseries C.

[95] Behrens, "In Defense," 76.

[96] *Allotment of Lands. Defense of the Dawes Indian Severalty Bill*, 4.

report outlined the NIDA's view of the allotment bill. Denver later stated that the "Indian Rights Association is managed in the interest of the whites, and is a deadly foe to the Indians."[97] Ellis related a similar story and concluded he was "in full sympathy with the National Indian Defense Association."[98] Although they had been caught in a lie, Welsh and the IRA never answered the NIDA response, but did, in May 1887 reprint the *Post* article in the form of a pamphlet entitled "Allotment of Lands, Defense of the Dawes Indian Severalty Bill." Similarly, Bland revealed that a correspondent for the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, friendly to the IRA, fabricated stories about the NIDA and its leadership. Even though the story had been proven false, the damage was done as other newspapers had already reprinted it.[99]

During these exchanges, the NIDA fought back in the pages of the *Council Fire*. In a five-page response, Bland outlined the allegations Welsh made in articles from the *Boston Post*, the *New York Sun*, the *New York Post*, and the *Pioneer Press*, and the *Friends Review*. Bland argued that the allotment program was "the embodiment of despotism and injustice," and that if "its true intent could be laid bare before the whole country, the public conscience would revolt, and the great majority of the people would demand its repeal." In his most direct reprisal Bland wrote that "Dawes and his backers...exert their utmost abilities in efforts to clothe it [the severalty law] in a garb of fictitious virtue and to misrepresent the views of those true defenders of the rights of the

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[97] Thomas Bland, "Injustice Sustained by Falsehood," *Council Fire* 10 (April-May, 1887): 59.

[98] Bland, "Injustice Sustained by Falsehood," 60.

[99] For more on this issue see Behrens, "In Defense," 199.

Indians who oppose this infamous scheme of despotism and robbery."[100] Because this response was published only in the *Council Fire*, however, it is difficult to judge the extent to which it reached a broad audience.

Bland and the NIDA were not the only individuals to experience character assassination at the hands of Welsh and the IRA. This strategy was one they employed often against other critics of the coercive assimilation approach and politicians who sought to block the IRA's reform agenda. When Sarah Winnemucca, the outspoken Paiute critic of forced assimilation, received a position as a teacher in a school run by Boston philanthropist Elizabeth P. Peabody, funded through private donations, C.C. Painter, as an agent of the IRA, conducted investigations into her background and personal life. In his vitriolic report, dripping with disdain, Painter stated that he believed Winnemucca to be a very immoral person, who among other things, lived with a man who was not her husband, gambled, fraudulently sold Indians' wheat, drank frequently, and committed assault with a brick and a "grip sack." Painter concluded that she was an "unmitigated fraud."[101] Later, the IRA investigated the actions of Alice Fletcher. Even though in this case the subject was a proponent of the IRA's coercive assimilationist stance, the results were quite similar to their earlier experience with Winnemucca. Hiram Chase wrote to Welsh from the Omaha reservation that "among Miss Fletcher's favorites is Frank La Flesche, who accompanied her in her work...camping out together

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[100] Bland, "Injustice Sustained by Falsehood," 57.

[101] C.C. Painter to Herbert Welsh, 11 December 1885, IRAP, Series I - Correspondance, 1864-1968, nd., Reel 1 - Series 1-A - Incoming Correspondence, 1864-1968, nd. A "grip sack" was a small piece of luggage or a hand-bag. For more on Sarah Winnemucca and her criticism of coercive assimilation see Senier, *Voices of American Indian Assimilation and Resistance*; and Sally Zanjani, *Sarah Winnemucca* (Lincoln: University Nebraska Press, 2001). For more on this issue, see Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 85-86.

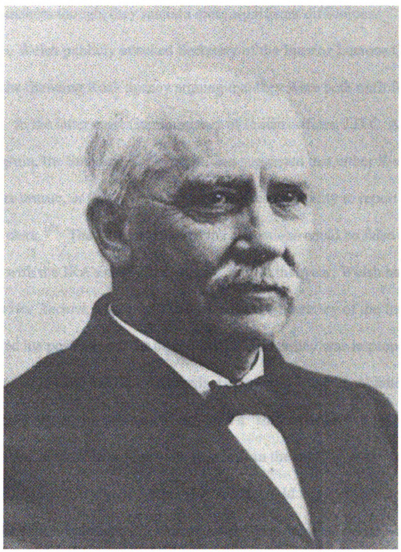

Figure 19: Charles C. Painter
Source: William Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 24

alone...and it is believed that undue intimacy existed between them." He also noted that she fraudulently administered allotments.[102] When they turned their rhetorical attentions toward policy-makers though, they ran into more significant difficulties.

In 1886, Welsh publicly attacked Secretary of the Interior Lucious Q.C. Lamar and a clerk at the Standing Rock agency arguing that they were both unfit for service in Indian Affairs. In the latter case, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, J.D.C. Atkins wrote to James McLaughlin, the Standing Rock Agent, and suggested that either Welsh's allegations were untrue, or that it was McLaughlin's responsibility to report on the conduct of his clerk.[103] That Atkins believed the allegations could be false demonstrated his familiarity with the IRA's media campaigns. Earlier that year, Welsh had published, in the *Civil Service Record*, a statement that asserted the Secretary of the Interior Lamar had mismanaged his position and the direction of Indian policy was improper. In a scathing critique of his and the IRA's methods, Lamar wrote a personal letter to Welsh and asserted that although he believed Welsh held a "sincere desire" to help Indian people, his method of making unfounded allegations in the popular press was damaging and counterproductive. He argued further that Welsh could be more effective if he consulted public officials directly.[104] Unfortunately, these reprisals were not frequent and

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[102] Hiram Chase to Herbert Welsh, 27 May 1886, IRAP, Series IV. Herbert Welsh Papers, 1877-1934, nd, Reel 133 - 1877, Aug.- 1900, July. For more on Alice Fletcher see Joan Mark, *A Stranger in Her Native Land: Alice Fletcher and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988) and Tong, *Susan La Flesche Picotte.*

[103] JDC Atkins, Commissioner of Indian Affairs to James McLaughlin, Indian Agent, Standing Rock Agency, 27 September 1886, IRAP, Series I - Correspondence, 1864-1968, nd., Reel 2 - Series 1-A - Incoming Correspondence, 1864-1968, nd.

