Summer 2018

"O Stop and Tell Me, Red Man": Indian Removal and the Lamanite Mission of 1830-31

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"O STOP AND TELL ME, RED MAN": INDIAN REMOVAL AND THE LAMANITE MISSION OF 1830-31

A Masters Thesis

Presented to

The Graduate College of

Missouri State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts, History

By

Kaleb C. Miner

August 2018

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History

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ABSTRACT

In 1830-1831, Mormon missionaries were sent out to proselytize Native Americans—an effort called the “Lamanite Mission.” While this event has been scrutinized multiple times over and in a variety of ways, the Native Americans themselves are most often either considered passive characters in the narrative or ignored completely. However, understanding the circumstances of those Native Americans leading up to the Lamanite Mission, during the era of Indian Removal, can give a deeper understanding of the early Mormon mission which has heretofore been ignored. Understanding Indian Removal not only explains why the Seneca, Wyandot, Shawnee, and Delaware people were located as they were when Mormon missionaries arrived in 1830-1831 but can also give possible explanations as to *why* those Native Americans reacted to the message of Mormonism as they did. Each of the four Native American groups, while experiencing many of the same trials during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, also underwent their own, unique issues which help to give more detail to the Lamanite Mission and the reaction of Native Americans to the first Mormon missionaries. Finally, by looking at the circumstances of the Native Americans themselves, the issue of ignoring or sidelining the indigenous people in the narrative of the Lamanite Mission can, at least in part, be rectified.

KEYWORDS: Mormon, Native American, Lamanite Mission, Indian Removal, Early Mormonism, Seneca, Wyandot, Shawnee, Delaware.

This abstract is approved as to form and content

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people for their support during the course of my graduate studies. First of all, my wife and family, whose patience and encouragement allowed me to make it this far and continue to support me in my path. My committee chair, Dr. Brooks Blevins, for helping me as a writer, being patient, and whose Ozark humor (which I'm sure he will appreciate) made me feel at home. Dr. John Chuchiak, who inspired me on multiple levels, encouraged me to follow my chosen path, and was an excellent mentor. Dr. Robert Miller, whose kindness and willingness to help was much appreciated. Dr. John Gram, also a wonderful mentor, who helped encourage me on my path and who had a humor which was much appreciated. Dr. Eric Nelson, for giving me the opportunity to work as a Graduate Assistant. Finally, the various members of the History Department at Missouri State University and various appendages of the same who helped me along the way.

I dedicate this thesis to my mother, Alana Lynn Miner (August 25, 1959-July 14, 2017). She didn't make it to see the destination but was with me for the entire journey.

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INTRODUCTION

O stop and tell me, Red Man,
Who are ye? why you roam?
And how you get your living?
Have you no God;--no home?

With stature straight and portly,
And deck'd in native pride,
With feathers, paints and broaches,
He willingly replied:--

"I once was pleasant Ephraim,
"When Jacob for me pray'd;
"But oh! how blessings vanish,
"When man from God has stray'd!

"Before your nation knew us,
"Some thousand moons ago,
"Our fathers fell in darkness,
"And wander'd to and fro,

"And long they've liv'd by hunting,
"Instead of work and arts,
"And so our race has dwindled
"To idle Indian hearts.

"Yet hope within us lingers,
"As if the Spirit spoke:--
'He'll come for your redemption,
'And break your Gentile yoke:

'And all your captive brothers,
'From every clime shall come,
'And quit their savage customs,
'To live with God at home.

"Then joy will fill our bosoms,
"And blessings crown our days,
"To live in pure religion,
"And sing our Maker's praise."[1]

[1] Emma Smith, comp., *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter Day Saints* (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams & Co., 1835), 83-84.

This hymn—written by W. W. Phelps, a prominent figure in early Mormon[2] history, and included in an early Church hymnal—epitomizes early Mormon thinking about Native Americans: often referred to as "Lamanites."[3] Early Mormons depicted and thought of Native Americans similar to the way many Anglo-American did in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—as "noble savages." Mormon theology, however, mixed in the unique idea that Native Americans were a once God-fearing and righteous people who had fallen into a state of savagery and would one day be "redeemed" to retain their rightful place as people chosen of God and blessed accordingly. One day they would reclaim their chosen status.

Mormons saw themselves as integral players in this redemption process. Not only had they "restored" the Gospel of Jesus Christ and vowed to assist in "restoring" to Native Americans God's blessings. They also promised to restore to Native Americans their lost lands—the Americas. It was this type of thinking, core to Mormon theology, which caused them to focus so earnestly on proselytization to Native Americans from very early in their history. In fact, after the official organization of the Mormon Church in 1830, one of the first matters attended by the young Church was to send forth missionaries to the Lamanites later that same year.

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[2] The term "Mormon" is commonly used today to refer to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) and sometimes to splinter groups such as the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (RLDS), now the Community of Christ or Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (FLDS). Though many, if not most, Mormons today recognize and even use the term "Mormon," the author recognizes that this is not the official name of the organization. Also, while sensitivity of language is important, the early LDS Church underwent multiple name changes, and was recognized early on by outsiders and insiders alike as "Mormons" or "Mormonites." As such, for the sake of clarity, the term Mormon is used throughout this work to refer to both the organization and its members (i.e. Mormon missionaries, Mormon church, etc.).

[3] The term "Lamanite" is derived from the core Mormon religious text, *The Book of Mormon*, which relays various stories regarding ancient inhabitants of the Americas. According to the text one group—the "Nephites"—was destroyed, while the "Lamanites" survived and are considered by Mormons to be the primary ancestors of various Native Americans.

The relationship between Native American peoples and Mormons has been discussed in a wide variety of ways and by multiple historians.[4] However, a common theme emerges in nearly all these works—the Native Americans are mostly left out of the story, or at best reduced to minor, passive actors. The same can be said for the LDS histories in general, a surprising and ironic fact when one considers that *The Book of Mormon* is "written to the Lamanites."[5] While it is not entirely fair to say scholars—or Church accounts for that matter—on the subject have always blatantly ignored the Native American people in the telling of this story the common theme remains that Native Americans themselves are given the lesser role in the narrative by far. Almost without exception, emphasis for the "Lamanite Mission" is placed on the narrative of the missionaries themselves and the effect that mission had on non-Native American converts—especially those converts made in the Kirtland, Ohio, region.

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[4] Some historian's and historical works (though this is by no means an exhaustive list) which have discussed the relationship between Mormons and Native Americans and/or the Lamanite Mission itself in various ways are: Max Perry Mueller, *Race and the Making of the Mormon People* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017); W. Paul Reeve, *Religion of a Different Color: Race and the Mormon Struggle for Whiteness*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Keith Parry, "Joseph Smith and the Clash of Sacred Cultures," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18, no. 4 (Winter 1985): 65-80; G. St. John Stott, "New Jerusalem Abandoned: The Failure to Carry Mormonism to the Delaware," *Journal of American Studies* 21, no. 1, Henry James: New Contexts (April, 1987): 71-85; Ronald W. Walker, "Seeking the 'Remnant': The Native American During the Joseph Smith Period," *Journal of Mormon History* 19 *Journal of Mormon History* 19, no. 1 (1993): 1-33; Ronald E. Romig, "The Lamanite Mission," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 14 (1994): 25-33; Leland H. Gentry, "Light on the 'Mission to the Lamanites,'" *BYU Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (1996): 226-234; Lori Elaine Taylor, "Telling Stories About Mormons and Indians" (PhD diss., State University of New York at Buffalo, 2000); Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc., 2005); Matthew Garrett, *Making Lamanites: Mormons, Native Americans, and the Indian Student Placement Program, 1947-2000* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2017); Christopher C. Smith, "Playing Lamanite: Ecstatic Performance of American Indian Roles in Early Mormon Ohio," *Journal of Mormon History* 41, no. 3 (2015): 131-166; T. Ward Frampton, "'Some Savage Tribe': Race, Legal Violence, and the Mormon War of 1838," *Journal of Mormon History* 40, no. 1 (2014): 175-207; Leland H. Gentry, "Light on the 'Mission to the Lamanites,'" *BYU Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (1996): 226-234; Ronald E. Romig, "The Lamanite Mission," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 14 (1994): 25-33.

[5] Joseph Smith, Jr., *The Book of Mormon*, 1830 ed. (Palmyra, New York: Printed by E. B. Grandin, 1830), Joseph Smith Papers.

Yet attempting to understand an effort to proselytize Native Americans while simultaneously ignoring them is problematic at best. Doing so not only ignores their role in the narrative but also limits how one understands the event itself. The years preceding the Lamanite Mission are integral to understanding the mission itself regarding both the Native Americans and the Mormons. Indian Removal and the events of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are key to understanding the context in which Mormon missionaries first encountered Native Americans during the Lamanite Mission. Yet, historians have consistently overlooked or deemphasized this impact. According to writer and historian Ronald E. Romig, "There is no need to review the [Lamanite] mission's background other than to say at the very moment of the Lamanite missionaries' arrival in western Missouri, the United States government was gathering Native American Indian tribes for resettlement to the west of the Missouri border in territory known today as Kansas."[6] Ronald Walker's article, "The Lamanite Mission," only dedicates a paragraph to the subject of Indian Removal.[7] This is not to say that historians thought Indian Removal was not important or a part of the narrative of the Lamanite Mission; on the contrary, they seem to declare—at least in passing—that it was important both for the location of the Native Americans at the time and for the mindset of the Mormon missionaries. However, granting but passing attention to the subject of Indian Removal and how it relates to the Lamanite Mission creates an oversimplification that can be misleading; in many ways, doing so adds to the false idea that Indian Removal was a sudden, uniform, and concentrated event which took place at a specific time and

[6] Romig, 25.
[7] Walker, 6-7.

for a singular purpose.[8] Nothing could be farther from the truth. Indian Removal was messy and occurred over a great length of time beginning as early as European contact with Native Americans in the Northeast of what is now the United States. Northern Indian Removal and the Lamanite Mission were intimately tied together, and an understanding of the former is necessary for a full appreciation of the latter.

In fact, it is only by discussing Indian Removal together with the first Mormon missionary effort to Native Americans such as the Seneca, Wyandot, Shawnee, and Delaware that we can answer questions crucial to understanding the full scope of the Lamanite Mission. Why did the Mormons seek out these specific Native Americans? Why were those Native Americans located where they were at the time of the missions? And possibly and perhaps most importantly, why did they either accept or reject the message of Mormonism, and to what degree? Not only are these questions important to answer, but by discussing Indian Removal as a key element of the narrative, we reestablish Native Americans themselves as key figures.[9]

Chapter one focuses on the Mormons and the missionary effort itself. As this is a story of *both* Native Americans *and* early Mormons, understanding aspects of early Mormonism's history and the account of the Lamanite Mission itself is crucial. I begin

[8] Most often this due to the implementation of the Indian Removal Act in 1830. See United States, *The public statues at large of the United States of America,* Statutes at Large, vol. 4, 21st Congress, 1st Session, Chapter 148, pgs. 411-412 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1845-1867), from Library of Congress, *A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774-1875*.

[9] I must note here that I do not offer any tribal or cultural insight which may seek to explain the reaction of any of the four Native American groups discussed to the Mormon missionaries. My focus is to place the story of Indian Removal and the "Lamanite Mission" in conjunction with each other—to make Native Americans key actors in the narrative. As such I rely mostly on non-Native American sources—though I did try to include them when available and relevant—as there are little or no existing sources from indigenous people directly relating to the "Lamanite Mission" itself. However, I recognize that further research into more specific aspects of the Mormon/Native American relationship does and should warrant further investigation into indigenous sources.

this discussion with an overview of early Mormonism and the mindset regarding Native Americans which Mormons likely would have had going into the proselytizing effort. Then I discuss the "traditional" account of the mission itself and map out the actual travels of the missionaries. Finally, I conclude the chapter with an overview of factors that led to the demise of the mission and forced Mormons to partially abandon their early focus on proselytizing Native Americans in order to deal with other issues of the time.

Chapter two focuses on the removal and situation of the Seneca, Wyandot, and Shawnee. Mormon missionaries found these three nations to be the least receptive to their entreaties, and little to no evidence remains of their specific responses. Nevertheless, understanding each group's individual experience with removal and discussing the varying trials they faced place each of them into the context of the Lamanite Mission.

The third chapter focuses solely on the Delaware. The Delaware experience with removal and resettlement best epitomized the trauma faced by Native Americans during this period. The story of the Delaware is one of near-constant relocation—be it forced or otherwise—and rebuilding, which certainly affected their decision making. Furthermore, the Delaware were the only one of the four Native American groups whom the missionaries visited who responded positively to the message the Mormons brought. This positive response is the most intriguing of the reactions during the Lamanite Mission saga—especially in light of the tumultuous experience of the Delaware and their history or interaction with other Christian missionaries.

CHAPTER 1: THE "LAMANITE MISSION"

> And the Gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them [the "Lamanites"]; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their fathers. And then shall they rejoice: for they shall know that it is a blessing unto them from the hand of God; and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and a delightsome people.[10]

Passages such as this, found in *The Book of Mormon*, heavily influenced both Mormon ideology and action towards Native Americans, whom they believed to be descendants of people found within *The Book of Mormon*, the "Lamanites." As *The Book of Mormon* was, and still is, the core canonized scripture of the Mormon faith, and perhaps the most important distinguishing aspect between themselves and other Christian denominations to appear during the period, adherence to its teaching and principles was of great importance to the young Church. A great deal of study has been dedicated to discussing the implications of Mormon ideology. Was it similar to other ideologies of the time? To what degree was it different? Was it more of the same racism towards Native Americans, or was it uplifting towards them instead? Such discussions are not within the scope of this paper, except to say that early Mormons *believed* they were obligated to take their teaching to the Native Americans; in turn, belief greatly influenced action. As such, early Church history and belief does deserve at least some discussion.

Organizing the Church

The story of Mormonism begins before its official organization in April of 1830 and warrants a brief discussion. As a teenager, Joseph Smith Jr., the founder of

[10] Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 1830 ed., 117.

Mormonism, was caught up, as many were, in the confusion and religious commotion of the Second Great Awaking in upstate New York, in the vicinity of Palmyra Township. In 1820, Smith supposedly experienced his "First Vision" during which he saw "two personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description"—God the Father, and the resurrected Jesus Christ. This was the initial inspiration that later culminated in the foundation of the Mormon Church.[11]

Just a few years after this first divine experience, on September 21, 1823, Smith experienced another vision. This time he was visited by yet another heavenly messenger in the form of an angelic being who referred to himself as Moroni.[12] During this visitation, Smith was told (among other things) that "there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent [North America], and the sources from which they sprang."[13] It was not until September 22, 1827, however, that Smith was able to actually retrieve the "gold plates" and subsequently begin the work of translation.[14]

There was a great deal of excitement regarding both the "gold plates" and the visions experienced by Smith, and in a short period of time rumors abounded. Hearing these rumors in 1829 Oliver Cowdery—who would become one of the missionaries

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[11] Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of the Church*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Deseret Book Company, 1980), 5. The author understands that there exist multiple accounts of the "First Vision." However, as a discussion of the variance between accounts is not prudent to this discussion, the official, canonized version of the account suffices for these purposes.

[12] The very same Moroni who was both a participant and partial author of the "original" plates which Smith later translated to become *The Book of Mormon*.

[13] Smith, *History of the Church*, 12; Ibid., 10-14.

[14] Ibid., 18. Also, it is important to note that the authorship of *The Book of Mormon* has been debated a great deal. However, discussing this debate is not the goal, or within the scope of this particular study. The important distinction, and thus the use of the word "translation," is that Mormons *believed* it to be a work which Smith translated rather than wrote—a doctrinal point which was as central to Mormonism in its youth as it continues to be today.

during the later Lamanite Mission—travelled to Pennsylvania, where Smith was then living, to ask Smith about the validity of these rumors. Cowdery quickly became converted to the teachings of Smith and took up the work of acting as a scribe for the translation process of *The Book of Mormon*. Cowdery would become an integral figure in early Mormon history and was even one of the "witnesses" to the gold plates.[15]

It was also during this period that Smith befriended the Whitmer family. Later, one of their sons, Peter Whitmer Jr., would also be called as one of the first Mormon missionaries to teach the Native Americans and was another witness to the gold plates.[16] It was at the Whitmer farm, in Fayette, New York, that Joseph Smith finished the translation of *The Book of Mormon*. Smith had the final translated work printed by Egbert B. Grandin of Palmyra in the latter part of 1829.[17]

Not long after, Smith and others prepared for the official organization of the Church.[18] Thus with just six members—Joseph Smith Jr., Hyrum Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer Jr., Samuel Smith, and David Whitmer—the followers of Joseph Smith were officially organized into a recognized church body.[19] Only a few months after the Church was officially organized, the thoughts of leaders and member alike turned to the proselytization of the Native Americans, or Lamanites, as the Mormons understood them to be.