[104] Secretary of the Interior Lamar to Herbert Welsh, 25 February 1886, IRAP, Series I - Correspondance, 1864-1968, nd., Reel 1 - Series 1-A - Incoming Correspondence, 1864-1968, nd. For a similar exchange see Frank Wood to Herbert Welsh, 10 March 1887, Series I - Correspondence, 1864-1968, nd., Reel 2 - Series 1-A - Incoming Correspondence, 1864-1968, nd.

the IRA often pursued character assassination techniques in the newspapers unabated as they did with the NIDA. That so few scholars understand the role and significance that Bland and the NIDA had in this era can be, to a large extent, explained by the IRA's successful media campaign against their opponents.

The Allotment Controversy and the Evolving Role of the State

Although the IRA, the NIDA, and their principle spokespeople drew from ideas and traditions previously established in Indian reform, they expanded the scope and significance of their arguments in the 1880s. As pressures for land and resources mounted in the late-nineteenth century, the IRA and the NIDA framed their arguments in such a way as to demonstrate that the direction of Indian policy was a critical front in the development of the role and power of the state in this era. In significant ways, Bland's and the NIDA's vision of the state as a compensatory and protective agency differed profoundly from that of Welsh and the IRA, who argued that it was the state's responsibility to shape the polity according to the values and interests of the elite. Bland's National Indian Defense Association suggested that the question of allotment was actually a question of the congressional power. By destroying the communally held reservations and creating individually held land plots, allotment legislation would actually remove Indian policy from federal jurisdiction and place it in the hands of the states, thus undermining Congress' role. Or, by providing Congress with the authority to distribute and sell lands owned by tribes as corporate bodies, allotment legislation could set a precedent that would expand the federal power exponentially and perhaps allow Congress in the future to do the same thing to municipalities or private corporations.

Welsh's Indian Rights Association tied allotment to a larger process of Civil Service Reform and a connection between the state and the economy. They asserted that through Civil Service Reform and the professionalization of the Indian Bureau, corruption would cease, and furthermore, that it was the responsibility of the state to foster economic development by opening land, resources, and markets for American entrepreneurs. By expanding the framework of Indian policy debates, these reform organizations made the Bureau of Indian Affairs a crucial meeting-ground upon which policy-makers and others attempted to address issues related to role of state in this time period.

Examining the ways in which both the IRA and NIDA situated their arguments about Indian reform reveals that, to both reform organizations, there was much more at stake than just reservation policies. In the 1870s and 1880s interest in Indian policy reform intensified across the nation, but it was not until reformers linked Indian policy to broader concerns about federal power and individual liberty that large numbers of senators became fully engaged in the cause.[105] The significant Indian reformers of this era were not, as they have frequently been portrayed, a marginal special interest group, they spoke for a majority of the population and represented widely held viewpoints.[106]

In their fight against severalty legislation, the NIDA attempted to frame their arguments first within the context of legal philosophy. In the October 1885 issue of the *Council Fire*, Bland published the transcript of a minority report filed in the House of Representatives by Russell Errett of Pennsylvania, Charles Hooker of Mississippi, and T.M. Gunter of Arkansas. The report stated that the biggest flaw in the allotment

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[105] Hoxie, "The End of the Savage," 165.

[106] Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 167-168.

program was that Indian people would hold a paradoxical position before the law. Errett and the other representatives stated that the first part of the program treated the Indian "as a man in giving him land and exacting from him the duty of maintaining himself upon and off of it." They continued, however, "as soon as we do this, we proceed to treat him as a child, an infant, a ward in chancery, who is unable to take care of himself and therefore needs the protecting care of the government."[107] NIDA leaders believed, like the representatives who filed the report, that this program would set a poor and contradictory precedent. In its rhetoric it would place Native people on an equal legal footing with other members of the polity, but it would simultaneously disadvantage them by withholding the franchise and Native people's ability to elect leaders to represent them. In addition, the allotment program took a similarly contradictory approach in relation to economic development on the reservations by pressuring Indian farmers to participate in commercial agriculture, while holding their profits in trust accounts for which they were not given complete access.

The more significant NIDA argument came in the form of an extended discussion of the role and power of Congress and the impact that enacting allotment legislation might have. Judge A.J. Willard, in an 1887 *Council Fire* article, informed readers that the land rights of Native people "are vested in the tribe as a corporate body." And furthermore, that the tribes held political authority over these lands in the same ways that private corporations and municipalities held their property. This was significant, Willard wrote, because, if Congress could arbitrarily "distribute the tribal property among the members of the tribe," through the allotment program, then it could just as easily divide

[107] "How Shall the Indians Hold their Lands," *Council Fire* 8 (October, 1885): 139.

the lands held by municipal corporate charters or private companies "among the individuals constituting such corporate bodies." With this precedent, Congress could dispossess city governments and private landholders alike. Willard asked rhetorically if the people of the United States were willing to extend such extraordinary powers to Congress. He concluded most directly that the issue was no longer simply a "question...of robbing the Indian, but it is a question whether Congress shall enter upon a career of legislation that embodies the worst principles...upon the stability of social institutions."[108]

Even after Congress enacted the General Allotment Act, the NIDA continued to connect Indian policy to broader political issues in the United States in published materials. In an 1889 *Council Fire* article, Willard warned of the dangers inherit in the allotment legislation, both for Indian people and non-Natives alike. The NIDA leaders believed that it was Congress' responsibility to compensate for dispossession and the history of colonization by providing opportunities for Indian communities, and continuing to distribute treaty appropriations. Allotment, however, threatened the balance of political power and authority between the federal and state levels. The allotment program removed Indian affairs from congressional jurisdiction, because the Constitution, which established this congressional authority, assumed the existence of tribes, and once tribal land was allotted, the individual landholders would no longer maintain tribal status. The new law, Willard asserted, "destroys the tribal condition and assumes to place the Indian on the same footing within the States as their white citizens." This development would not only unsettle the balance of federal and state power, Willard

[108] A.J. Willard, "The Dawes Land-in-Severalty Bill," *Council Fire* 10 (January 1887): 13.

continued, but the history of Indian-white contact demonstrated that when Native communities fell under the jurisdiction of a state or territory, there was often little interest by local politicians or settlers to protect them and their lands. He concluded that the allotment program broke the "solemn trust" between Congress and Indian people, and more importantly for his larger argument, undermined the power of Congress and the federal government more generally.[109]

That Bland would support compensatory legislation and the protection of Indian communities as distinct entities is not surprising when one considers his other reform interests. Though far-reaching, Bland's reform associations all centered on the idea of the government performing a compensatory role in some form or another. As a writer, Bland's publications clearly reflected these interests, as did his membership in a number of political parties and organizations that espoused these values. In the 1870s Bland published *Farming as a Profession* (1870), *How to Grow Rich* (1879), and *The Life of Benjamin Butler* (1879).[110] The first was a novel about a young man who became a successful farmer, the second attacked monopoly, while the latter, though biographical in nature, focused intently on the "greenback" issue. Bland believed that the federal government should issue paper money, and vehemently opposed bankers. He argued that as long as these people controlled the currency, farmers and the working classes would always operate at a disadvantage in a capitalist society. It was the role of the state, Bland

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[109] A.J. Willard, "Indian Jurisdiction After Division in Severalty," *Council Fire* 12 (March 1889): 46-4747.

[110] Thomas A. Bland, *Farming as a Profession* (Boston: Loring Publisher, 1870) and Thomas A. Bland, M.D., *The Life of Benjamin Butler* (Boston: Lee and Shepard Publishers, 1879). See also Behrens, M.A. Thesis, 79. He also published a short biography of the greenback party members of Congress in 1879 called *The Spartan Band.*

suggested, to compensate for the short-comings of a capitalist economy. As a greenbacker, Bland would have been interested in labor issues, supporting the eight hour workday, the establishment of an income tax, and even women's suffrage.[111] Bland also took issue with railroad monopolies, this in fact may have dovetailed nicely with his efforts at Indian reform, and was the subject of his fourth and fifth books entitled *The Reign of Monopoly* (1881) and *How to Grow Rich* (1881).[112] In 1892 he turned back to his interest in banking and published *Esau: or the Bankers Victim*, in which he attacked the National Bank, and *People's Party Shot and Shell* which addressed the reform agenda of the upstart populist party.[113] His interest in populism also easily fit with his compensatory ideology.[114]

As the NIDA sought to expand the framework of its arguments, so too did the IRA, and Herbert Welsh's interests in Indian policy fit well with his other reform interests and ideology. Welsh once wrote that the members of the IRA believed that "this Indian question, like the national evil of slavery in the past or the corruption of the Civil Service

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[111] For more on the National Greenback Party see Irwin Unger, *The Greenback Era: A Social and Political History of American Finance, 1865-1879* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964); Gretchen Ritter, *Goldbugs and Greenbacks: The Antimonopoly Tradition and the Politics of Finance in America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[112] Thomas A. Bland, *Reign of Monopoly* (Washington D.C.: Rufus H. Darby, Printer and Publisher, 1881). Darby also published the *Council Fire*. See also Behrens, M.A. Thesis, 80. For more on the significance of railroads in United States history see John Stover, *American Railroads* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961); Gabriel Kolko, *Railroads and Regulations, 1877-1916* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965);Sarah Gordon, *Passage to Union: How the Railroads Transformed American Life, 1829-1929* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1997); and Barbara Welke, *Recasting American Liberty: Gender, Race, Law, and the Railroad Revolution, 1865-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[113] See Behrens, "In Defense," 80. Thomas A. Bland, *People's Party Shot and Shell* (Chicago: Charles M. Kerr and Co., Publishers, 1892).

[114] For more on populism see Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976).

in the present, was a great national question."[115] As they constructed their arguments in support of the coercive assimilationist ideology, they sought to demonstrate how important Indian affairs were to the broader nation by connecting it to civil service reform, and to the issue of governmental regulation of the economy. However, like other elements of their work, there was an underlying ideology that drove their rhetorical expansions.

In the 1880s, partly motivated by the patronage politics of the Cleveland administration and bolstered by the passage in 1883 of the Pendleton Act, Welsh became a devoted proponent of civil service reform and its extension to the Indian office.[116] He solicited information from and built friendships with several important leaders of the movement, including Dorman B. Eaton, the man who drafted the Pendleton Act, Richard H. Dana, the editor of the *Civil Service Record*, and George W. Curtis, the editor of *Harper's Weekly* and president of the National Civil Service Reform League (NCSRL).[117] Curtis and Welsh worked closely together and in the mid-1880s he created a committee that included Welsh, Theodore Roosevelt and Secretary of the Interior, Charles Schurz. This committee worked to coordinate strategies between the NCSRL and the IRA. Early victories for Welsh and the IRA on this front came when the National Civil Service Reform League passed a resolution in 1886 to advocate the application of civil service

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[115] *Constitution and By-Laws of the Indian Rights Association*, 3.