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[15] Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 1830 ed., 589.
[16] Ibid., 599.
[17] Bushman, 76-82.
[18] Smith, *History of the Church*, 75-77.
[19] There is some debate or the manner and place of the official organization of the Church. This account relies upon the *History of the Church*. However, for a more detailed overview of that historical debate, see Bushman, 109-110. Also there is a great deal of information regarding the coming forth of *The Book of Mormon* and the organization of the Church, but for this discussion those details are not pertinent, and have been intentionaly left out of this narrative.

Among the Lamanites

At the very heart of the "Lamanite Mission" was *The Book of Mormon*. After all, the very introduction of *The Book of Mormon* declares that it was "written to the Lamanites, which are a remnant of the House of Israel."[20] According to the main narrative of *The Book of Mormon*, ancient people from Jerusalem were lead away by divine providence and eventually arrived in the ancient Americas. Shortly thereafter, a factional schism occurred, and those newly arrived people were labeled either "Nephites" or "Lamanites" depending on which faction they sided with.[21] By the end of *The Book of Mormon*, the Nephites are destroyed, and the Lamanites remain. According to Mormon theology, modern Native Americans are descendants of those remaining Lamanites. Throughout the text of *The Book of Mormon* there can be found prophetic references to the future of the Lamanites' descendants. In fact, *The Book of Mormon* was supposedly written by the ancient Nephites so that it "may be of worth unto… the Lamanites, in some future day."[22]

Though the text had only recently begun publication and printing, early Mormons would certainly have been savvy to its references to the Lamanites and their "descendants," the Native Americans. Oliver Cowdery, perhaps above all the other missionaries called to proselytize the Native Americans, would certainly have had a deep

[20] Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 1830 ed., title page.
[21] *The Book of Mormon* actually refers to multiple groups of people throughout, but for the sake of clarity, most often refers to each side as either "Nephites"—the group which most often chose to follow God—and the "Lamanites" who rebelled against them and constantly antagonized the "Nephites."
[22] Ibid., 574. There are numerous references pertaining to the destiny of the "Lamanites" at a future date, along with reference to the importance *The Book of Mormon* will play in that role. However, it is not prudent to go over each individual reference. Suffice it to say that, according to the text, *The Book of Mormon* is meant first and foremost to restore the "Lamanites" to their rightful place as chosen people of God.

understanding of the promises made to the Lamanites in *The Book of Mormon* as he had assisted Joseph Smith in the majority of the work's translation.

Smith himself made plain the thinking of early Mormonism towards Native Americans. A few years after the Lamanite Mission, in 1833, Smith wrote to N. C. Saxton:

> The Book of Mormon is a reccord [sic] of the forefathers of our western Tribes of Indians, having been found through the ministration of an holy Angel translated into our own Language by the gift and power of God, after having been hid up in the earth for the last fourteen hundred years containing the word of God, which was delivered unto them, By it we learn that our western tribes of Indians are desendants [sic] from that Joseph that was sold into Egypt, and that the land of America is a promised land unto them…[23]

Evidence strongly suggests that early Mormons saw the North American indigenous population as the very descendants of the Lamanites in a very literal way.[24]

The topic of Indian Removal also must have been extremely influential on the mindset of early Mormons. In fact, with the passing of the Indian Removal Act of 1830, Indian Removal to lands west of the Mississippi would have been on the minds of most, if not all, American people—both indigenous and non-indigenous. As with many Christian missionary efforts, the Mormons saw this as a unique opportunity to proselytize the Native American people. For Mormons, as with other Christians, Indian Removal was seen as nothing less than positive for both themselves and Native American people, on multiple levels. Clearly early Mormons saw the gathering of Native Americans to

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[23] Letter from Joseph Smith to N. C. Saxton, 4 January 1833, Dean C. Jessee, comp. and ed., *Personal Writing of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 2002), 297.

[24] This is another debate both within and without the Mormon faith. Today, there are many studies regarding the "who" and "where" of *The Book of Mormon* and its people. However, the earliest ideology of Mormonism, prior to and during the "Lamanite Mission" strongly suggests that early Mormons looked to local Native Americans as the likely descendants of the "Lamanites."

lands west of the Mississippi as important, nothing less than prophetic, in fact. The Mormon newspaper the *Evening and Morning Star* reported in 1832 in an article labeled "The Indians":

> It is not only gratifying, but almost marvelous, to witness the gathering of the Indians. The work has been going on for some time, and these remnants of Joseph [the Native Americans] gather by hundreds to settle west of the Missouri and Arkansas. And is not this scripture fulfilling: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock, through the instrumentality of the government of the United States? For it is written, Behold I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.— Thus… there is reason to rejoice that the great purposes of the Lord are fulfilling before our eyes…[25]

To early Mormons the removal of Native Americans and the "gathering of the Lamanites" (as part of the "House of Israel") seemed synonymous. It would be the Mormons who would facilitate the task of bringing the gospel to the "remnants of Joseph," whom they understood the Native Americans to be.

With this in mind, it is no wonder that just a few months after the organization of the Church missionaries were called to go preach to the Native Americans. In September of 1830, Joseph Smith relayed to Oliver Cowdery a revelation: "Behold I say unto you [Oliver Cowdery] that thou shalt go unto the Lamanites & Preach my Gospel unto them & cause my Church to be established among them…."[26] Later in the month, during a Church conference held at Fayette, New York, Smith instructed Peter Whitmer Jr. to accompany Cowdery.[27] Those present at the conference were very excited about the

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[25] *Evening and Morning Star*, vol. 1, no. 7 (December, 1832), 107.
[26] "Revelation, September 1830–B [D&C 28]," p. 41, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed April 11, 2018, http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/revelation-september-1830-b-dc-28/2.
[27] "Revelation, September 1830–D [D&C 30:5–8]," p. 42, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed April 11, 2018, http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/revelation-september-1830-d-dc-305-8/1.

prospect of the mission effort, and Smith subsequently called Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson to go along as well.[28] The four missionaries made a covenant in October of 1830 that they would go to teach the Native Americans and subsequently left on their journey later that month.[29]

After just a few days of travel, the missionaries encountered the first of the Native American people to whom they would proselytize. In his later published autobiography, missionary Parley P. Pratt does not indicate exactly who these Native Americans were, merely stating that he and his companions stopped amongst "an Indian nation at or near Buffalo [New York]."[30] Later in his account he refers to the "Catteraugus Indians, near Buffalo, N.Y.,"[31] but there was no "Catteraugus" nation of Native Americans. This seems to have been purely a mistake of language and/or ignorance on Pratt's part, as he was apparently not aware of the specific identities of some of the various Native American peoples in the region, including these first indicated in his account, the Seneca. There was, however, and still is a Seneca reservation in the region known as the "Cattaraugus Reservation," which is almost certainly where Pratt came up with his incorrect identification for the Seneca people living there.

Pratt indicates that the missionaries met with and preached their message among the Seneca for a day and that "we [the missionaries] were kindly received, and much interest was manifested by them on hearing this news." The missionaries even left copies

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[28] Smith, *History of the Church*, 118; "Revelation, October 1830–A [D&C 32]," p. 84, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed April 11, 2018, http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/revelation-october-1830-a-dc-32/2.
[29] "Covenant of Oliver Cowdery and Others, 17 October 1830," p. [1], The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed April 11, 2018, http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/covenant-of-oliver-cowdery-and-others-17-october-1830/1.
[30] Pratt, 25.
[31] Ibid., 32.

of *The Book of Mormon* with the Seneca.[32] However, based upon the fact that Pratt spent less than a paragraph speaking about the missionaries' experience there, it seems they left with little success in regard to obtaining Native American converts, and there is no record of any specific response made by the Seneca. The fact that Smith's *History of the Church* does not even mention the missionaries' visit to the Seneca seems to support the idea that the message of the Mormons was not received as well as the missionaries had hoped. After all, the Mormons believed that the Native Americans would "be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers" and accept the gospel of Christ as the Mormons presented it.[33]

Met with this lack of immediate success, the missionaries soon resumed their undertaking and travelled west into Ohio. There, in the area of Kirtland, the missionaries made contact with Sidney Rigdon, a Reformed Baptist preacher with whom Pratt had worked prior to his own conversion to Mormonism. It was there, in the Kirtland area, where perhaps the greatest success was met with, not in the form of Native American converts as the goal of the Lamanite Mission had intended, but Anglo-Americans in the region, the preacher Rigdon included. According to Pratt, "in two or three weeks from arrival in the neighborhood… we had baptized one hundred and twenty-seven souls, and this number soon increased to one thousand."[34] Kirtland would soon become a major Mormon hub. Joseph Smith himself later relocated to the region, along with many of his followers, and the first Mormon temple was even built there.

[32] Ibid., 25.
[33] Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 1830 ed., 117.
[34] Pratt, 25.

Most narratives of the Lamanite Mission emphasize this point in the journey as the most important, and for good reason. The church grew exponentially there and changed from a miniscule group of followers to a major and recognizable American religious denomination. Many of the Ohio converts were products of the "camp revival" fever that had swept through the region earlier and were no strangers to the practice of acting out their spiritual experiences in very active, theatrical ways. In fact, many of the people there, upon hearing the news of the goal to convert the Native Americans, began to act out interactions between themselves and the modern-day Lamanites—to "play Lamanite" as historian Christopher C. Smith observes.[35] Clearly the idea of Native American conversion was an appealing aspect of Mormonism, and the new converts of Kirtland wholeheartedly supported the missionary effort.

After leaving the Kirtland area, and having added the recent convert Frederick G. Williams to their party, the Mormon missionaries continued westward. Along the way they made a point of stopping at various homes and gained additional converts. Apparently, the news of Mormonism was not well received by *all* the inhabitants of the Ohio region, and Pratt was even arrested while staying at the home of Simeon Carter, west of Kirtland. After a rather comical encounter with the local magistrate and his bulldog, he was able to escape imprisonment and rejoin his companions.[36]

By November of 1830, after a few more days of walking, the missionaries reached the second group of Native Americans along their journey, this time in the upper

[35] Christopher C. Smith, "Playing Lamanite: Ecstatic Performance of American Indian Roles in Early Mormon Ohio," *Journal of Mormon History* 41, no. 3 (2015):131-166. In this article is a much more complete discussion of how early Mormons in Ohio acted out their own ideas of Native American conversion, and the role Native Americans were proposed to play according to Mormon theology.
[36] Pratt, 26-27.

Sandusky River region. Again, Pratt's account gives very little information and no specifics regarding the interaction the Mormons had with the Wyandot people there. Though, like the Seneca, the Wyandots received the missionaries with kindness, Pratt merely states that the Mormons "spent several days [among the Wyandots] … and had an opportunity of laying before them the record of their forefathers [*The Book of Mormon*] …. They rejoiced in the tidings, bid us God speed, and desired us to write to them in relation to our success among the tribes further west, who had already removed to the Indian Territory, where these expected soon to go."[37] There is no mention in the account of any baptisms received or conversions made amongst the Wyandot at this time. Though Pratt's autobiography seems to place the visit in a positive light, the missionaries must have been at least somewhat disheartened; after all, they had apparently recruited no Native American converts among those they had visited thus far.

After a few days with the Wyandot the missionaries commenced their travel once again, heading this time to Cincinnati. From there they took a steamboat down the Ohio River towards the Mississippi, with St. Louis as their destination. Unfortunately, the effects of a relatively harsh winter had already begun to set in, and the steamer was forced to halt due to ice. The missionaries, undaunted by such an inconvenience, continued on foot some 200 miles to St. Louis, though they were forced to halt for some time due to harsh weather while *en route*. The harsh weather finally broke enough to continue travel and the missionaries once more took up the journey to Indian Territory on foot. This stretch of the journey was by no means easy. Pratt describes that during the next 300 miles westward the missionaries encountered a "bleak northwest wind always

[37] Ibid., 28.

blowing in our faces with a keenness which would almost take the skin off the face… wading in snow to the knees at every step, and the cold so intense that the snow did not melt on the south side of the houses, even in the mid-day sun."[38] However, "after much fatigue and some suffering"[39] the missionaries arrived in Independence, Missouri, on January 13, 1831,[40] the place which would become their "base" for travelling into Indian Territory and that would eventually become another Mormon hub.

After establishing themselves in Independence, two of the missionaries, Peter Whitmer Jr. and Ziba Peterson, set up a tailor shop in order to provide for the five Mormons' monetary needs. Parley P. Pratt, Oliver Cowdery, and Frederick G. Williams commenced their work of proselytizing in Indian Territory. They first traveled about 25 miles west and visited the Shawnee who had recently relocated there. The missionaries soon realized that missionary work by other Christian denominations—mostly Methodists and Baptists—was already being done among the various Native American peoples there, including the Shawnee. Whether due to this fact or because they were unable to acquire an audience with Shawnee leadership to give their message, they stayed only for the night. Certainly, the missionaries would have heard of the Shawnee people. The late Tecumseh and his brother "the Prophet" would have been well-known figures at the time. Regardless, the missionaries, for whatever reason, decided to move along quickly, having only "tarried one night' with the Shawnee.[41] The next day Pratt, Cowdery, and Williams made their way to the nearby settlement of the Delaware people,

[38] Ibid., 28
[39] Ibid., 28
[40] Andrew Jenson, Journal History of the Church, January 29, 1831, 2, LDS Church Archives, quoted in Leland H. Gentry, "Light on the 'Mission to the Lamanites,'" *BYU Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (1996): 226-234.
[41] Pratt, 29.

having crossed the Kansas River by ferry or on the frozen surface.[42] It was among the Delaware that the Mormons experienced the most success with Native American people during the Lamanite Mission, and the encounter of which Pratt gives the most detail.

Upon entering Delaware land, they were received by the notable Delaware Chief William Anderson. Anderson invited the three missionaries into his home and treated them kindly, giving them both rest and food. After having eaten, the missionaries soon began trying to relay their message regarding Mormonism and *The Book of Mormon* to Chief Anderson by way of an interpreter who was present. Anderson seemed resistant, as he had always been toward Christianity in general. The missionaries tried to persuade him to call a counsel of the local Delaware to hear them, which Anderson agreed to think about before directing them to the local government-appointed blacksmith James Pool, for lodging and accommodation. The next day, the missionaries once again had an audience with Anderson, who still resisted the Mormons' plea to call together his people. However, as the missionaries continued their appeal and Anderson "began to understand the nature of the Book [*of Mormon*],"[43] Anderson asked the missionaries to cease their dialogue until he could gather together a council of his people to hear them out in full. Once the council was gathered, the missionaries were allowed to give their message as they had desired. Oliver Cowdery stood and addressed Anderson and the other Delaware gathered there:

> Aged Chief and Venerable Council of the Delaware Nation; we are glad of this opportunity to address you as our red brethren and friends. We have travelled a long distance from towards the rising sun to bring you glad news; we have travelled the wilderness, crossed the deep and wide rivers, and waded in the deep snows, and in the face of the storms of winter, to communicate to you great

[42] Romig, 28.
[43] Pratt, 29.

knowledge which has lately come to our ears and hearts; and which will do the red man good as well as the pale face.

Once the red men were many; they occupied the country from sea to sea—from the rising to the setting sun; the whole land was theirs; the Great Spirit gave it to them, and no pale faces dwelt among them. But now they are few in numbers; their possessions are small, and the pale faces are many.

Thousands of moons ago, when the red men's forefathers dwelt in peace and possessed this whole land, the Great Spirit talked with them, and revealed His law and His will, and much knowledge to their wise men and prophets. This they wrote in a Book; together with their history, and the things which should befall their children in the latter days.

This Book [of Mormon] was written on plates of gold, and handed down from father to son for many ages and generations. It was then that the people prospered, and were strong and mighty; they cultivated the earth; built buildings and cities, and abounded in all good things, as the pale faces now do.

But they became wicked; they killed one another and shed much blood; they killed their prophets and wise men, and sought to destroy the Book. The Great Spirit became angry, and would speak to them no more; they had no more good and wise dreams; no more visions; no more angels sent among them by the Great Spirit; and the Lord commanded Mormon and Moroni, their last wise men and prophets, to hide the Book [of Mormon] in the earth, that it might be preserved in safety, and be found and made known in the latter day to the pale faces who should possess the land; that they might again make it known to the red man; in order to restore them to the knowledge of the will of the Great Spirit and to His favor. And if the red man would then receive this Book [of Mormon] and learn the things written in it, and do according thereunto, they should cease to fight and kill one another; should become one people; cultivate the earth in peace, in common with the pale faces, who were willing to believe and obey the same Book [of Mormon], and be good men and live in peace.

Then should the red men become great, and have plenty to eat and good clothes to wear, and should be in favor with the Great Spirit and be his children while he would be their Great Father, and talk with them, and raise up prophets and wise and good men amongst them again, who should teach them many things.

The Book [of Mormon], which contained these things, was hid in the earth by Moroni, in a hill called by him, Cumorah, which hill is now in the State of New York, near the village of Palmyra, in Ontario County.

In that neighborhood there lived a young man named Joseph Smith, who prayed to the Great Spirit much, in order that he might know the truth; and the Great Spirit sent an angel to him, and told him where this Book [of Mormon] was hid by Moroni; and commanded him to go and get it. He accordingly went to the place, and dug in the earth, and found the Book [of Mormon] written on gold plates.

But it was written in the language of the forefathers of the red man; therefore this young man, being a pale face, could not understand it; but the angel told him and showed him, and gave him knowledge of the language, and how to interpret the Book [of Mormon]. So he interpreted it into the language of the pale

> faces, and wrote it on paper, and caused it to be printed, and published thousands of copies of among them; and then sent us to the red men to bring some copies of it to them, and to tell them this news. So we have now come from him, and here is a copy of the Book [of Mormon], which we now present to our red friend, the Chief of the Delawares, and which we hope he will cause to be read and known among his tribe; it will do them good.[44]

After ending his sermon, a copy of *The Book of Mormon* was presented to Anderson, and the chief addressed the missionaries in turn. Perhaps to the surprise of the missionaries, Anderson made known that he was glad of their message, "especially this new news concerning the Book of our forefathers."[45] He invited the missionaries to come again in the spring to continue teaching the Delaware people and allowed them to stay among the Delaware for a few days. During that time Pratt states that they were able to continue teaching among the Delaware people and that their "interest became more and more intense on their [the Delaware's] part… until at length nearly the whole tribe began to feel a spirit of inquiry and excitement on the subject… and took great pains to tell the news to others, in their own language."[46] One can imagine the missionaries' elation. Could this be the beginning of what they believed would result in a total conversion of all the Lamanite people? Though Pratt does not indicate that any baptisms took place among the Delaware at the time, the thought certainly must have crossed the minds of the missionaries. (For a map of the missionaries' path, see Figure 1).

[44] Pratt, 30-31.
[45] Ibid., 31.
[46] Ibid., 31.

Figure 1. The path of the Lamanite Mission.[47]

[47] "Mission to the Indians, 1830-1831," "The Joseph Smith Papers," http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/media/maps.

The End of the Lamanite Mission

The success felt by the Mormon missionaries among the Delaware was short-lived. News of the missionaries entering Indian Territory and preaching among the Native Americans reached the ears of local Indian agent Richard Cummins. Cummins ordered the missionaries out of Indian Territory at once, even threatening them with removal by force if they were unwilling to comply.[48] Pratt blamed their eviction from the area on the "jealousy and envy of the Indian agents and sectarian missionaries"[49] in the surrounding area. Certainly, this idea was not completely unwarranted. Other denominations such as the Baptists and Methodists had made little to no headway among the Delaware there, despite constant efforts. Cowdery even wrote a few months later that "almost the whole country which consists of Universalists Athists Deists Presbyterians Methodists Baptists & professed Christians Priests & people with all the Devels from the infernal pit are united"[50] against the Mormons. Cummins had also had his fair share of ejecting trespassers from Native American land in the past, and most likely would have held little pity for the missionaries without a legal sanction to be there. Regardless as to the *why*, the missionaries had indeed failed to acquire the legal license regarded for them to proselytize in Indian Territory.

After being ordered out of Delaware country, the missionaries returned to their companions in Independence. Cowdery reported that "The Chief of the delewares… said that… they were very glad for what I… had told them."[51] He was also somewhat

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[48] Ibid., 31.
[49] Ibid., 31.
[50] Letter from Oliver Cowdery, 7 May 1831, p. 13, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed April 18, 2018, http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-from-oliver-cowdery-7-may-1831/2.
[51] Letter from Joseph Smith Jr. to Hyrum Smith, 3 March 1831, LDS Church Historical Department, Archives, quoted in Ronald E. Romig, "The Lamanite Mission," John Whitmer Historical Association Journal 14 (1994): 28. It is uncertain whether Cowdery was "uncertain" as to the reception of Mormonism

reserved as to *how* successful the effort had been and later worried that "…how the matter will go with this tribe [the Delaware] to me is uncertain."[52] Perhaps Cowdery was concerned regarding whether or not the Delaware had actually received the message of Mormonism as the missionaries intended or was unsure as to how future meetings with the Delaware may go, or if they would even be allowed a future meeting with them at all. The missionaries did not give up, however. Whether they had pointedly chosen to trespass in Indian Territory or, more likely, had been ignorant of the fact that special permits were required to do so, the missionaries attempted to remedy their folly.

Cowdery took his case to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs in St. Louis, William Clark.

> Sir, While I address your honour by this communication I do it with much pleasure understanding it pleasing your honour to countenance every exertion made by the philanthropist for the instruction of the Indian in the arts of civilized life which is a sure productive of the Gospel of Christ.
>
> As I have been appointed by a society of Christians in the State of New York to superintend the establishing Missions among the Indians I doubt not but I shall have the approbation of your honour [sic] and permit for myself and all who may be recommended to me by that Society to have free intercourse with the several tribes in establishing schools for the instruction of their children and also teaching them the Christian religion without intruding or interfering with any other Mission now established.[53]

Though Cowdery seemed to show every confidence in the thought that Clark would grant them permission to once again enter Indian Territory as missionaries, Clark apparently never replied.

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and The Book of Mormon by the Delaware themselves, or if he was referring to difficulties caused by their ejection from Indian Territoy.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Letter from Oliver Cowdery to William Clark, 14 February 1831, quoted in Gentry, 233.

Most likely unbeknownst to the Mormon missionaries, Indian agent Richard Cummins, who had first ordered them from Indian Territory, wrote his own letter to Clark.

> A few days agoe three Men all Strangers to me went among the Indians Shawanees & Delawares, they say for the purpose of preaching to and Instructing them in Religious Matters, they say they are sent by God and must proceed, they have a new Revelation with them, as there Guide in teaching the Indians, which they say was shown to one of their Sects in a Miraculous way, and that an Angela from Heaven appeared to one of their Men and tow others of their Sect, and shewed them that the work was from God, and much more &c. I have refused to let them stay or, go among the Indians unless they first obtain permission from you or, some of the officers of the Genl. Government who I am bound to obey. I am informed that they intend to apply to you for permission to go among the Indians, if you refuse, then they will go to the Rocky Mountains, but what they will be with the Indians. The Men act very strange; there came on five to this place, they say, four from the State of New York, and one from Ohio.[54]

Though Cummins' letter does not openly recommend against the Mormons being given permission to return to preach to the Native Americans, the fact that he seemed apprehensive towards these "strange" newcomers surely must have influenced Clark's decision not to make a reply to Cowdery's plea.

After receiving no reply, Pratt eventually returned east to Ohio to report, and the rest of the missionaries took up the work among the local Anglo-American settlers in Missouri, with some success. However, with the petitions for licensing ending in failure combined with a local populous that seemed determined to deter the Mormons from proselytizing the Native Americans of Indian Territory, the Lamanite Mission effectively came to an end. The Mormons probably felt that the Lamanite Mission had been a failure. In their later accounts Smith and Pratt, seem to have considered it as such as

[54] Letter from Richard Cummins to William Clark, 15 February 1831, quoted in Gentry, 234.

well, as they devote very little time to discussing it and place relatively little emphasis (or none whatsoever) on the Native American aspect of the mission.

While many would agree that the original goals of the Lamanite Mission were a failure, it is important to note that the Mormon zeal for converting the Native American people and the ideology that the Lamanites would one day become key players in the Mormon narrative did not wane as some have suggested.[55] Communication regarding the Lamanites continued, Cowdery even reported on "an other Tribe of Lamanites lately who have abundence of flocks of the best kind of sheep & cattle and manufacture blankets of superior quality the tribe is very numerous they live three hundred miles west of Santafee and are called navahoes why I mention this tribe is because I feel under obligation to communicate my breth[r]en evry informati[o]n respecting th[e] Lamanites."[56] Major traumatic events just a few years after the Lamanite Mission would cause the focus of the Mormon faith to turn elsewhere for a time. Yet, Mormons continued to associate themselves with Native Americans, to *be* associated with Native Americans, and to communicate with them (albeit perhaps less publicly after the expulsion from Missouri) long after the Lamanite Mission.

[55] For example, G. St. John Stott's article "New Jerusalem Abandoned: The Failure to Carry Mormonism to the Delaware" argues that the failure of the "Lamanite Mission" effectively ended any major interest in Native Americans by the Mormons. However, other evidence seems to suggest that such is not the case and that Mormons in later year did actively seek out Native American entities. With issues such as expulsion in Missouri soon after the "Lamanite Mission" though, it is no wonder that Mormons would likely have been at least distracted from the idea of Native American conversion at least for a time.
[56] Letter from Oliver Cowdery, 7 May 1831.

CHAPTER 2: THE SENECA, WYANDOT, AND SHAWNEE

Merely understanding the movements of the Mormon missionaries during the Lamanite Mission, even when focusing upon those interactions they had with Native Americans, is not enough to grasp a complete picture of the event. Doing so does not explain why those Native Americans were present in that location concurrent with the Lamanite Mission in 1830-1831 and gives little to no evidence regarding *why* those Native Americans reacted as they did to the message the Mormons brought with them. To do this, one must look to events prior to the mission itself, to the era of Indian Removal. It is only by understanding the effect this era of dislocation and upheaval had on Native Americans that we can grasp possible explanations for such questions.

While the Mormons did visit four different Native American entities—the Seneca, Wyandot, Shawnee, and Delaware—it seems only one of the groups received the news of Mormonism in a clearly positive manner, the Delaware. As indicated in the surviving account of one of the missionaries, Parley P. Pratt, the other three groups were not as receptive as the Delaware. The time the Mormons spent among the Seneca, Wyandot, and Shawnee was short to say the least, and accounts give very little detail showing the reaction of these three Native American groups visited. Though Pratt's account does try to spin the encounters with the Seneca, Wyandot, and Shawnee in a rather positive light for the sake of his autobiography, the very fact that he gives little to no information regarding the interactions between the missionaries and these Native Americans indicates that they in turn had very limited reactions. Of course, for at least two cases the missionaries were "kindly received" and copies of *The Book of Mormon* were handed out,

but no speeches by either the Mormons or responses by the Native Americans were recorded during the Mormon interaction with the Seneca, Wyandot, and Shawnee.[57]

So why is it that the Seneca, Wyandot, and Shawnee were not receptive to Mormonism in contrast to the Delaware? Answering this question requires looking at the specific situation of the Seneca, Wyandot, and Shawnee in turn. Each of the four Native American entities visited were present in the same greater region, the Old Northwest, during the Removal Era of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As such, each of them experienced many similarities in regard to events which directly affected them at roughly the same time. Wars, disease, Anglo-American encroachment, treaties, migration, and so on are part of the narrative for the Seneca, Wyandot, Shawnee, and Delaware.

Yet it is by understanding the individual problems faced by these four peoples that one can, in turn, understand their various reactions to the Mormons when they arrived in 1830-31. It is also important to point out, as historian Colin G. Calloway wrote in his book *The Shawnees and the War for America*, that

> No genetic mandate or tribal master plan dictated… Not all Shawnees [or any Native American group], insisted on standing and fighting. Retreat could be an effective strategy of cultural resistance against the imposition of Euro-American ways as well as a necessary step to move people out of harm's way… Like any people, Shawnees sometimes changed their minds as circumstances changed, and individuals sometimes made decisions for their own interests rather than the good of the whole. People wavered, disagreed, displayed human weakness, and grew weary of the fight. Some found opportunities for survival in adaptation rather than outright resistance, and some sought opportunities for personal gain even as they fought on. Many chose day-to-day survival over heroic resistance.[58]

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[57] Parley P. Pratt, *The Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* (Pantianos Classics, 1888), 25-29.
[58] Colin G. Calloway, *The Shawnees and the War for America* (New York: Penguin Group Inc., 2007), xxxv-xxxvi.

Such a statement could and certainly did apply to the Seneca, Wyandot, Shawnee, and Delaware, respectively. Both group and individual choices were made for a variety of different reasons. Understanding the different problems faced by each Native American group respectively and following the history of those specific bands of Native Americans during their movements up to 1830-1831 can lead to a deeper understanding of Native American Removal, the Lamanite Mission, and the Native American decision to either react to Mormonism in a negative or positive way.

The Seneca

One cannot discuss the Seneca without mentioning the famous Iroquois Confederacy.[59] The Iroquois Confederacy was, at one time, the Native American powerhouse of the American Northeast, encompassing almost the entirety of modern-day New York state and whose influence was spread far and wide beyond their direct borders. Of the Iroquois League, "the Seneca, [were] the most populous and the most powerful…. To be a Seneca was to be a member of one of the most feared, most courted, and most respected Indian tribes in North America"[60] by both other Native Americans of the region and European powers after contact. The Seneca themselves occupied the most western

[59] The Iroquois Confederacy is known by a multitude of names including the Iroquoian League, the Five Nations, and the Six Nations. It should be noted however, that the "Five Nations" did not become the "Six Nations" until the inclusion of the Tuscarora in the 1720s. The Six Nations were thus comprised of the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk. See William Sawyer, "The Six Nations Confederacy During the American Revolution," Fort Stanwix, National Park Service, accessed March 19, 2018, https://www.nps.gov/fost/learn/historyculture/the-six-nations-confederacy-during-the-american-revolution.htm#CP_JUMP_3550115. The Iroquoian League initially formed around 1450 "in a successful endeavor to revive an even more ancient, but less formally constructed, ethnic confederacy among the Iroquois." Anthony F. C. Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, 1969), 41-42.

[60] Wallace, 21-22.

part of that land claimed by the Iroquoian League, at times all the way to the shores of Lake Erie.

Unlike many of those Native Americans located along the eastern seaboard at the time of European contact, the Seneca's location and affiliation with the Iroquois League protected them from much of the initial upheaval caused by the European colonization process. As such, they were able to maintain and control their traditional lands for an extensive period of time. However, this did not mean they were protected from the conflicts which broke out between European powers for control over the resources of the American continent. Quite the contrary, because the Seneca and the Iroquois League were so powerful in the greater region, they were much sought-after allies by both the British and the French. The Seneca were able to use the desires of these two powers for their own agenda, playing one side against the other as it seemed most beneficial. Officially, the Iroquois held a stance of neutrality, though the fact was well known that if they chose to lean towards one side of the conflict over the other it would surely tip the scales of power.[61]

However, this ability changed after the Iroquois Confederacy gave an "unfair" advantage towards British trade during the 1740s. Doing so upset the French and caused various groups of the Iroquois Confederacy to join one side or the other in order to maintain access to trade goods—the Seneca often joining the side of the French. Soon after, the French and Indian War broke out in full and the Iroquois Confederacy was unable or unwilling to stay neutral in the matter, though their unity was tested as not all the united tribes of the Confederacy fought on the same side. This led to an era of

[61] Ibid., 112-113.

hostilities for the Seneca who, after having joined the side of the French, carried out a number of raids and schemed to expel the British from the region. Unfortunately for the Seneca, they and other Native American allies of the French were unable to expel the British from their various forts scattered throughout the Ohio Valley.[62]

The defeat of the French at the hands of the British, British colonists, and their Native American allies was disastrous for Native Americans of the Old Northwest as it signified the end of the age where they could play the motives of European powers off one another in any effective manner. The Iroquois Confederacy, including the Seneca and tribes claimed by the Iroquois Confederacy as dependents such as the Shawnee and Delaware, subsequently signed the Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1768 with the British. In it, they agreed to give up all land claims south of the Ohio and Susquehanna River where the Iroquois Confederacy claimed hunting rights and whereupon some of those nations dependent upon the Six Nations resided.[63]

Anglo-American encroachment onto newly agreed upon Native American land continued however, leaving the Seneca much dissatisfied with the signing of the Treaty of Fort Stanwix. As such, many joined the hostilities against the British and its colonists—especially those of Virginia—in Lord Dunmore's War of 1774. The Seneca and other Native Americans were defeated during the conflict; this combined with their defeats during the earlier Seven Years War (often called the French and Indian War) caused the Iroquois Confederacy to lose much of the power and respect they once enjoyed among other Native American tribes.[64]

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[62] Ibid., 114-117.
[63] E. B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, vol. 8 (Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons, and Co., 1857), 111-137.
[64] Wallace, 125.