[116] The Pendleton Act established the United States Civil Service Commission and is understood as the official end of the patronage politics. The impetus for this legislation was Garfield's assassination by Charles Guiteau, a disgruntled office-seeker. However, it is also important to note that many politicians initially criticized this law significantly.

[117] For more see Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 81-82 and 113-114. That Welsh sought out allies among editors is significant in that it fit nicely with the IRA's tactic of using and controlling the media.

rules to clerks in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and when the "Friends" passed a similar resolution at Lake Mohonk that year.[118] In his speech at Lake Mohonk, which the IRA published in the form of a pamphlet, Welsh told the stories of Morris A. Thomas and Dr. J.J.S. Doherty, two men who had been accused of fraud, yet subsequently appointed to important positions in the Indian Bureau - Indian Inspector and Government Physician. He also cited a story concerning General R.H. Milroy, ex-Agent from Yakima Agency. According to Welsh, Milroy had been forced to resign for political reasons and that conditions at the reservations had deteriorated considerably as a result. Welsh concluded that to protect against such actions, "the reform civil service spirit, and, in some shape, the civil service rules should be extended to the system which controls the appointment and removal of inspectors, agents, chief clerks, farmers, and other subordinates in the Indian service."[119] Interestingly, Milroy's personal letters to Welsh, which he wrote to solicit help in appealing his removal, were filled with vitriolic statements commenting upon the fitness of his replacement. Among his other complaints, Milroy argued that the new agent was a Catholic and that he smoked tobacco, thus making him unsuitable for the position. In addition, he referred to the Secretary of the Interior Lamar, a Democrat, as a "darn Reb."[120]

While Milroy's comments, on their surface, bore the mark of an emotional reaction to what he perceived to be an unjust termination, the fact that he framed his

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[118] Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 81.

[119] *Address of Herbert Welsh, Corresponding Secretary of the Indian Rights Association, Delivered before the Mohonk Indian Conference, October 14th, 1886*, IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 - Subseries A 2-4.

[120] General R.H. Milroy to Herbert Welsh, 17 September 1885, IRAP, Series 1-A - Incoming Correspondence, 1864-1968, nd, Reel 1.

solicitations for Welsh's aid by impugning his replacement's character is revealing. At several moments throughout his career, Welsh, a staunch Republican, demonstrated an anti-Catholic bias, particularly in the role of the Catholic Church in Indian education.[121] As the IRA leader researched the history of civil service reform in the United States and Great Britain, he came upon the idea of competitive examinations. In England, one of the most significant features of the new system, Welsh observed, was "that it substituted an open competitive examination, as a means of testing the qualifications of those seeking place in the Civil Service of the Government, for the former methods of influence and pressure."[122] Through civil service reform, Welsh believed that it was possible to shape the policy agenda and administration of the Indian Bureau by controlling who became administrators.[123] Welsh believed that these examinations could serve as gateway, through which only properly-educated, and ideologically homogenous individuals would pass. Significantly, Herbert's uncle William Welsh and the Board of Indian Commissioners tried to control who had access to political power within the BIA in the

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[121] Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 88-89.

[122] Herbert Welsh, *A Sketch of the History of Civil Service Reform in England and in the United States*, (1889), IRAP, Series II. Organizational Records, 1882-1968, Reel 102 - IRA Pamphlets, 1883-1892 - Subseries A, 6. Welsh also supported V.T. McGillycuddy whole-heartedly. Prior to his removal, McGillycuddy sent a letter to Welsh outlining some of the actions the BIA had taken at his agency, including removing his school superintendent and matron. He stated that they "New Englanders," seemingly a compliment that Welsh would have understood. The replacement superintendent, he stated, was "a single man" and "a good democrat," seemingly questioning his background and similarly he asserted that the new matron was from the "solid south" and the daughter of an "ex-guerilla." He also mentioned that he had been sent a new assistant teacher who "half-demented" and wandered "around the building talking to herself." See V.T. McGillycuddy to Herbert Welsh, 17 September 1886, IRAP, Series 1-A - Incoming Correspondence, 1864-1968, n.d., Reel 2.

[123] For more on the Civil Service in United States History and Civil Service Reform, see Ronald N. Johnson, *The Federal Civil Service System and the Problem of Democracy: The Economics and Politics of Institutional Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Patricia Ingraham, *The Foundation of Merit: Public Service in American Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); and David A. Schultz and Robert Moranto, *The Politics of Civil Service Reform* (New York: P. Lang Press, 1998).

1870s, most notably in the allegations made against and subsequent trial of Ely S. Parker. Welsh would have been familiar with this tactic and through civil service reform, he attempted to control and shape Indian policy through the methods by which the BIA made appointments. In the late-1880s and 1890s, civil service reform began to occupy more and more of Welsh's time and he shifted the direction of the IRA to incorporate these ideas.

The IRA also argued for a significant expansion of governmental intervention into the economy. In his presentation to the "Friends of the Indian" assembled at the seventh annual Lake Mohonk Conference, C.C. Painter argued that in order for the allotment program to be successful, the government should help create contracts between the Indian allotees and landless white men. The white men would help break and cultivate the land for a period of years, while the Indians would work as paid laborers. At the end of the period, the white men would move on and the Indians would keep the ready-made farms.[124] Two years earlier Painter had written a pamphlet entitled "The Dawes Land in Severalty Bill and Indian Emancipation," and asserted that by breaking apart tribal relations, creating individual farms for commercial agriculture, and disposing of "surplus" lands to white settlers, the government would not only hasten the assimilation process, but stimulate an economic windfall.[125] It appears that the question of the viability of farming on the reservations never significantly entered into the IRA leaders thinking, but after the passage of the Allotment Act, many Indian agricultural

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[124] C.C. Painter, *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indian* (1889), 84-89. This source is part of an edited collection of documents of the "Friends." See Prucha, *Americanizing the American Indian*, 114-121.