The outbreak of the American Revolution broke out soon after, bringing the Seneca into conflict once again. Officially, as many Native Americans saw the struggle as one between foreign powers, they attempted neutrality on the condition that the fighting stay out of Iroquois lands. Though officially neutrality was the plan, American hostilities against the Iroquois began nonetheless. In retaliation, a secret council was held in September of 1776—attended by notable Seneca figures such as Handsome Lake, his brother Cornplanter, Red Jacket, and others—where it was decided to take up arms against the rebellious American colonists.[65]

By 1779, raids against the Americans became so severe that they decided to lay plans to deal a major blow to the Seneca and other Native Americans allied with the British. A series of invasions laid waste to the majority of the Seneca towns. These raids decimated the towns of the Iroquois Confederacy and by 1780 "only two survived undamaged."[66] Though the Seneca and other Iroquoian groups retaliated with effective raiding that brought terror into the minds of the American frontier, it was for naught as the British was eventually defeated and repelled from the immediate region where they could not give supplies to their Native American allies in any practical manner.

Though the Iroquois Confederacy was not completely defeated, it had become ineffective as a united entity and signed a peace treaty with the new American nation in 1784, once again at Fort Stanwix.[67] The treaty was not to last, however, and many Native Americans, including those from the Seneca, decided to take up arms once more to

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[65] Ibid., 131-132. It is important to note that there was some disagreement in the council, and the declaration to take up arms against the Americans was not officially done until the following year, 1777.
[66] Ibid., 144.
[67] Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Six Nations, 1784," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 3-4.

protect their lands, which effectively ended the Iroquois Confederacy. Some Seneca, such as Cornplanter and his brother Handsome Lake, advocated for continued peace, but they and those who followed them were ostracized by those western Native American factions who continued hostilities.[68] While those who sided with resistance efforts migrated west, groups such as those who followed Cornplanter—including those who resided in the Cattaraugus Reservation when the Mormons later arrived—stayed in their traditional homeland of western New York. Those who stayed in New York signed the Treaty of Canandaigua in 1794 to officially retain their lands.[69] However, encroachment by American settlers continued, forcing the Seneca to sign a series of treaties reducing them to a mere fraction of their original homelands and placing them on reservations covering a measly 200,000 acres in total.[70]

Cornplanter, seeing it as the best way for his people to survive, advocated consistently for an end of conflict between Native Americans and the United States and for the Seneca to adopt aspects of Anglo-American culture. However, internal division between those advocating adoption of Anglo-American ways against those who sought to adhere to tradition was most often the immediate result. The Seneca reservations of New York became, as historian Anthony F. C. Wallace describes them, "slums in the wilderness."[71] Though many aspects of traditional culture persisted among the Seneca of New York, depopulation from past conflict, disease, and hunger were major problems; to make matter worse, alcoholism became rampant.[72]

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[68] Wallace, 162-165.
[69] Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Six Nations, 1794," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 27-29.
[70] Wallace, 179-183.
[71] Ibid., 184.
[72] Wallace, 192-196.

Concurrent with this period, the Society of Friends—most often known as Quakers—took a great deal of interest in attempts to assimilate the Seneca. Just prior to the beginning of the nineteenth century, Quaker missions were set up among the Seneca at the Allegheny and Cattaraugus reservations, respectively.[73] Though supported by leaders such as Cornplanter, the Quaker admonition to adopt Anglo-American farming and industrial techniques, education, and Christianity (though even Cornplanter himself did not advocate the adoption of Christianity) met with limited success. Cornplanter and his Quaker friends were, at least, able to reduce to consumption of alcohol among the Seneca.[74]

A major turning point for Cornplanter and the Seneca took place in the spring of 1799 at the Alleghany reservation with the first of many visions experienced by Cornplanter's brother, Handsome Lake. Handsome Lake, having been sick for quite some time, collapsed in his him home one day. Though initially his relatives thought him dead or dying, he awoke and relayed to them a vision he had experienced, which the Quaker Henry Simmons later recorded.

> Handsome Lake heard his name called and left the house. Outside he saw three middle-aged men dressed in fine ceremonial clothes…. They told him they were sent by the Creator to visit Handsome Lake… he was told to… report what the Creator had to say about how things should be on earth…. The message was contained in four "words" that summarized the evil practices of men about which the Creator was sad and angry. The four evil words are whiskey, witchcraft, love magic, and abortion-and-sterility medicine…. After threatening him that he must not drink even in private… the messengers left with the promise to return.[75]

[73] Ibid., 221.
[74] Ibid., 228.
[75] Henry Simmons, "Sixth Month 15th," Simmons Journal, Swarthmore College, quoted in Wallace, 241.

Handsome Lake and Cornplanter relayed the vision to a council of Seneca at the Allegheny reservation where it was well received by those in attendance and was supported by those Quakers also present.

Handsome Lake experienced yet another vision on August 7, 1799. This time he was taken by a fourth heavenly messenger on a "sky journey" where he was shown the cosmos, aspects of the afterlife, and a variety of representative scenes. Importantly, Handsome lake saw images such as:

> …a jail, and within a pair of handcuffs, a whip, and a hangman's rope; this represented the false belief of some that the laws of the white man were better than the teaching of *Gaiwiio* [the "good word" or Code of Handsome Lake]. They saw a church with a spire and a path leading in, but no door or window… and heard a great noise of wailing and crying; this illustrated the point that it was difficult for Indians to accept the confining discipline of Christianity…. They met Jesus, bearing nail scars on his hands and feet, and on his breast a bloody spear-wound. Jesus reported that his people had slain him in their pride and that he would not return to help them "until the earth passes away." He asked Handsome Lake how the Indians received his teachings. When Handsome Lake said that half his people believed in him, Jesus declared, "You are more successful than I for some believe in you but none in me. I am inclined to believe that in the end it will be so with you. Now it is rumored that you are but a talker of spirits. Now it is true that I am a spirit and the one of him who was murdered. Now tell your people they will become lost when they follow the ways of the white man."[76]

The messenger then led Handsome Lake through a tour of heaven and hell and lectured Handsome Lake as to some of the specifics for Native Americans to achieve salvation. The Quakers once again encouraged the vision and it was well received by the Seneca there. Cornplanter reaffirmed that he believed that the adoption of some aspects of Anglo-American culture was a good thing, as long as it did not interfere with the traditional aspect of Seneca worship which Handsome Lake's visions encouraged.[77]

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[76] Wallace, 243-244.
[77] Ibid., 245-247.

In a third vision by Handsome Lake, the three heavenly messengers from the first reappeared, asked him if the Native Americans had given up bad things like witchcraft and alcohol, told him they "deplored the fact that the whites had taken away so much of their [Native American] land and were so arrogantly sure that the mind of the Great Spirit was in their books, counseled Handsome Lake to have his teaching written down, admonished Cornplanter to unite the Seneca people, and said that the people should "keep up their Old form of worship…and must never quit it." Though it may seem that Handsome Lake was creating an entirely new religion, in many ways he sought to revive traditional aspects of Seneca culture, though his teachings and visions clearly held aspects of Christian influence.[78]

Handsome Lake quickly began to rise in influence among the Seneca of New York as his words were spread among the various reservations of the area. Though spiritually Handsome Lake advocated a return to more traditional Seneca practices and traditions, he too supported the adoption of some aspects of Anglo-American culture as brought to them by the Quakers; not the least of these was the complete abolition of alcohol from among the Seneca people. While this was in part due to the fact that his visions had not blatantly chastised *all* aspects of Anglo-American culture as bad, he was also limited in his choice to support the matter based on the fact that the majority of the Seneca had come to support acculturation, including his highly influential brother Cornplanter. As such, the Seneca relayed to the United States government their desire "to be civilized (although not Christianized)."[79] Such a plea to the United States seemed agreeable and certainly helped secure the Seneca's retention of continued land rights in

[78] Wallace, 248-251.
[79] Ibid., 265.

New York even in the face of continued attempts by American settlers to encroach upon Native American land in the area.

Support for Handsome Lake's teaching helped to reunify the Seneca. The fact that he had no problem with the implementation of farming and industrial techniques as brought by the Quakers caused the process to become much more successful over the next few years. However, it is important to note that the Seneca did not merely adopt every aspect of Anglo-American culture as it was given. Those aspects which the Seneca found beneficial and pleasing, such as farming techniques and education, they implemented with gusto. Others, such as practices regarding worship or political leadership structure, the Seneca largely rejected. Seneca groups such as the Allegheny band, Cold Spring, and Cattaraugus were some of the most successful at adhering to the spiritual message of Handsome Lake and the political influence of Cornplanter.

Unfortunately for Handsome Lake, the latter part of his life was marked by a fall from grace. Though his message often continued to be supported, some earlier accusations he had made against other Seneca leaders such as Red Jacket caused his political influence to wane. As a spiritual leader, however, his success continued and "by 1806 Handsome Lake considered his evangelical program well established at Cold Spring, Cattaraugus (which was nearby), Onondaga, Oneida, and Tonawanda."[80] Handsome Lake had sparked a resurgence of Seneca spirituality and assisted in reinventing the Seneca from the defeated people they had become, to once again be successful and thriving. Shortly after the death of Handsome Lake in 1815, there was a short period of upheaval among the Seneca once again. Those who had been rigid

[80] Wallace, 299.

followers of Handsome Lake's teachings were able to codify them and settle much of the political confusion by once again uniting the Seneca people of New York under the banner of Handsome Lake's teachings, the *Gaiwiio*.[81] Between the years of 1818-1845, the teachings of Handsome Lake were finally brought together and an official church created, though some historians have argued that at least some degree of codification and the establishment of Handsome Lake's religion was already present by as early as 1815.[82]

It was during this short period of upheaval, after the death of Handsome Lake, that the Mormon missionaries arrived at the Cattaraugus reservation of the Seneca near Buffalo, New York. Christian missionaries of many denominations had come to the Seneca during this period already; in many ways this influenced Handsome Lake's followers to create a church based on his teaching and resist growing Christian influence. Though by 1830 when the Mormons arrived, Handsome Lake's Church had not been organized in any official manner, the Cattaraugus Reservation had already developed a strong adherence to the teaching brought to them by Handsome Lake nearly two decades ago. As with many Native American groups, the Seneca had experienced their own spiritual revival during and as an effect of the years of Indian Removal. Handsome Lake, as one of the many "Indian Prophets" to develop during the period, saw a great deal of success among his people in New York. According to Mormon missionary Pratt, the Mormons visited the Seneca at Cattaraugus, taught them for a day, left copies of *The Book of Mormon*, and promptly returned to nearby Buffalo. So why was it that the message of Mormonism had such little effect on the Seneca there?

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[81] Wallace, 303.
[82] Dean R. Snow, *The Iroquois* (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), 165.

There are probably multiple reasons for this negative reaction toward Mormonism. First of all, the Seneca of New York, unlike many other Native American tribes of the Removal Era, had not been completely alienated from their homelands, though their land holdings had been grossly reduced. As such, supposing that the message the Mormon missionaries relayed to them was similar to that which they later gave to the Delaware, the appeal of a Christian denomination advocating for the Native American right to control their own, divinely-given land was less appealing to the Seneca than perhaps to a group which had been uprooted. Furthermore, the teaching of Handsome Lake already advocated for the need for Native Americans to maintain their traditional lands.

Secondly, it is possible that the Seneca had already heard some disturbing rumors regarding the Mormons prior to their visit. After all, stories of Smith and the "gold Bible" could be found throughout western New York. Though there is no indication of this being an issue based on what little Pratt says about the missionaries' meeting with the Seneca, it cannot be fully discredited as a possibility.

Most importantly, the Seneca at the Cattaraugus reservation, having been early and zealous followers of Handsome Lake's teachings, had little or no need for Mormonism. Those aspects of Anglo-American culture which they had adopted were already brought to them previously by the Quakers. Also, Handsome Lake's teaching specifically denounced the spiritual teaching of Christianity, favoring instead many aspects of traditional Seneca spirituality. In fact, the teaching of Handsome Lake specifically attacked the idea that only Christian Anglo-Americans had the true teaching of the divine. Part of the message of Mormonism was, much like other Christian

denominations, that their truth was *the* truth, an idea openly rejected by Handsome Lake. In short, by the time the Mormons arrived at the Cattaraugus reservation of Seneca, they were too late. Though the Seneca may certainly have expressed some interest, as Pratt suggests, they were fully engrossed in the teachings of Handsome Lake and had once again become a relatively successful people who found meaning in their traditional, cultural values. As such, Mormonism had very little which would have appealed to the Seneca beyond perhaps curiosity.

The Wyandot

After the Mormon missionaries visited the Seneca in New York and subsequently travelled to Ohio where they met with a great deal of success among the Anglo-American population of the Kirtland area, the missionaries then went to see the Wyandot of the Sandusky region of Western Ohio. Unlike the Delaware and Shawnee who had mostly been removed from their traditional homelands and resided mostly in Indian Territory by 1831, the Wyandot still maintained much of the lands they had held for over a century and were not removed to Indian Territory until roughly a decade after the Lamanite Mission.[83]

Originally the Wyandot had lived farther north in what is today Canada. This original homeland was called "Wendake," commonly referred to as "Huronia" by non-Wyandots.[84] It was in this original homeland that they were first encountered by

[83] Thomas Peace and Kathryn Magee Labelle, ed., *From Huronia to Wendakes: Adversity, Migrations, and Resilience, 1650-1900* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 5.
[84] Ibid., 3; "Wendake" is also used to refer to other "homelands" as the Wyandot were forced or chose to migrate. It is important to point out here that the proper name for early Wyandots, and the Wyandot people in general is "Wendat." "Wyandot" appeared later as a group, who settled in the Sandusky region of Ohio, "split" from the main body of the Wendat. The terms "Wendat," "Wyandot," "Wyandotte," and even "Huron" are often used interchangeably even by accounts of the period. However, for the sake of clarity

Europeans, namely the French. Jesuit missionaries who accompanied these expeditions created early and lasting relationships with the Wyandot people which have lasted, to varying degrees, since the early contact period. Soon after the arrival of Europeans, the Wyandot were forced to remove from their homelands for survival, not directly due to the influence of European powers but due to devastating military efforts by the "Haudenosaunees"—better known today as the Iroquois. Thus, by the mid-seventeenth century, the Wyandot participated in a "mass relocation effort" to find a new homeland and distance themselves from the Iroquois.[85] After severe environmental factors wreaked havoc on the Wyandot, they were forced to disperse, with some travelling east or north but with the main body reestablishing themselves in the region of what is today Detroit, Michigan. There they were able to rebuild, create a new homeland, and even expand.[86]

By the mid-eighteenth century the Wyandot had recovered from their earlier war with the Iroquois but had simultaneously been plagued with many of the same issues which many Native Americans faced after European contact: disease, conflict, alcohol, European encroachment, and so on. However, the Wyandot continued to have a strong relationship with the French and with Christianity which would continue to unify them and affect their decision making. Unlike many other Native Americans who often developed a degree of distaste for Christianity, the Wyandot made it a core aspect of their identity—albeit on their own terms. In fact, "Catholicism became such a critical element of Wendat identity that it served as a marker of political authority among at least some

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and to avoid confusion since the Mormon missionaries refer to those Native Americans they visited in Upper Sandusky as Wyandots, this term is most often used.

[85] Kathryn Magee Labelle, "'Like Wolves from the Woods': Gahoendoe Island and Early Wendat Dispersal Strategies," 17, 23, in Thomas Peace and Kathryn Magee Labelle, *From Huronia to Wendakes: Adversity, Migrations, and Resilience, 1650-1900* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 17-34.