[125] C.C. Painter, *The Dawes Land in Severalty Bill and Indian Emancipation.*

developments failed, for a variety of reasons, and the Indian people leased their lands to non-Native farmers, homesteaders, and mineral extraction companies.[126] Nonetheless, when they made these arguments, IRA leaders envisioned a greatly expanded federal bureaucracy with powers previously unseen. Creating contracts between landholders and laborers or lessees, would be a state function directly within the economic structures of various regions, a power considered dangerous by some. By considering an expanded federal bureaucracy, however, the IRA's ideology was very typical of the larger social and political reform movements of the Progressive Era.

The IRA agenda also fit nicely with Welsh's other reform interests. Among other causes, Welsh participated in the Philadelphia and National Municipal Leagues, working to create more open and honest city governments. He also helped to found a Pennsylvania forestry association, served as a vice-president for a national Forestry Congress, worked in the Law and Order Society of Philadelphia, sat on the Board of Managers for the City Parks Association, and played a key role in the Culture Extension League, an organization created to improve recreational facilities for the poor. He also participated in the local Board of Education and in the Universal Peace Union.[127] One key factor that united all of the reform organizations in which Welsh participated was that they all engaged in creating a physical and human environment that they felt was most appropriate for United States society. In Indian policy this ideology manifested itself in the form of an approach characterized by dispossession and the spatial, social, political,

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[126] See Leonard Carlson, *Indians, Bureacrats, and Lands: The Dawes Act and the Decline of Indian Farming* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1981); and Emily Greenwald, *Reconfiguring the Reservation: The Nez Perces, Jicarilla Apaches, and the Dawes Act* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002).

[127] For more on Welsh's other reform interests see Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 49, 98.

and economic confinement of Indian people. Welsh and the IRA sought to expand the framework within which they situated their arguments about Indian reform, and in doing so, they appealed to like-minded individuals and organizations. Through their efforts and through a number of contingent factors, their vision of Indian policy and role of the state came to dominate the era.

IRA Victory

With the passage of the Dawes General Allotment Act in 1887 the IRA claimed victory over the NIDA in this period of Indian policy reform. A program of coercive assimilation coupled with dispossession would guide the BIA for most of the next 50 years. The IRA victory demonstrated several important insights into Indian policy reform, late-nineteenth-century reform movements more generally, the development of the post-Civil War state, and the significance of historical contingencies.

Although the debates in the House of Representatives seemed mild compared to the debates between reformers leading up to that moment, the final version of the general allotment legislation in February 1887 represented a wide political alliance and diverse eastern and western political concerns. Some commentators understood allotment as an idealistic, yet practical program, while others "saw the law as an opportunity for the Federal government finally to rid itself of its obligations to the Indians."[128] The IRA and the "Friends of the Indian" had been incredibly successful in shaping the terms of the allotment debates and in drawing together diverse interests through their lobbying tactics. By employing a full-time lobbyist, in the person of C.C. Painter, they were able to keep Indian issues in the forefront of the minds of congressmen and legislators. This

[128] Hoxie, "The End of the Savage," 169.

technique had not yet developed into a mainstay among the broader reform organizations, as it would in the 1890s and after the turn of the twentieth century, and it is significant that this method was used so effectively first in Indian policy reform. Furthermore, the IRA's ability to control and manipulate newspaper coverage, through letters to the editor and through interviews with journalists, helped to establish their agenda as the central body of thought on the "Indian Question." The IRA also drew together several factions of the population and appealed to more individuals and organizations that otherwise may not have considered Indian policy among the most pressing issues facing the nation. Though the NIDA often used the *Council Fire* to counter the IRA claims, as a narrowly defined reform journal, the paper did not enjoy the same wide readership as larger regional periodicals.

That the allotment law became a federal policy directive in the late-1880s also provides insight into the ideologies of geographic expansion and of the development of the state by the late-nineteenth century. The coercive assimilationist framework of the allotment program was the logical extension of the efforts of William Welsh and the Board of Indian Commissioners during the Peace Policy Era, but bureaucratic mechanisms of the BIA had not yet developed to the point that the machinery of allotment would have been possible. Also, federal policymakers were not yet ready to institute such overt state-sanctioned expansionist policy, even though proposals for such legislation had circulated in Washington D.C. in the 1870s and before. By the late-1880s though, the BIA had developed bureaucratically and coupled with the recent interest in territorial expansion, helped make allotment a political reality. In the post-Civil War era, the settlement of western territories, debates about the potential annexation of Canada,

parts of Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the heightened interest in and eventual colonization of Hawai'i, all developed within a similar time period and all help to demonstrate the evolution of thought concerning state-structured expansion.[129] This was also a moment when policymakers were increasingly open to accepting new and experimental policy reforms, perhaps more so that at any time in the past.[130] It is significant that it was within this complex social and political milieu in which the coercive assimilationist program became a federal law.

One final element, however, comprises this story. At the critical moment that the state began to implement allotment legislation, the NIDA's momentum, already smarting from its political defeat, but resigned to challenge the law in the courts, faltered due to a tragic accident. Shortly after the passage of the Dawes Act, Bland and the NIDA vowed to pursue a legal recourse against the congressmen who had supported the bill. Bland wrote that the bill was "despotic, unjust and unconstitutional," and that "we have protested against its enforcement, and we are vigilantly and anxiously awaiting an opportunity to make our protest before the Supreme Court." He knew that they faced savvy political opponents and noted that the Secretary of the Interior specifically

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[129] For more on the Indian Wars and settlement of the Western Territories, see Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West*; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*; Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy*; Wooster, *Nelson A. Miles and the Twilight of the Frontier Army*; Buecker, *Fort Robinson and the American West*; and McChristian, *Fort Bowie, Arizona.* In 1865-1866 the idea of an annexation of Canada played a key role in the development of the confederation movement in Canada. In 1866 an annexation bill even passed the House of Representatives. For more on Canadian confederation see Martin, *Britain and the Origins of Canadian Confederation*; Moore, *1867*; and Vaughan, *The Canadian Federalist Experiment.* For more on United States involvement in Latin America and the Caribbean in post-Civil War Era see Nelson, *Almost a Territory*; Topik, *Trade and Gunboats*; Webb, *Impassioned Brothers*; Healy, *James G. Blaine and Latin America*; Johnson, *A Hemisphere Apart*; and Holden and Zolov eds., *Latin America and the United States: A Documentary History.* For more on the annexation of Hawai'i see Coffman, *A Nation Within* and Silva, *Aloha Betrayed.* For more general studies of American Imperialism in this time period see Paolino, *The Foundations of American Empire* and LaFeber, *The New Empire.*

[130] For more on this idea of openness see Daniel Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

hindered the NIDA attempt to test the constitutionality of the program by initially applying it only to small reservations that fell under the jurisdiction of executive order, or to those that had allotment clauses in their individual treaties with the United States. [131] This way, he did not actually enforce the allotment law, and the NIDA could not field a test case. "Something besides protest and argument and appeals to the pubic sentiment through the *Council Fire* is needed now," Bland asserted and he concluded "to go into the lecture field and make a determined effort to correct public opinion on this question, and also to raise a fund sufficient to enable the National Indian Defense Association to meet the expense of defending the legal rights of the Indian tribes in the United States courts."[132] In early May, Thomas and Cora Bland left Washington DC on an east coast tour of prominent reform centers including Boston, Philadelphia, and New York. The trip seemed to be useful, particularly in Boston. "[W]e felt quite encouraged with the success attending our efforts to get Boston right on the Indian question."[133]

They left Boston on June 20, encouraged by the positive reception they experienced. The next day however, tragedy struck. The limited express train from Washington collided with the Blands' homeward bound train at Havre de Grace, Maryland. One can only imagine the terror as their passenger car was "telescoped by the locomotive of the other train." The only other passenger sitting ahead of them was killed instantly, and the Blands "were badly scalded and otherwise injured, but escaped through

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[131] "A History of the Policy of Coercion," *Council Fire* 10 (December 1887), 92.

[132] "A Special Word to Our Readers," *Council Fire* 10 (April-May 1887), 66.

[133] "Report of Work During the Summer," *Council Fire* 10 (November 1887), 74. See also Behrens, "In Defense," 200, and "Forgotten Challengers," 151.

a window of the car."[134] He would later note that he could not remember how they escaped because both he and Cora "had no conscious recollection of the circumstances." They spent the rest of the year and all of 1888 in recovery, suffering from bouts of "brain fever" and "nervous prostration," and while they continued lecturing, their suffering bodies prevented them from writing or editing the *Council Fire*. The momentum that had been established ground to a halt because the Blands served as the conduit through which NIDA members communicated and were the driving force behind this movement. It is impossible to know what the outcome may have been had Bland and the NIDA been successful in bringing a case before the United States Supreme Court to test the constitutionality of the allotment law. For the student of federal Indian policy though, this episode is satisfying in the sense that Bland's and the NIDA's efforts demonstrate that there were individuals who, drawing from a tradition of dissent initiated by Ely S. Parker and others a generation previous, fought against the idea of coercive assimilation and dispossession. It is also frustrating, however, to know that the possibility existed for this history to have unfolded differently if not for a tragic accident.

The generation of reformers who emerged after the Peace Policy era adopted and expanded the reform agendas and policy platforms of the previous period. In these debates Thomas Bland and the National Indian Defense Association lobbied for compensatory legislation and supported the protection of Indian communities as distinct entities – an approach popularized by Ely S. Parker. Simultaneously, Herbert Welsh and the Indian Rights Association supported the conservative, coercive assimilationist

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[134] "Homeward Bound - A Railroad Collision," *Council Fire* 10 (November 1887), 77.

ideology that had been the mainstay of William Welsh and the Board of Indian Commissioners. By connecting their Indian policy agendas to larger issues in state development and social reform, however, this generation of activists fostered a growth of public interest in Indian affairs. Their actions demonstrate that scholars, in order to understand the complexities of this era in United States history, must consider the role of the Bureau of Indian affairs as a meeting ground for ideas about role of the state and its relationship to individuals, and how these ideas served as forbearers of later reform trends.

In his institutional history of the Indian Rights Association, historian William Hagan wrote that while its development was interesting, the National Indian Defense Association, "never seriously rivaled the IRA."[135] Historian Francis Prucha was slightly more circumspect and suggested that the NIDA "appeared to have some influence in high places." This chapter has demonstrated that in the debates leading up to the passage of the general allotment law, the NIDA mounted a significant opposition to the IRA. In their rhetoric and reform tactics, Thomas Bland and the NIDA exposed some of the inconsistencies of the IRA platform and revealed the coercive assimilationist ideology of its leadership, especially in the persons of Herbert Welsh and Charles C. Painter. Prucha concluded that "Bland's views, if not his methods, look better in the perspective of time than many of those of the united humanitarian reformers [the IRA and the 'Friends']."[136]

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[135] Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association*, 37.

[136] Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, 166, 167.