[86] Ibid., 30.

Wendats." By doing so, however, the Wyandot often attracted the animosity of some other Native American groups.[87]

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the new homeland of the Wyandots began to expand outwards from their main settlements in the Detroit area and developed settlements in the Sandusky River region of Ohio.[88] Initially these settlements in the Sandusky area marked a split in Wyandot unity. Those who migrated to Ohio often did so because they rejected their long-time French allies and instead chose to work with the British. It was this split that historians often attribute to the emergence of the Wyandot, as opposed to the Wendat. However, others have attributed this less to a formal split and more to a natural expansion, using the Sandusky settlements as satellites of sorts to the main Wyandot body in Detroit to continue their long-standing role as middlemen in the greater region and to pass along intelligence to the main body in Michigan. Though the split between political allegiances certainly did cause problems, it was relatively short lived, and the two parties soon reaffirmed their relationship. This role of the Sandusky Wyandots deserves some exploration, as it not only explains some of the Wyandot decision making during the Removal Era but may also give some insight into the later reaction of the Wyandot towards the Mormon missionaries.

Though the Wyandot enjoyed a long-term relationship with the French, and the majority of the Wyandot sided with them during conflicts between European powers as they did during the Seven Years War, as the French were pushed out of the region it is

[87] Andrew Sturtevant, "'Over the Lake': The Western Wendake in the American Revolution," 38-40, in Thomas Peace and Kathryn Magee Labelle, *From Huronia to Wendakes: Adversity, Migrations, and Resilience, 1650-1900* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 35-73.
[88] John P. Bowes, *Land Too Good for Indians: Northern Indian Removal* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 114-115.

possible that the satellite settlements of Sandusky acted in the interest of the greater Wyandot people to attempt to establish a relationship with the British as well. Such would certainly not be an outrageous idea, as the Wyandots were known as shrewd diplomats, and the Sandusky settlements played a similar role in other conflicts, working with whichever group best suited the needs of the entirety of the Wyandot people rather than merely those settlements found in Ohio. Regardless, the end of the Seven Years War resulted in the expulsion of the French from the region and the Wyandots quickly began to strengthen their ties to the British.

The outbreak of the American Revolution just a decade later best epitomizes the role of the Sandusky settlements in Wyandot decision-making. By this time, the Wyandot had more or less secured their allegiance to the British. This was done not only to maintain a relationship and trade with the British, but also because the Wyandot, along with various other Native Americans of the Ohio Valley, had been continually challenging the encroachment of Anglo-American settlers for years. However, as American forces continued to pour into Ohio and the British suffered defeats at their hands, the Wyandot used the location of the Sandusky settlements to develop relationships with the Americans in an attempt to dissuade a full invasion of Wyandot territory by American military forces. While doing so did not mean a complete denouncement of British allegiance, similar to actions taken in earlier conflicts, it allowed the Wyandot to make choices which best suited their needs as necessity required. As a result, the Wyandot were able to avoid much of the devastation carried out on other Native American entities allied with the British as the Americans continued to send military forces against Native Americans in Ohio and western New York. However,

American forces soon realized that the Wyandot were "more interested in protecting their homeland than in making any kind of lasting peace with the [American] rebels," and diplomacy soon turned south. The Wyandot subsequently continued their raids against the Americans, and in essence, gave up attempts at diplomacy with the United States.[89]

After the defeat of the British by American forces, the Wyandot were forced to sign a treaty agreement in 1785 with the United States declaring themselves under the protection of the same and ceding some of their land rights.[90] Over the next few years, multiple treaties ensued after continued hostilities between the United States and Native Americans of the Old Northwest. In 1789, 1795, and 1805 treaties that continued to cede Wyandot land and other rights were signed in attempts to make peace with the United States.[91] Clearly the United States recognized the influence of the Wyandot and the fact that some of the Native American nations who signed the treaty resided on lands claimed and controlled by the Wyandots at the latter's discretion.

Though the Wyandot, unlike many other Native Americans, had heretofore held Christianity—via Catholicism—as part of their identity since very early on in their contact with European entities, it was during this tumultuous period of conflict and subsequent treaty-signing that Protestant denominations sought to build relations with the Wyandots. While, like the Seneca, the Wyandot had already experienced contact with

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[89] Sturtevant, 54-59. For a more complete discussion of the important role the Sandusky Wyandot played as diplomatic "go-betweens" for the larger community, see Sturtevant, "Western Wendake in the American Revolution," cited previously.

[90] Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Wyandots, Etc., 1785," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 4-5.

[91] Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Wyandots, Etc., 1789," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 13-18; Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Wyandots, Etc., 1795," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 30-34; Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Wyandots, Etc., 1805," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 56-57.

the Quakers, it would be the Presbyterian denomination that would eventually thrust itself into the story of the Wyandots around the turn of the nineteenth century.[92]

The treaty of 1795, better known as the Treaty of Greenville, severely limited land controlled by the Wyandot. From that point they would continually face further encroachment by Anglo-American settlers and calls for either assimilation or removal. Christian missionaries often saw themselves as the conduit for not only spiritual but temporal assimilation as well and it is not surprising that Christian missionaries sought out the Wyandot due to their long affiliation with Catholicism—though some Protestant faiths were discouraged by the same fact.[93] As such, Presbyterian missionaries contacted the Wyandot as early as 1800 and visited regularly throughout the next five years attempting to gain Wyandot permission to build a mission.[94] The Wyandot of Sandusky, perhaps adhering to their traditional role as intermediaries for the greater Wyandot settlements in Michigan, contemplated the idea after multiple discussions with the Presbyterians, but eventually agreed.[95]

Joseph Badger, one of the first Presbyterian missionaries to contact the Wyandot, returned to them in 1805 to develop his mission. The Wyandot most likely made this decision not only to hear out the Presbyterian message of spirituality, but more importantly, they realized that survival would require further adaptation in light of continued expansion by the United States; the secular aspects of a Presbyterian presence would assist them in making such adaptations. This was a time where the Wyandot had

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[92] Michael Leonard Cox, "Wedants, Presbyterians, and the Origins of Protestant Christianity on the Sandusky River," 113, in Thomas Peace and Kathryn Magee Labelle, *From Huronia to Wendakes: Adversity, Migrations, and Resilience, 1650-1900* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 111-143.
[93] Ibid., 116.
[94] Ibid., 113.
[95] Ibid., 114.

to make choices which best suited their survival and though they did allow the Presbyterians to exist among them, this does not mean they cast their lots entirely with the recently arrived Protestants. Some Wyandots explored alternatives such as the messages of the many Native American prophets which arose during the period such as Handsome Lake and Tenskwatawa, though neither the Seneca nor the Shawnee prophet made the same lasting impacts as they did for their own respective people.[96] The spiritual result was a cauldron of various religions and "a broad acceptance of multiple faiths" among the Wyandot.[97]

So, if the Wyandot did not wholeheartedly accept Presbyterianism, what roles, other than spirituality, did the mission serve for the Wyandot? As with the Seneca and other Native American people, the Wyandot began to adapt aspects of Anglo-American culture in regard to farming, building, and economic techniques, training which the Presbyterians could provide. Besides this the Presbyterian missionaries offered much needed medical care. Most importantly, however, the Wyandot desired education and the Presbyterian mission was more than happy to oblige. By 1807 a schoolhouse was built, and it was relatively successful by 1809. Obviously, the Wyandot saw education as the best tool at their disposal to adjust to the new world which had been thrust upon them.[98]

Unfortunately for the Presbyterian mission, its relative success was short lived. As the conflicts of the early nineteenth century, culminating in the War of 1812, raged across the Old Northwest, the mission was forced to come to an end. Although the missionaries acquired few Wyandot converts, the seeds of Protestantism had been sewn

[96] Ibid., 119.
[97] Ibid., 121.
[98] Ibid., 122-125.

among them. Besides matters of a spiritual nature, the Wyandot had also adopted many aspects of Anglo-American ways, though they still held strongly to their own cultural identity and many of their traditions.

The War of 1812 was extremely disruptive for the Wyandot. Their position in the Old Northwest caused their lands in both Michigan and Ohio to become a crossroads for both British and American movements. The war also caused factional splits within the Wyandot community itself; though most of the Wyandot located in the Sandusky region advocated for the United States, the early fall of Detroit to Britain and pro-British Native Americans caused many of the Wyandot residing there to seek an alliance with the British. To make matters worse, the war dislocated people of all ethnic backgrounds in the region, and many Anglo-American settlers used the turmoil to move onto Wyandot lands as squatters. When the War of 1812 was finally ended many of those trespassers were allowed to remain. Though the Sandusky Wyandot objected, and treaties were signed in both 1814 and 1815 praising the Sandusky Wyandot for their alliance during the recent conflict and reaffirming boundaries determined prior to the War of 1812, little was done in the matter.[99] The issue was decided in a third treaty in 1817—though not in the way the Wyandot had hoped—resulting in further land cession by the Wyandot to accommodate Anglo-American settlers.[100] The Wyandot and other Native Americans were reduced to ever-decreasing tracts of land and suffered the consequences of living in close proximity to Anglo-American settlers who most often desired them to be gone

[99] Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Wyandots, Etc., 1814," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 76; Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Wyandots, Etc., 1815," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 83;

[100] Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Wyandots, Etc., 1817," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 100-108;

entirely. Native American entities such as the Delaware and western Seneca left the area to remove west to settlements in Indiana along the White River or across the Mississippi to join those who had removed there earlier, and by the late 1820s many Wyandot most likely saw the "writing on the wall" and felt the same urge.[101] This was to be a long and drawn-out issue, however, and though the thought of removal weighed heavily on the minds of the Wyandot in Sandusky, it was over a decade later that they faced official removal from the region.

It was during this stressful time of Wyandot history of trying to adjust to a changing world, dealing with unfriendly Anglo-American settlers with little to no redress by the United States, and with the prospect of removal looming on the horizon, that the Mormon missionaries encountered the Wyandot of Sandusky in late 1830. After the Mormons had met with success in the Kirtland area of Ohio, they decided to stop among the Wyandot of Sandusky along the march further west to Indian Territory. Pratt gave the following account of their rather brief visit:

> We now pursued our journey for some days, and at length arrived in Sandusky in the western part of Ohio. Here resided a tribe, or nation of Indians, called Wyandots, on whom we called, and with whom we spent several days. We were well received, and had an opportunity of laying before them the record of their forefathers [*The Book of Mormon*], which we did. They rejoiced in the tidings, bid us God speed, and desired us to write to them in relation to our success among the tribes further west, who had already removed to the Indian Territory, where these expected soon to go.[102]

As the Sandusky Wyandot were more or less in the path of the missionaries' travel westward it was not difficult to understand why the Mormons would choose to stop there. On top of that, Pratt, who resided in Ohio prior to his recent conversion to Mormonism,

[101] Bowes, 124-125.
[102] Pratt, 28.

most likely knew not only of the Sandusky Wyandot themselves but also of their past relationship with Christianity in the form of both Catholicism and Protestantism via Presbyterianism and more recently with the Methodists.[103] As such, the missionaries most likely expected to be well received, as they seem to have been. However, the Mormons found no converts among the Wyandot either and moved along rather quickly.

The very fact that the Wyandot were willing to hear out the Mormons is not surprising. After all, as Pratt most likely knew, they had a long relationship with Christianity. Besides this, as mentioned previously, the Wyandot of Sandusky were still in a state of adaptation and exploration in regard to both temporal and spiritual matters. To them, a people who were accepting of a variety of belief systems, there was no harm in hearing out the Mormons, and the message brought by the Mormons may even have been somewhat appealing.

However, the lack of immediate success for the missionaries can be explained by two major factors. First of all, it is possible that the Wyandot continued somewhat in their traditional role as intermediaries for the greater Wyandot nation as opposed to major decision makers. Such is not to say that the Sandusky Wyandot did not make decisions, but as can clearly be seen in their role in the earlier politics of conflict and the Presbyterian attempts to set up a mission just a couple decades earlier, the Sandusky Wyandot made very few decisions without prior approval from the greater Wyandot community. As with the Presbyterians' earlier attempts, the Mormon effort to acquire the sanction of the Wyandot most likely would have taken a great deal of time and effort, rather than a single and significant meeting and subsequent conversion which the

[103] Lori Elaine Taylor, "Telling Stories About Mormons and Indians" (PhD diss., State University of New York at Buffalo, 2000), 146-147.

Mormon missionaries probably hoped for. Clearly the Wyandot did not snub the Mormons with outright rejection, but they were unwilling to make any commitments without continued deliberation.

The most important factor however, was the Wyandot's immediate concerns regarding removal. The fact that Pratt even mentions it in his account clearly illustrates that the Wyandot made such concerns known to the Mormons. As they had with earlier missionaries, the Wyandot used the Mormons for their own purposes as well. Clearly the Wyandot expected that soon they would be removed to the western side of the Mississippi and on to Indian Territory. The fact that they requested the missionaries to write back to them regarding their successes in Indian Territory shows that the Wyandot were more concerned with their immediate needs of news and communication over anything spiritual the Mormons had to offer them.

As such, the Mormons decided to move along after just a few days. Interestingly, Mormons did apparently continue correspondence with the Wyandots of Ohio as the Wyandot had requested.[104] As the Wyandot expected, they signed agreements to leave Ohio shortly after the Mormon missionaries passed through, although the actual removal itself took over a decade to complete.

The Shawnee

The third Native American people visited by the Mormon missionaries were the Shawnee, who resided in Indian Territory at the time of the missionaries' arrival in 1831. As with most tribes who ended up residing in Indian Territory in the early part of the

[104] Ibid., 147.

nineteenth century, the Shawnee were from the woodland region east of the Mississippi River. The Shawnee believed their original homeland to be the Ohio Valley. However, unlike some other nations, the Shawnee seem to have been travelers from a very early stage. As historian Colin G. Calloway puts it, "Shawnees moved so often and dispersed so widely that they sometimes seemed like a people without a homeland of their own."[105] At different times and to varying degrees, the Shawnee had once been present in modern-day Georgia, Pennsylvania, Alabama, Florida, Texas, the Ozarks, and the greater Ohio Valley area. In short, at the time of European contact, the Shawnee seem to have been the "most geographically widespread tribal group in the Eastern Woodlands."[106] As such they had developed political and kinship ties with a wide variety of Native Americans across much of the Eastern Woodlands over a lengthy period of time and were in many ways a multi-ethnic people. Just as with other Native American factions, the Shawnee migrated for a variety of reasons: to avoid other Native American entities such as the Iroquois Confederacy, to resist the influence of Europeans after the contact period, to find better locations for survival or trade, to escape epidemics of disease, and so on. However, by the latter half of the eighteenth century, most Shawnee people had re-centralized in the Ohio Valley.[107]

As with most Native Americans east of the Mississippi, the turmoil of the latter part of the eighteenth century proved to be a major turning point for the Shawnee. The period was marked by almost constant conflict between European powers and Native Americans for control of the Old Northwest. As French and British forces faced off over

[105] Calloway, 13.
[106] George R. Lankford, "Shawnee Convergence: Immigrant Indians in the Ozarks," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (Winter, 1999): 393.
[107] Calloway, 13.

control of the eastern section of the continent, the Shawnee often allied with one side or the other depending on which European power best met their needs at the time or with whomever did not insult them and try to force their own colonial agenda upon the Shawnee, who staunchly rejected such actions. Though the Shawnee held no sense of loyalty towards the French, when the Seven Years War broke out between Britain and France, taking the side of the French seemed to most logically suit the purposes of the Shawnee.[108]

The expulsion of French presence from the region at the resolution of the French and Indian War placed the Shawnee in a difficult situation as it did for most Native Americans of the Old Northwest. No longer were they able to play the opposing Europeans' struggle for power against each other. With their French allies gone and in order for the Shawnee to maintain access to much desired and sometimes necessary trade goods, the Shawnee were forced to make peace with the victorious British forces at Fort Pitt in 1760. This peace was not to last however, as British subject continued to trespass on Native American lands seemingly unchecked.