Conclusion

John Collier and the Backlash against Coercive Assimilation

The coercive assimilationist reformers won the policy reform battles of the late-nineteenth century, and the resulting policy agenda, founded upon dispossession, moved forward with a brash intensity. Though amended several times, in an effort to include additional reservations within its framework, the allotment program profoundly shaped Indian history between the late-1880s and the mid-1930s. By the end of this period, the disruption and despair that dispossession created within Indian communities - results hinted at by the developments Ely Parker witnessed during the Ogden land dispute at the Tonawanda reservation in the 1840s and 1850s - became painfully apparent when the federal government commissioned a study of Indian life and governance by the Institute for Government Research in 1928. Known to historians as the Meriam Report because of its editor, Lewis Meriam, *The Problem of Indian Administration* revealed the outcome of almost fifty years of dispossession and coercive assimilation legislation. This report noted that the infant mortality rate among Indian people was double the national average. It also found that two-thirds of Native people earned fewer than one hundred dollars per year, that only about one third of Native people were literate, and that Indians died from tuberculosis at a rate seven times that of the general population. Finally, of the 155,632,312 acres Native people held in 1881, only 52,651,393 remained in Indian hands in 1933. Although it was not tabulated, non-Native people, especially ranchers, homesteaders, land developers, and farmers, profited greatly from the opportunity to

purchase newly opened reservation lands at a minimum. The federal government too, used these funds to defray some of the costs of Indian governance.[1]

But the Indian-centered opposition to coercive assimilation, with its notions of compensatory and protective legislation did not disappear. After the publication of the Meriam Report, interest in Indian policy reform once again intensified. In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed a reform-minded Indian advocate named John Collier as Commissioner of Indian Affairs and his administration created and implemented a system of compensatory legislation that reflected Roosevelt's broader social and economic policy reform agenda. Collier became interested in social policymaking first through his work with immigrant communities in New York and Los Angeles, but in 1921 he visited Taos Pueblo in New Mexico and had a transformative experience. Inspired by what he believed was the ideal pre-modern human culture among the Indians of the southwest, Collier began working, with the assistance of such women as Stella Atwood of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, to improve Indian health care and other social programs. He also founded a reform organization called the American Indian Defense Association.[2] The Indian New Deal, Collier's reform campaign on the federal level in the 1930s, was the culmination of twelve years of first-hand work among Indian people. As Commissioner of Indian Affairs, he reversed the

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[1] For more see The Brookings Institution, Institute for Government Research, *The Problem of Indian Administration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1928). See also Hoxie, *The Final Promise*, 242; Greenwald, *Reconfiguring the Reservation*, 146. The Dawes Act itself was only one of the methods by which Indian were dispossessed in this period, but the land cessions that also occurred were part of the general framework of dispossession and coercive assimilation in this period.

[2] Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation,* 124-129. There is no indication that Collier knew Thomas Bland personally, or that he knew the history of Indian reform in the 1880s. The fact that his reform organization's name resembled so closely, that of Bland's, however, suggests that there might have been some connection.

coercive assimilationist policies of the allotment era, beginning with the passage of the Wheeler-Howard or Indian Reorganization Act in 1934. This act "successfully ended land allotment, restored surplus land at various reservations, and provided funds for purchasing new real estate."[3] Collier sought to reshape the colonialist ideologies of policymakers and reformers by changing the overtly hostile attitude many of these people held (as had their predecessors) toward customary Native American cultures and practices. He saw in Native culture a beauty and harmony that had been lost within modern society, and he vowed to protect and foster it. While Collier may have suffered from an overly romanticized and simplistic view of Native American culture, he played a key role in securing the passage of the Johnson-O'Malley Act, which allowed the Secretary of the Interior to "provide money for local assistance in the areas of Indian health, education, agriculture, and social welfare."[4] He also created a mechanism by which Indian communities could assert rights of self-government by writing constitutions of their own, electing officers, and adopting law codes that the federal government then supported and protected. Through this general program of reform and through specific legislation Collier established a compensatory system that both Ely Parker and Thomas Bland had attempted to develop within earlier and different political climates.

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[3] Kenneth R. Philip, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform, 1920-1954* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977), 186.

[4] Philip, *John Collier's Crusade*, 133. For more on Collier, his background, and his reform agenda, see Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation*; and E.A. Swartz, "Red Atlantis Revisited: Community and Culture in the Writings of John Collier," *American Indian Quarterly* 18 (1994): 507-531.

Legacies of Nineteenth-Century Indian Policy Reform

The mid- and late-nineteenth century in Indian affairs represented a period of contestation and complexity during which divergent and competing voices attempted to speak for Indian people and direct Indian policy. At particular moments – in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War and again in the 1880s – supporters of policies designed to protect Indian communities as distinct entities, or to provide Native peoples with opportunities, money, and goods, in an effort to balance dispossession and compensate for a history of colonialism, confronted a group of conservative, zealously Christian, elitist reformers who championed indigenous confinement and coercive assimilation within a larger context of United States expansion. The language and actions of these individual reformers and reform organizations revealed the intersections of race, class, and gender discourses within Indian/white relations at mid-century. This period of contestation and complexity in Indian policy reform was significant in several ways.

First, the evolution of Indian policy between the Civil War and the end of the nineteenth-century both shaped and reflected larger issues of state development and colonial action. While the federal government had engaged in colonial actions prior to the Civil War on a limited basis, often at the request of and under pressure from land speculators, mineral and resource extraction industries, and enterprising farmers, as represented by the Ogden land dispute at the Tonawanda reservation, after the war the state became an active force in United States colonialism through its land allotment and coercive assimilation programs embodied in the General Allotment Act of 1887 and its corollary programs. An important and politically powerful group of coercive

assimilationist reformers, led in the 1870s by William Welsh and Board of Indian Commissioners, and in the 1880s and 1890s by Herbert Welsh and the Indian Rights Association, aided this process by articulating a policy agenda that focused on forced land allotment and sought to replace customary cultural and political practices within Indian communities with structures and values based on Euro-American models. They also wanted to develop a system of mandatory Christian education for Indian youth, while encouraging their parents to become involved in the market economy. All of these programs operated within the premise of and under the assumption of total Indian confinement. The progression of this policy agenda was not the harmonious, linear development, constructed in previous interpretations.