During the multi-ethnic movement under the Ojibwa Chief Pontiac just a few years after the end of the French and Indian War, the Shawnee, along with their Native American allies, successfully "took every British post west of the Appalachians except Detroit, Niagara, and Fort Pitt; they carried the war from the Great Lakes and the Mississippi to the Appalachians, and they killed five hundred British soldiers and hundreds of settlers," and even put the great Fort Pitt under siege.[109] Due to earlier conflicts and their success during this period, the Shawnee became known as fierce and

[108] Ibid., 25-27.
[109] Ibid., 34.

effective warriors. Unfortunately for the Shawnee, the Native American effort soon fell apart and the Shawnee were once against forced to make peace and give up the many captives they had acquired during the conflict.[110]

Though the Shawnee secured peace with the British once again, this did not end the former's animosity for the latter. As Anglo-American settlers continued to trespass, and the British tried to exert control over Native Americans in the Old Northwest, the Shawnee once again felt the need to resist. Shawnee leaders such as Cornstalk and his brother Nimwha advocated for the Native American right to own their lands even though the British saw themselves as "Masters of this Country."[111] After the 1768 Treaty at Fort Stanwix, the Iroquois ceded claims to a great deal of their southern lands, lands which the Iroquois Confederacy claimed even though it was occupied by other Native Americans such as the Shawnee and Delaware. This treaty between the Iroquois and the British combined, with Daniel Boone's "pathfinding" exploits into the Cumberland Gap of Kentucky, caused the flood gates of Anglo-American encroachment to be opened onto Shawnee lands. This resulted in the outbreak of Lord Dunmore's War in 1774, "in which Shawnee territory was invaded by a Virginia army and the Shawnees were forced to sign a treaty recognizing the Ohio River as their southern boundary."[112]

The outbreak of the American Revolution soon after only continued the near constant conflict the Shawnee had faced during the past few decades. Though some Native Americans saw the war as a conflict between foreign powers, many others, including the Shawnee, understood that this conflict would also decide the fate of Native

[110] Ibid., 35-39.
[111] Ibid., 43.
[112] Lankford, 393.

American lands. Although many Shawnee saw an alliance with the British as the only way to stymie further encroachment by American settlers, the precarious position of the Shawnee and other Native Americans of Ohio convinced many that neutrality was the only option. This did not stop some Shawnee from visiting other Native American nations, such as the Cherokee, to call for war against the Americans. Officially, however, leaders such as Cornstalk, who had agreed earlier to make peace with the "Big Knives" of Virginia, continued to advocate for Shawnee neutrality during the American Revolution.[113] Cornstalk and other Shawnee leaders who advocated for peace did not have the power to stop the continued flood of young Shawnee warriors to take up arms against the Americans, however. This only became worse after Cornstalk was murdered by American forces during a visit to Fort Randolph to meet with the Americans.[114]

It is important to note, however, that while many Shawnee took up the fight against the Americans, just as many continued to advocate for peace. During the American Revolution, a major schism occurred among the Shawnee, and a large portion of them decided instead to remove themselves from the conflict by travelling west across the Mississippi River into lands claimed by the Spanish. By at least 1779, there was at least one major Shawnee—and Delaware—occupied town in southeastern Missouri outside of St. Genevieve, other settlements along the St. Francis River. By "1784, Shawnee and Delaware representatives were among a group of Native Americans that met with Spanish officials in St. Louis to complain of the hordes of white settlers in the East and to inquire about available lands on the western side of the Mississippi."[115]

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[113] Calloway, 59-61; Virginia Irving Armstrong, comp., *I Have Spoken: American History Through the Voices of the Indians* (Chicago: Sage Books, The Swallow Press, Inc., 1971), 27.
[114] Calloway, 64-65.
[115] Lankford, 395; Blevins.

Those Shawnee who remained in the Ohio Valley either chose or were forced into continued conflict. Thomas Jefferson, then Governor of Virginia, advocated taking war to the Shawnee and sent George Rogers Clark to decimate Shawnee villages and crops.[116] The loss of their own supplies was made worse as American forces beat back the British who in turn abandoned those Shawnee who had allied with them to fight against the Americans. The end of the American Revolution at the Peace of Paris in 1783 handed over all land rights to the new United States, regardless of the fact that much of this land belonged to Native Americans, including the Shawnee.

The Americans tried to exert their newly found power over the various Native Americans of the Old Northwest to claim their "winnings." Initially they met with success, but the Americans' heavy-handed diplomacy and threatening was enough to convince many that the concession of lands for peace was the only way end the bloodshed and survive. However, of all the tribes of the Old Northwest, the Shawnee would not have peace as the cost of traditional lands. Any possibility for peace on the part of the Shawnee died when the tribal leader Moluntha, who had hoped a peace could be reached, was brutally tomahawked to death by a Kentuckian.[117]

Continuing conflict did cause the Shawnee to take up migration once again. The slow trickle of Shawnee from the Ohio Valley to lands west of the Mississippi to join those who had moved there earlier continued. Even those Shawnee who decided to stay and resist often moved farther west in order to avoid continued assaults by American

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[116] "From Thomas Jefferson to George Rogers Clark, 3 January 1778," *Founders Online,* National Archives, accessed May 15, 2018, http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-02-02-0044. Original source: Julian P. Boyd, ed., *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 2, *1777–18 June 1779* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), 132–133.
[117] Calloway, 78, 84.

forces and receive British supplies coming from Canada, but close enough that they could still draw the line of resistance at the Ohio River. During this time, Blue Jacket, a great symbol of Shawnee resistance, dealt a devastating blow against the Americans by soundly defeating the American army lead by General Arthur St. Clair. Such defeats changed the tune of the Americans, who in turn tried to seek peace, this time without threats. However, as they did so they continued to prepare for further assaults into Native American land, and the Shawnee would hear none of it.

Unfortunately, the western confederation of tribes lead by Blue Jacket was coming apart, and united Native American forces were defeated at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. The Shawnee, along with others, signed the Treaty of Greeneville in 1795, ceding away much of their lands in Ohio.[118] Afterwards, those Shawnee who remained in Ohio were forced to live among white settlers, but most went west to Indiana or to join those already living west of the Mississippi into Missouri and Arkansas where the majority of Shawnee would soon come to reside.[119] Tecumseh, who had fought with Blue Jacket at Fallen Timbers, and his brother Tenskwatawa moved to Indiana and rose to prominence continuing to promote resistance while leaders such as Black Hoof in Ohio sought accommodation and adaptation.[120]

In 1805, Tecumseh's brother Tenskwatawa experienced a vision of the "Master of Life" and became yet another of the many Native American prophets who came about during the era of Native American removal from the Old Northwest. In the vision,

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[118] Charles Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Wyandots, etc., 1795," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 30-34.
[119] Stephen Warren, *The Shawnees and Their Neighbors, 1795-1870* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 17.
[120] Calloway, 126.

Tenskwatawa was told by the Master of life that "The Americans I did not make…. They are not my children, but the children of the Evil Spirit. They are numerous but I hate them. They are unjust. They have taken away your lands, which were not made for them."[121] This vision, and continued land hunger on the part of American settlers, was the catalyst for Tecumseh's militant movement to continue resistance. Tecumseh's resistance met with some success in gathering various Native American people of different tribes together for yet another attempt at militant resistance. Unfortunately for him, his pleas for aid from the majority of Shawnee who had already traveled west of the Mississippi was not answered, and many still east of the Mississippi were working for peace instead of continued bloodshed. Tecumseh's defeat at Tippecanoe, the War of 1812, and the final defeat and death of Tecumseh at the Battle of the Thames, effectively ended Native American militant resistance in the Old Northwest.

Though many histories see this as the end of the narrative for eastern tribes, this was not the case. However, it did cause a great deal of continued migration to the lands west of the Mississippi by those Shawnee who still remained. By this time, the vast majority of Shawnee had migrated west. Early Shawnee settlements in Missouri had become successful, and various settlements began to be established across the Ozarks, in Southwest Missouri and Northwest Arkansas. Contrary to the opinion that Tecumseh's movement was the last multi-ethnic confederation of Native American people from the Eastern Woodlands, the Western Shawnee were creating their own—not through military force as Tecumseh sought, but through the seemingly paradoxical methods of adaptation and simultaneous cultural resistance. Western Shawnee, Delaware, Cherokee, and a

[121] R. David Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 38, quoted in Calloway, 131.

multitude of other tribal groups came together to form more centralized governments based more upon tribal traditions than Anglo-American practices. It became "a loose form of political and military affiliation in which participants retained a mixed allegiance to both their tribe and the alliance."[122] The Shawnee west of the Mississippi became successful traders, raised livestock, and even owned slaves.[123] This success, both economically and politically, caused these emigrant Native Americans to encourage their brethren from the east to continue migrating to the region.[124]

Despite the successes of the Western Shawnee, they were soon plagued by a plethora of factors which made life difficult for them, not the least of which was war with the Osage native to the region. As emigrant Native Americans moved in, not only did they take lands which had previously been claimed by the Osage, but their presence added strain to the already precarious amount of game and other food available. Not only was conflict with the Osage an issue, but there were also problems between American settlers and the Shawnee. Settlers stole Native American goods and livestock, capitalized on emigrant Native Americans by selling food and supplies at outrageously high prices, squatted on lands granted by the Spanish and later American governments to emigrant Native Americans, and even murdered Shawnee people to take their lands. Some Shawnee at the Apple Creek settlement even complained, "the whites do not steal these things merely for their value but more to make us abandon our land and take it for themselves."[125] Finally, environmental factors such as flooding and earthquakes wreaked

[122] Warren, 73.
[123] Letter from Hopkins to Richard Graham, 6 August 1825, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
[124] Warren, 91-92.
[125] Ibid., 81.

havoc on some Shawnee settlements.[126] These issues, combined with the creation of Indian Territory in 1825, caused the Western Shawnee to feel the need to migrate once again; ironically, the desire for unification by the Shawnee and the creation of Indian Territory seemed to work in favor of the goals desired by the western coalition of emigrant Native Americans.[127]

The years between 1825-1830 brought a great deal of change to the Shawnee. Tribal government adapted to become more centralized and "between 1825 and 1833, four major Shawnee bands located in both Missouri and Ohio merged together as a tribe in what is now Kansas."[128] As part of the process of removal to Indian Territory, Christian missionaries took up their work among those Native Americans relocating there, including the Shawnee. As the changes in tribal government began to take place, bands or individual Shawnee people allied themselves with one Christian denomination or another to meet their own goals. A Shawnee leader, Chief Fish—who had migrated with his band to their reservation in Kanas in 1828—invited the Methodist sect to build a mission in Kansas, to the dismay of Baptist Reverend Isaac McCoy.[129] Tenskwatawa, the Indian Prophet and brother of Tecumseh, ever the advocate of tradition, advocated unsuccessfully for the Baptists, perhaps in an attempt to resist the change in Shawnee practices in government which were taking place. Due to the fact that he was out of favor after the defeat of Tecumseh and rather unsuccessful politically among the Western

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[126] Letter from Hopkins to Richard Graham, 6 August 1825, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
[127] Warren, 94-96.
[128] Ibid., 98.
[129] Martha B. Caldwell, comp., *Annals of the Shawnee Methodist Mission and Indian Manual Labor School* (Topeka, Kansas: The Kansas State Historical Society, 1977), 7-8; Ronald E. Romig, "The Lamanite Mission," *John Whitmer Association Journal* 14 (1994): 26.

Shawnee, this was most likely an attempt to reduce the influence of leaders such as Chief Fish who had chosen to work with the Methodists instead. By September of 1830 the Methodists began working with the Shawnee in Kansas and by November were given permission to establish a mission among them.[130] It was under these circumstances of migration, change, and Christian denominational conflict that the Mormon missionaries encountered the Shawnee in the winter of 1831.

The interaction the Mormons had with the Shawnee was minimal to say the least. Pratt merely references them once: "Passing through the tribe of Shawnees we tarried one night with them, and the next day crossed the Kansas River and entered among the Delawares."[131] So why the inattention to the Shawnee? After all, the Mormons had come to convert the Native Americans and had gone out of their way to meet with both the Seneca and the Wyandot along their journey to Indian Territory. It is possible that either the Mormons were unable to receive an audience with any Shawnee leaders, or that they instead chose not to. The Shawnee, while divided as to which Christian denomination would best suit their needs, had mostly cast their lot either with the Methodists or the Baptists by the time the Mormons arrived. Due to this fact, it is possible that either the Shawnee refused to meet with them on this account, or that the missionaries' themselves decided not to pursue the matter after learning of the entrenchment of other sects with the Shawnee. Instead, they may have thought it best to move on to the nearby Delaware where they may have learned that the Delaware had heretofore resisted any concrete affiliation with the Christian denominations of the region and where the Mormons might find a more receptive audience.

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[130] Romig, 26; Caldwell, 10.
[131] Pratt, 29.

It is also possible that the Mormons' own bias towards the Shawnee influenced their decision. After all, the Mormons themselves were from the east and likely associated the Shawnee with earlier militant leaders such as Tecumseh. Though the majority of Western Shawnee who now resided in Kansas were not a part of those militant resistance efforts—save a few who had emigrated their later—the Mormons would most likely not have been savvy to the experience and feelings of the Shawnee located there. This bias, combined with the presence of other Christian denominations, most likely accounts for the Mormons' decision to move along quickly instead of continuing to seek an audience.

CHAPTER 3: THE DELAWARE

> It is now winter, we are new settlers in this place; the snow is deep, our cattle and horses are dying, our wigwams are poor; we have much to do in the spring—to build houses, and fence and make farms; but we will build a council house, and meet together, and you shall read to us and teach us more concerning the Book of our fathers and the will of the Great Spirit.[132]

Chief William Anderson of the Delaware relayed to the recently arrived Mormon missionaries the desperate situation he and his people were in. The Delaware were newcomers to a place recently dubbed Indian Territory, a swath of land just west of the Missouri border where the missionaries had come to seek them out. Their homes, livestock, farms, and nearly every other aspect of their lives at this point were in a state of decline approaching outright destitution. Yet while the Delaware people had only recently immigrated to the Indian Territory, they were not new to being removed from their homes—whether by force, coercion, or choice.

The missionaries could plainly see the problems faced by the Delaware people of the region, yet they could not have known the full scope of the struggles those people had faced in the years preceding the arrival of the Mormons in the winter of 1831. Without understanding the problems faced by the Delaware people prior to 1831, one cannot fully grasp the context of the proselytizing effort itself. Expounding upon such issues will not only illuminate the state of the Native American people as the missionaries encountered them and answer why they were in such a problematic situation but could

[132] A part of the reply given to the Mormon missionaries in 1831 by Chief William Anderson, according to the autobiography of Parley P. Pratt. Parley P. Pratt, *The Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* (Pantianos Classics, 1888), 31.

possibly help to answer the question of *why* the Delaware reacted to the missionaries' message in a positive manner.

To do this, one must look to events prior to 1830, a date that is often mistakenly identified as the beginning of Native American removal westward. The westward migration of various Native American peoples, especially from the Old Northwest, began very early after European colonization. Emphasis here, however, is placed upon the years more closely preceding 1830, as they are more directly relevant to the state of the Delaware people as the Mormon missionaries encountered them.

The experiences of the Delaware people during this period perhaps best epitomize the struggles faced by many Native American entities during this tumultuous era, though each of those peoples experienced the turmoil of the time in their own unique way. It is also important to note that the experiences faced by the Delaware themselves were not the same for *all* Delaware people. The Delaware were not ruled by a single entity dictating their decisions, reactions, thoughts, movements, or choices made; both individuals and groups of Delaware people made various decisions for any number of reasons.

Most importantly, the story of the Lamanite Mission centers on the Delaware—not on the Seneca, Wyandot, or Shawnee—because the Delaware seem to have been the only one of the four groups who reacted to the Mormon message in such a positive manner at the time. This is especially curious in light of the Delaware history of contact with various forms of Christianity prior to and during the Removal period.[133] With this in

[133] The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) are not considered by many today to be affiliated with other Christian denominations. However, it is highly unlikely that the Delaware of the time would have distinguished them as anything less or other than Christian.

mind, a general history of the Delaware people focusing on specific groups of people as they journeyed to Indian Territory before their first encounter with Mormon missionaries in 1831 will show that removal and the Delaware reception of Mormonism are intimately tied together.