Second, this period in Indian policy reform represented the emergence of a significant tradition of dissent within mainstream systems of governance. Beginning in the Reconstruction Era, an oppositional framework, previously apparent in the work of some Native and non-Native political commentators outside of the structures of government, developed within mainstream systems of governance - first in the work of Ely Parker in the late-1860s and early-1870s, then in the reform campaign of Thomas Bland and the National Indian Defense Association in the 1880s. During the Ogden land dispute Parker came to understand, at a young age, the profound disruptions that dispossession and colonial action could cause for an Indian community. He also understood, though, that as the nineteenth century progressed, that United States geographical expansion and economic development would likely continue, but he designed a reform agenda that sought to minimize the disruptions this process caused for Native people. He did this by attempting to create policies that would provide

educational and employment opportunities, as well as money and goods in an effort to compensate for the disruptions related to dispossession, while at the same time protecting Indian communities as distinct entities. He believed that these opportunities could help Native people assimilate into mainstream society on their own terms, in their own time. Although Parker's reform campaign ended in disappointment and he no longer worked actively in federal policymaking into the 1870s, his oppositional framework emerged again in the work of Thomas Bland and the NIDA.

Third, Ely Parker's life and career in the nineteenth century problematizes the existing interpretations that construct Indian leaders who worked within mainstream systems of governance as indigenous "sellouts." While it is true that Parker served as Commissioner of Indian Affairs during a period in which notions of Indian confinement evolved, and even that he suggested or supported certain reforms and programs, like the transfer of the BIA from the Interior Department to the Department of War, and the movement to end the treaty-making period in Indian history, the evidence simply does not support the contention that he ever abandoned his heritage. Rather, Parker was an innovative policymaker who wedded an indigenous worldview with a western intellectual framework. Understood within this context, it becomes clear that his efforts which have been constructed as detrimental (or at least potentially so) to Native peoples were well-intentioned. He believed that situating the BIA in the War Department would help insulate Native communities against the corrupting influences land speculators and business interests had on federal policymakers. When he sought to end officially the practice of making treaties between the federal government and tribal nations, he did so because in his experiences during the Ogden land dispute, he learned how factionalism

and individual interests could render community leaders' abilities to negotiate equitable treaties ineffective, or sometimes, potentially destructive to the community interests. Parker, though, underestimated the level to which the state had shifted toward a system of disruptive, coercive assimilation by the early-1870s. Viewed within the context of the evolving nineteenth-century state, his efforts to reform BIA corruption, to create policies, and to expand indigenous educational opportunities can more appropriately be interpreted as a "path not taken," rather than an abandonment of an indigenous heritage.

Furthermore, Parker's relationships with two prominent ethnographers in the early and later parts of his life demonstrate that he did not have conflicting notions of his own identity, but rather, that he maintained an active engagement with popular notions and depictions of Indians and while he highlighted certain characteristics or traits that reflected these notions as they shifted and evolved, he also demonstrated a consistent public persona as a Seneca man. While Parker's relationships with these two ethnographers, separated by several decades, differed in subtle ways, they also revealed his consistent effort to associate with individuals who supported Indian people and Indian communities. In the period between these two relationships, Parker's association with Union General U.S. Grant and the public spectacle of his marriage to a young, white, Washington DC socialite demonstrated how he continued to engage with popular notions of Indian people, at times supporting mainstream depictions, while at other times challenging them through rhetoric, reform, and his own public persona.

Finally, this period of Indian policy reform suggests that Indian affairs in the nineteenth-century were not simply peripheral events in the background of broader and more important developments in United States history. Events such as the Ogden land

dispute in the early-nineteenth century and Parker's rise to prominence during and after the Civil War in Washington DC reveal the ways local and national leaders and citizens followed events in Indian affairs intensely and the ways that these events contributed to both state and federal political developments, as well as the emergence of shifting and fluid notions of race, class, and gender. In the aftermath of the Civil War, these connections became even more explicit. The mid- to late- nineteenth-century BIA, served as a crucial meeting ground for ideologies of governmental authority and its development not only demonstrated the experimental nature of federal governance in this period, as policymakers allowed the state to take on increasingly active functions, but also shows the evolution of social policymaking from the hybrid public and private character of the Reconstruction programs to the institutionalized federal compensatory programs of the early-twentieth century. The significant reformers and reform organizations of this period, the Indian Rights Association and the National Indian Defense Association, facilitated this development as they connected their notions of Indian reform to broader issues in politics and society in their widely-distributed pamphlets and articles in the nation's most important newspapers. They also employed innovative tactics in political lobbying that would, within a short period of time, be adopted by many other social and political reformers. The politicians who came to support these competing organizations were not, as has sometimes been asserted, marginal legislators, but included some of the most significant senators, representatives, and jurists in the nation.

While scholars of pre-Revolutionary and late-eighteenth-century North America have demonstrated clearly that in order understand the history of this region and

timeframe, one must recognize the importance of the Indian experience and the ways Indian people shaped this history. Scholars of the nineteenth-century Indian history have struggled to make similar assertions for their chronological orientation and most mainstream studies of United States history and in particular, state development, either disregard completely, or attach little significance to Indian affairs within the larger context of national events. Indian policy reform in this period though, revealed the ways that ideas about Indian people and Indian confinement, as well as Indian people themselves, shaped, influenced, and reflected national trends and events in mid- to late-nineteenth-century United States history. Highlighting the primacy of the BIA in the evolution of the state and recognizing how some state-centered social policymaking was modeled first in Indian policy suggests that recognizing the importance of the Native American experience in this era is critical to our larger historical understanding.

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