Pre-Removal

John Heckewelder, a Moravian missionary who spent time among the Delaware, wrote that the Delaware people had once "resided many hundred years ago, in a very distant country in the western part of the American continent," probably as far as the western side of the Mississippi River.[134] These *Algonkian*-speaking people, whose name for themselves is "Lenni Lenape," lived in the Delaware River region—what today makes up parts of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania—at the time of European contact.[135] At this point in their history there was no Delaware "tribe" or "nation" as one would understand the terms today. Rather, the Delaware people were a loose group of communities who were linked together by culture, language, traditions, and geography. According to missionary David Zeisberger, the Delaware "were divided into three tribes. Most distinguished among them were the Unamis or Turtle tribe, who,

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[134] John Heckewelder, *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations Who Once Inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States*, reprint ed. (New York: Arno Press, A New York Times Co., 1971), 47; C. A. Weslager, *The Delaware Indian Westward Migration* (Wallingford, Pennsylvania: The Middle Atlantic Press, 1978), 3.

[135] "…*Algonkian*, a modification of *Algonquin*, has come to apply to a family of related dialects. The term is not correctly used to classify Indian cultures or artifacts, because there were substantial cultural differences among many of the tribes who spoke dialects of the Algonkian language." C. A. Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1972), 41; According to C. A. Weslager, "The word *Lenape* standing alone can be translated as 'common people,' and the addition of *Lenni*, a redundancy, reinforces the meaning." Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History*, 31; The word Delaware being "derived from the third Lord de la Warr, Sir Thomas West, who was appointed governor of the English colony at Jamestown, Virginia"—as such the local indigenous people were called by the same name. Ibid., 31.

with the Unalachtgos or Turkey tribe, lived nearest to the sea-board…. The third tribe was the Wolf, called Minsi or Monseys."[136]

It did not take long for the Delaware people to begin being pushed from their lands as more European colonizers came to the region. The Swedish, Dutch, and later English intruders quickly began negotiating or coercing away those lands occupied by various Delaware bands. Delaware people gave up their lands for a variety of reasons: misunderstandings regarding land ownership, issues due to the language barrier, coercion by the use of alcohol, disease, and to retain cultural autonomy, among others.[137] Regardless of the causes for ceding land rights and to what degree the Delaware understood such agreements, the Delaware learned soon enough how the European newcomers understood land ownership. As such, the Delaware soon began migrating out of the area where they had first encountered Europeans and started to travel westward, an ordeal which they would end up having to repeat multiple times in the future.

From about 1709 through the course of the next few decades, the Delaware people began to settle in the Susquehanna River valley of what is today Pennsylvania.[138] During this period, the region was claimed and controlled by the Six

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[136] Edmund De Schweinitz, *The Life and Times of David Zeisberger: The Western Pioneer and Apostle of the Indians* (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 35.

[137] Weslager argues that "The Delaware concept of land tenure was entirely different from the European traditions of land ownership and sale." Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History*, 17. Regarding language, the conveyance of the particulars of treaty arrangements, be they intentionally vague or not, were certainly problematic in the negotiation process. The use of alcohol among the Delaware was an issue early on after European contact. See Virginian Irving Armstrong, comp., *I have spoken: American History Through the Voices of the Indians* (Chicago: Sage Books, The Swallow Press, Inc., 1971), 5. Regarding the devastating effects of disease on Native American populations, see James Axtell, *The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 248. Finally, many Delaware sometimes chose to remove themselves from a degree of Anglo-American influence to maintain cultural autonomy. Though they had adopted some aspects of Anglo-American culture and material goods, it is important to point out that, as Axtell writes, "adaptation is less often a sign of capitulation than of capitalization." Axtell, 246.

[138] C. A. Weslager, *The Delaware Indian Westward Migration* (Wallingford, Pennsylvania: The Middle Atlantic Press, 1978), 12.

Nations Confederacy who apparently sanctioned the Delaware's settlement in the region. During the Delaware's sojourn there, they began to be more tightly controlled by the Six Nations, due to pressure from both Iroquoian entities and from various European powers, such as the English and French, for control of the region. As a result of this struggle for control of the area, especially the Ohio River Valley, the Seven Years War, broke out in 1754. The events of this tumultuous period became another major factor contributing to the westward migration of the Delaware people.

Early Removal Era.

The onset of war between the English, French, and Native American powers of the "Old Northwest" found the Delaware people not only in the Susquehanna River valley claimed by the Iroquois Confederacy; they had also begun to establish themselves in the Ohio River valley on land belonging to the Wyandots.[139] During this period a significant portion of Delawares migrated to the Ohio River valley region, including what is today western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio. While the Delaware did not necessarily act as a unified or cohesive body, it was during this time that the Delaware became more centralized in their leadership.[140]

While some Delaware tried to remain neutral as the conflict broke out—such as Teedyuscung, who became recognized as a leader of many of those Delaware who had decided to remain in the Susquehanna River area and had no love for either the French or the English—others such as Shingas, another Delaware leader of the Ohio

[139] John P. Bowes, *Land Too Good for Indians: Northern Indian Removal* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 80.
[140] Bowes, 79.

River valley, quickly joined the Shawnee and their allies against the British.[141] Obviously, the Delaware had developed a general distrust of Europeans very early on. After several raids by both the Delaware and Anglo-American forces, respectively, and pressure from both within and without, even those seemingly neutral Delaware took up arms against the English, largely in retaliation for wrongs against the Delaware.[142]

After some major assaults on Delaware towns by English settlers and more importantly, as the French were pushed out of the Ohio River Valley region and thus unable to support those Native Americans with whom they were allied (or who, at least, fought *against* the English), the Delaware were forced to seek peace. At a peace conference in Easton, Pennsylvania, on November 13, 1756, between the British and a multitude of Native American groups, Delaware leader Teedyuscung spoke for an end of hostilities on behalf of the Delaware.[143] While this ended the immediate conflict between the Delaware and the British, it did not bring a complete end to violence.

The end of the Seven Years War would have major ramifications for Native American people, including the Delaware. No longer would the Native Americans of the region find security in the ability to play European powers against each other. Indigenous populations would instead deal almost exclusively with an ever-encroaching frontier which was not held in check by European rivalries for control of Native

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[141] At the signing of the Treaty of Easton in 1756, Teedyuskung supposedly said, "The kings of France and England have settled this land so as to coop us up in a pen. This very ground under me was my land and inheritance, and is taken from me by fraud." See Armstrong, 19; Shingas clearly had no love for either European power. See Armstrong, 19-20.

[142] Weslager, *The Delaware Indian Westward Migration*, 20.

[143] James H. Merrell, ed., "Easton Treaty Texts: July and November 1756," *William and Mary Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (October 2006): 50. For a discussion of the various texts and transcriptions relating to the Easton Treaty see, James H. Merrell, "'I desire all that I have said… may be taken down aright': Revisiting Teedyscung's 1756 Treaty Council Speeches," *William and Mary Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (October 2006): 777-826.

American land and resources.[144] Though peace was established between the British and the Delaware, the latter was perhaps in one of the most precarious positions of their history thus far. In light of nearly unchecked Anglo-American encroachment, most of those who had stayed in the Susquehanna River area decided to travel west to join those who had travelled to the Ohio Valley earlier.[145]

This troubling era for Native American people of the "Old Northwest" also gave rise to various resistance efforts, propagated a feeling of distrust toward Anglo-American settlers and Christianity, and gave rise to "Indian Prophets" who preached to their followers a return to the "old ways" along with the rejection of certain aspects of Anglo-American influence. Many of these spiritual leaders became very influential and played major roles in decision making during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Of particular interest for the Delaware was the prophet known as Neolin, whose message notable leaders such as the Ottawa Pontiac adhered to during his so-called "rebellion." Central to Neolin's teachings was a vision he had with the "Master of Life," a heavenly figure who taught Neolin the path Native Americans should take. The vision account states:

> [Speaking to Neolin] I am the Master of Life… listen well to what I am going to say to thee and to all the Indians:
>
> I am He who hat created the heavens and the earth, the tree, lakes, rivers, all men, and all that thou seest and hast seen upon the earth. Because I love you, ye must do what I say and love, and not do what I hate….
>
> This land where ye dwell I have made for you and not for others. Whence comes it that ye permit the Whites upon your lands? Can ye not live without them?...[146]

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[144] Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 187.

[145] Though some Delawares split off, perhaps even earlier, and travelled north as far as Canada. Weslager, *The Delaware Indian Westward Migration*, 80.

[146] M. Agnes Burton, ed. *Journal of Pontiac's Conspiracy, 1763* (Detroit, MI: Published by Clarence Monroe Burton under the Auspices of the Michigan Society of the Colonial Wars, 1912), 28-30.

The vision continued, reiterating that Native Americans should follow the path set forth by the Master of Life and giving a prayer unto Neolin to read and recite. Though the vision and teachings of Neolin were obviously influenced in some manner by Christianity, this is not to say that it did not also draw heavily upon traditional Delaware teachings as well.[147] However, while many Delaware did not follow the teaching of Neolin or join the uprising of Pontiac, aspects of it surely must have been significant to later Delaware efforts to resist Anglo-American influence. Also, the teaching of the land having been made for and given to the Native Americans certainly resonated, during this and later periods, with Delaware leaders who had already been uprooted from their lands on multiple occasions.

Concurrent with this period, missionaries—especially Moravians, or the *Unitas Fratrum*—made great efforts to acquire Native American converts. They met with a certain degree of success among the Delaware, building a number of mission settlements for those Native Americans who accepted Christianity and acquiring a number of converts, including many notable figures among the Delaware people.[148] Unfortunately, factors eventually came together that led to an important and horrific event between Anglo-Americans and these Christianized Delaware Indians which affected the stance of Delaware people towards both Anglo-American settlers and the Christian faith: the Anglo-American massacre of Christian Delawares at the mission town known as

[147] For a further discussion of Neolin and his visions, see Alfred A. Cave, "The Delaware Prophet Neolin: A Reappraisal," *Ethnohistory* 46, no. 2 (Spring, 1999): 265-290.
[148] Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History*, 288.

Gnadenhütten.[149] The violence created from the rebellion of the thirteen colonies from Britain was intimately tied to the horrendous event.

With the outbreak of the American Revolution, the Delaware once again found themselves caught in the middle of a conflict between what they saw as foreign powers vying for control over land which rightfully belonged to Native Americans. White Eyes, who had taken control as a centralized chief of sorts for the Delaware people in 1774, faced very difficult decisions—some of which would be opposed by his own people and create lasting divisions. In previous conflicts, the Delaware had most often opposed the Anglo-American colonists who were under the control of the British. This new conflict between the American colonists and the recent enemies of the Delaware, the British, gave difficult and limited options to the Delaware, as it did to many Native American groups east of the Mississippi. To complicate matters, the very position of the main body of Delaware in Ohio placed them between the Anglo-Americans to the east and the British and its Native American allies to the north and west.[150]

Finding themselves in such a position, the Delaware— by way of White Eyes, Captain John Killbuck, Jr., Captain Pipe, and other leaders—signed the Treaty of Fort Pitt with the Americans in 1778. According to the treaty, American troops could travel through Delaware land, and the Delaware were to offer military assistance and supplies as they were able.[151] Though White Eyes and others saw this as the best option to protect their people and keep the Delaware as neutral in the conflict as possible, it essentially

[149] Gnadenhütten, founded in 1772, was one of many Moravian mission towns founded in the Ohio region for Christianized Native Americans. See Weslager, *The Delaware Indian Westward Migration*, 31.
[150] Ibid., 39.
[151] Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Delawares, 1778," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 1-3.

allied the Delaware with the United States. Doing so also cut off the Delaware from receiving trade or supplies from the British. Regardless of the hope for neutrality, the geographic location of the Delaware in Ohio placed them between a rock and a hard place as the British and the colonists faced off.

Divisions among the Delaware surfaced quickly after the Americans failed to deliver promised supplies and support to the Delaware. Captain Pipe, a Delaware leader who had signed the 1778 treaty at Fort Pitt, began to advocate for the British on the grounds that the Americans had failed to uphold their side of the treaty agreements and gained many followers from among his people. As a result, "the majority of the [Delaware] warriors fought with the English."[152] Half King, a Wyandot leader, told the remaining Delawares of the Moravian mission towns in 1781 that "Two powerful and mighty spirits or gods are standing and opening wide their jaws toward each other to swallow… and between the two angry spirits, who thus open their jaws, are you placed; you are in danger, from one or from the other or even from both."[153] Those Delaware who had sided with the British left the immediate area to receive British supplies and protection, while those who supported either the Americans or neutrality—mostly Christian Delaware—stayed behind. It was under these circumstances, with those Delaware who remained undersupplied by their American allies in the area of the Moravian mission towns, that the tragedy of Gnadenhütten took place.

Undersupplied, hungry, and perhaps seeing no other option for survival, those remaining Delaware decided to stay in Gnadenhütten despite multiple warnings

[152] Weslager, *The Delaware Indian Westward Migration*, 44.
[153] Eugene F. Bliss, ed., *The Diary of David Zeisberger: A Moravian Missionary Among the Indians of Ohio* (Cincinnati, OH: Robert Clarke, 1885), quoted in John P. Bowes, *Land too Good for Indians: Northern Indian Removal* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 82.

regarding the danger of their position. As a warning to nearby Anglo-American Settlers, in March of 1782, four warriors (of what Native American group is unknown) who were apparently allied with the British, impaled a woman and child whom they had taken from a nearby settlement on the eastern side of the Ohio River across from the mission town of Gnadenhütten. Local American militia quickly reacted to find those responsible and, though the Christian Delawares there had not been involved in the horrific incident, they were "deemed guilty by association" in the eyes of these American militiamen.[154] Under false pretenses of coming to escort the local Delawares to safety, the militia was welcomed into the village; all the while they spoke with the Delaware of peace and even stayed the night in the village. The next day revealed their true intentions.

> …the [American] militia seized them [some of the Delawares in Gnadenhütten], bound their hands behind their back, and hurried them across the river, where they found the rest of the [Delaware] Indians also prisoners, confined in two houses, and closely guarded. The militia now tried to criminate them, bringing forward the following accusations: First, that they [the captive Indians of Gnadenhütten] were warriors and had taken part in the war against the Americans; second, that they had harbored and fed, in their towns, British Indians on the march to the American frontiers; third, that their horses must have been stolen from the Americans…; fourth, that those articles of clothing and children's caps, those tea-kettles and household equipments, those saws, axes, and chisels, and all those many other implements found among white people only, of which both Gnadenhütten and Salem [another nearby mission town] were full, constituted a positive proof that they had helped to plunder farms and attack settlements. The prisoners clearly rebutted every one of these charges. They appealed to their friendship for the white people…. They explained the necessity which compelled them to entertain British Indians passing through their towns…. They reminded them, that Gnadenhütten and Salem were towns belonging to civilized natives, to Christian Indians, to Indians who had been taught to dress like the whites, to work their horses like the whites, and to use the same household utensils, mechanical tools, and agricultural implements. But this vindication did not satisfy the militia, because they were predetermined not to be satisfied.
>
> It was the eighth of March [the next day]. Impatient to begin their work of blood, the militia selected two buildings, which they wantonly denominated "slaughter-houses," the one for the killing of men, the other for the massacre of the women…. There they [the Christian Delaware] were deliberately slain, and

[154] Bowes, 83.

> afterward scalped. The rest suffered in the same way, two by two. When all the men and boys were dead, the women and small children were brought out, two by two as before, taken to the other house, and dispatched with the same systematic barbarity…. Tomahawks, mallets, war-clubs, spears, and scalping-knives were used to effect the slaughter…. It was a butchery in cold blood, without the least excitation of feeling, as leisurely and dispassionately done as when animals are slaughtered for the shambles…. Thus it appears that of the victims twenty-nine were men, twenty-seven women, and thirty-four children.[155]

This account was relayed by the Moravian David Zeisberger after having learned of the event from two young Delaware boys who had managed to escape the slaughter. In the words of historian C. A. Weslager, "No incident in American-Delaware Indian relations had such tragic and lasting consequences. The Delawares lost all respect for the Americans and the God the white man worshipped."[156] One Delaware shared with Moravian missionary John Heckewelder his thoughts after the experience, which surely echoed those shared by many Delaware people.

> …these white men would be always telling us of their great Book [*The Bible*] which God had given them. They would persuade us that every man was bad who did not believe in it. They told us a great many things which they said was written in the Book; and wanted us to believe it. We would likely have done so, if we had seen them practice what they pretended to believe—and acted according to the good words which they told us. But no! While they held the big Book in one hand, in the other they held murderous weapons—guns and swords—wherewith to kill us poor Indians. Ah! And they did too. They killed those who believed in their Book as well as those who did not. They made no distinctions.[157]

The defeat of the British by American forces spelled disaster for not only Native American forces allied with Britain—as some of the Delaware were—but for the various

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[155] Edmund De Schweinitz, *The Life and Times of David Zeisberger: The Western Pioneer and Apostle of the Indians*, (London: Forgotten Books, 2012), 545-553. Originally published in 1870 by J. B. Lippincott & Co. Though this is a rather lengthy description of the horrific event, it warrants full attention as its impact on the Delaware distrust of Christianity cannot be understated.
[156] Weslager, *The Delaware Indian Westward Migration*, 45.
[157] Armstrong, 33.

Native American forces of the "Old Northwest" in general. Britain turned over all land rights of the region to the Americans—though in reality neither the British nor the Americans could actually maintain control in the region at that time. With British power more or less removed from the area, however, the American forces quickly began exerting their military and political influence over Native Americans of the Ohio region.

In 1785, at Fort McIntosh, the Delaware signed another treaty with the young American nation. In it they agreed to deliver up any hostages acquired during the conflict, that whites would not settle across newly agreed upon boundaries, and to "acknowledge themselves and all their tribes to be under the protection of the United States and of no other sovereign whatsoever."[158] However, many Native Americans were unsatisfied with the treaty signed at Fort McIntosh and hostilities continued.

A major defeat faced those Native Americans who unified to resist American encroachment into the Ohio region at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. After this defeat, the Delaware, along with other Native American entities, signed another treaty in 1795 at Greenville, Ohio. Multiple leaders represented the Delaware at the signing of the treaty, including Chief "Kikthawenund ("creaking boughs"), who was better known as Chief William Anderson"[159]—the same Chief William Anderson who would later receive the Mormon missionaries in 1831. This treaty made peace between those Native Americans and the United States, promised the release of captives, and changed the boundaries of

[158] Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Wyandots, Etc., 1785," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 4-5.
[159] Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History*, 329.

"Indian land" once again.[160] By and large the Delaware were compelled to accept terms which were not in their best interests and removed them from more of their lands.

The violence and suffering of the late 1700s faced by the Delawares ultimately led to massive out-migrations over the space of the next few decades. Each of these movements "had a common origin in the destroyed towns along the Muskingum River valley and the blood-stained village of Gnadenhutten."[161] The diaspora of this period generally resulted in the Delaware travelling north to Canada, southwest to Spanish controlled lands, or west into Indiana (See Figure 2).[162]

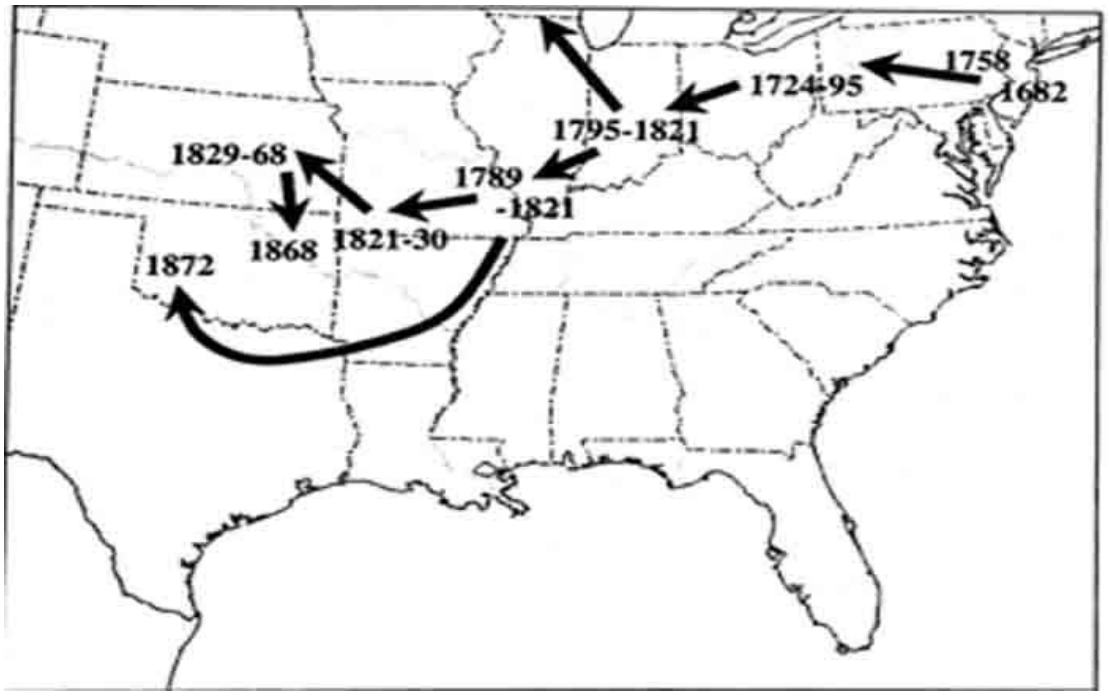

Figure 2. The Delaware diaspora.[163]

[160] Charles Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Wyandots, etc., 1795," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 30-34.
[161] Bowes, 84.
[162] Ibid., 84.
[163]"The Delaware Westward Migration," "Removal Era," Where the Wilson Meets the James, Center for Archaeological Research: Missouri State University, accessed March 23, 2018,

Westward Migration.

It would be those westward migrating Delaware whom the Mormon missionaries encountered in 1831 residing in Indian Territory. However, by the turn of the nineteenth century, the majority of these Delaware had not yet traveled west of the Mississippi, but had established themselves in villages across Indiana.[164] One of these settlements was even known as "Anderson's Town"—also called Wapiminskink or "Chestnut tree place"[165]—where Chief William Anderson and many of his followers resided.[166] It was during the Delaware's stay in Indiana that Anderson grew to greater prominence among his people and eventually took over as principal chief after the death of Chief Buckongahelas and his short-lived successor Captain Amochk.[167]

Chief William Anderson was the son of Swedish-descended John Anderson and his Delaware wife and was born sometime during the 1750s in Pennsylvania near the Susquehanna River. As his mother was a member of the Turkey clan of Delawares—she was also a daughter of the revered Delaware Chief Netawatwees—William Anderson inherited the same affiliation. Anderson seems to have migrated to Indiana sometime in 1798.[168] Anderson was described by one missionary—who was most likely bitter about Anderson's rejection of Christianity—as "a half-breed who… was not inclined… to Christianity, but sought to make his people averse to it."[169]

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https://delawaretown.missouristate.edu/delaware.html. Dates on the map are general or reflect major movements and do not account for the "trickle" of Delaware movements.
[164] Ibid., 333.
[165] Weslager, *The Delaware Indian Westward Migration*, 58.
[166] Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History*, 334.
[167] Ibid., 335.
[168] Stephen T. Jackson, "Chief Anderson and His Legacy," Madison County Historical Society, accessed March 21, 2018, http://www.andersonmchs.com/chief-anderson.php.
[169] Lawrence Henry Gibson, ed., *The Moravian Indian mission on White River; diaries and letters, May 5, 1799, to November 12, 1806* (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1938), 608.

The Delaware, besides merely Chief Anderson, maintained a strong aversion to both Christianity and the push from missionaries and government agents alike to adopt many aspects of Anglo-American culture. Of course, such disillusionment is not surprising considering past hostilities with the United States, the fact that horrendous tragedies—such as what took place in Gnadenhütten—were still fresh in the minds of the Delaware people, and the movement by Native American prophets to return to the "old ways." In general, the Delaware consciously resisted white influence by rejecting missionaries (or at least their message), some material goods, and various aspects of Anglo-American culture. As Anglo-Americans continued to push westward, such resistance influenced continued westward migration.

It did not take long for the Delaware, especially the younger generation, to become dissatisfied with the land they had been given in Indiana. Though it caused a great deal of controversy among the Delaware and some other Indian nations, the Delaware decided to begin selling some of their lands and signed another treaty with the United States in 1803 at Fort Wayne. Local Moravian missionaries who continued to work among the Delaware relayed that "the Delawares here [in the White River area of Indiana] are consequently quite excited over it and want to move to the Mississippi."[170] Environmental problems such as flooding from the White River and decreasing amounts of available game only increased the anxiety of the Delaware living there and encouraged migration further westward.[171] American agents, conveniently, recognized the right of

[170] Gibson, 378-379.
[171] Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History*, 342.

the Delaware to sell land to the United States, even though other Native American entities claimed the land the Delaware lived on as their own.[172]

After the treaty signing, Delawares living in Indiana quickly began migrating westward across the Mississippi. Traveling into the Ozarks presented its own challenges as it was not merely an empty, unoccupied space into which newcomers could move and stake claim. Osage people, among others, already had claims in the region; besides, there were other migrant Native Americans including Cherokees, Shawnees, and Delawares who had arrived in the region previously. Mix in a population of Europeans—including Anglo-Americans, Spanish, and French settlers—and the Ozark region of Missouri and northern Arkansas was bound to be a place of conflict for the Delaware once again.

Even before the major Delaware migrations from Indiana in the early nineteenth century, some Delaware settlements already existed in Missouri. In fact, many Delaware had migrated there earlier along with some of the Shawnee.[173] There was also at least one major established Native American settlement in southeastern Missouri, largely consisting of Shawnees and some Delawares, by 1779.[174] Following the 1795 treaty signed at Greeneville, there were approximately 600 additional Delaware who had traveled west of the Mississippi River and settled in the Whitewater River region.[175]

Violent interaction between the emigrant Delaware, with their allies, and the Osage people broke out soon enough. This was a result of two factors: "First, the Spanish wanted to use the emigrant Indians for their own purposes, specifically to protect

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[172] Bowes, 89.
[173] Brooks Blevins, "Natives and Newcomers," unpublished manuscript in possession of the author.
[174] George E. Lankford, "Shawnee Convergence: Immigrant Indians in the Ozarks," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (Winter, 1999): 395.
[175] Ibid.

Spanish settlements from the Osages. Second…the presence of the eastern Indians created a competition over resources with the Osages."[176] By November of 1803, after the region passed into the hands of the United States via the Louisiana Purchase, messengers were sent from the Mississippi region to those Delaware still residing in Indiana, calling for warriors to join them in a coming conflict against the Osage. According to the Moravian accounts, major conflict seemed imminent.[177] The appearance of famous Shawnee leader Tecumseh and his brother Tenskwatawa, or "the Prophet," in Indiana settlements did not help to alleviate the desire of many Delaware warriors to take up weapons of war, be it against the Osage or even Anglo-Americans.[178] Under the guidance of Chief William Anderson, however, most of the Delaware of Indiana kept themselves removed from both the conflicts west of the Mississippi and from the coming conflict between the Shawnee followers of Tecumseh—along with his various Native American allies—and the United States.

Although a movement back east in Indiana continued encouraging a return to more traditional ways, the same did not seem to be completely true for Delawares west of the Mississippi. This did not equate to a full break with traditional values, but the prosperity of the Shawnee and Delaware with regards to domesticated livestock, the building of log homes, and even the ownership of slaves, was certainly well noted in the region.[179] As for the conflict with the Osage, troubles seemed to die down for a time after an agreement was made between the United States and the Osage, placing the latter

[176] Bowes, 92.
[177] Gibson, 267-268.
[178] Bowes, 93.
[179] Blevins.

under the former's protection, thus discouraging the Delaware from going through with a war against the Osage.[180]

Back east, violence broke out once again in 1811 with the Battle of Tippecanoe between the United States and Tecumseh's allies, and then with the War of 1812 between the United States and Britain—including Native American allies once again on both sides of the conflict. Though the majority of Indiana Delaware chose neutrality during the conflicts, this did not mean they were unaffected. As the fighting raged, Delawares were once again forced from their homes along the White River in order to seek safety from the struggle, this time by travelling back east into Ohio on the far side of the Ohio River,[181] a journey which proved to be very taxing for them during the rather rushed escape in the winter months of 1812-1813.[182] Here the Delawares, under Chief William Anderson, sought once again to survive the best they could. While there, some Delawares even provided assistance to the United States during the War of 1812, especially during the march of William Harrison to Detroit.

After the defeat of Tecumseh and the British at the Battle of the Thames in October of 1813, Native American militant resistance in the Old Northwest more or less ceased. In July of 1814 the Delaware participated in another treaty-signing with the United States and other Native American nations—this time as allies of the Americans, having lent aid to the United States—to end the hostilities between the United States and various Native Americans entities. This treaty was also intended to reiterate that

[180] Bowes, 96.
[181] Bowes, 99.
[182] Weslager, *The Delaware Indian Westward Migration*, 69.

boundaries set prior to the conflict were to be reestablished.[183] With the hostilities ended, the majority of the eastern Delaware returned to their homes along the White River in Indiana.

Pressures for the Delaware to vacate Indiana in favor of further Anglo-American expansion came to the forefront once again in 1816 when Indiana was officially given statehood. The Delaware once again felt pressure both from within and without to divest their lands there in favor of continued travel west across the Mississippi. The earlier inclination to leave which many had experienced in the years before the War of 1812, combined with invitations from their brethren already living west of the Mississippi, only encouraged Delaware removal. To add to the equation, the Delaware experienced negative environmental factors in Indiana, had a desire to remove themselves from a certain degree of Anglo-American influence, and were dealing with continued pressure from the United States for removal westward in general. When taken together, the result was further cessions of land in 1818-19. A treaty signed at St. Mary's, Ohio, stipulated the cession of Delaware land in Indiana and removal to the western side of the Mississippi.[184] Though many were willing to give up their land in Indiana, there was still some hesitation on the part of the Delaware signers of the treaty.[185] Chief William Anderson even apparently complained to a visitor, Reverend Isaac McCoy—who had and would continue to play an integral role in both westward Native American removal and in

[183] Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Wyandots, etc., 1814," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903),76.
[184] Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Delawares, 1818," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 118-119.
[185] Chief William Anderson, among other signers, apparently had to be offered additional annuities (one might say bribes) to finally sign the treaty. Anderson's annuity was an additional $360. For an example of the additional annuity being paid to William Anderson, see: William Anderson, "Letter from William Anderson to Richard Graham, 14 June 1826," Center for Archaeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.

the 1830-1831 Mormon Lamanite Mission—that Anderson hoped the treaty would not go through.[186] However, with the final resolution of the Treaty of St. Mary's, the rest of the Delaware remaining in Indiana faced yet another migration. Anderson and his party left Indiana in the fall of 1820.[187]

The Delawares travelling westward to Missouri would once again find themselves in a region wrought with turmoil. While many Delaware had been living in southeast Missouri, the encroachment of Anglo-American settlers there had caused some to already seek refuge farther west, in southwestern Missouri. The influx of even more Delaware people from Indiana only aggravated the issue. Besides this, conflict between the emigrant Native Americans (including the Cherokee, Shawnee, Delaware, etc.) and the Osage had once again come to the forefront by at least 1817.[188]

Over the next few years, groups of Delaware travelled west of the Mississippi and settled largely in two regions, near the James River—"then called James Fork, a tributary of the White River in Missouri"[189]—and the White River (not to be confused with either the White River of Indiana or the Whitewater River of southeastern Missouri). It was along the James River that Chief William Anderson and his followers settled. The main community there, in fact, was known alternatively as Anderson's Village, Delaware

[186] Weslager, *The Delaware Indian Westward Migration*, 75.
[187] Ibid., 77.
[188] Grant Foreman, *Indians & Pioneers—The Story of the American Southwest Before 1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), 54.
[189] Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History*, 362.

Village, or Delaware Town.[190] This area had been chosen and set apart by United States agents specifically for the relocation of Delaware and Shawnee people.[191]

During the Delaware's stay in southwestern Missouri they continued to face many challenges. There was already Anglo-American settlement in the region and further encroachment continued to be an issue. Anderson and the Delaware clearly wanted earlier settlers removed, a proposition which did not sit well with those Anglo-Americans forced out of the region. Anglo-American squatters selling alcohol to local Native Americans also became an issue, though Indian agents and Chief William Anderson certainly tried to discourage the sale and use of alcohol among the Delaware people.[192] Alcohol, along with the availability of funding and goods, began to create divisions within the Delaware people themselves. Thievery, alcoholism, and other issues continually plagued the Delaware in their new home.[193]

Feeding the influx of Delaware migrants to the region also become a point of tension. Due to the amount of the annuities paid to the Delaware as part of their agreement to leave Indiana, they were largely discouraged from becoming completely self-dependent and growing all their own food. This was further complicated by the influx of white traders who sought to capitalize on the issue by growing corn and raising

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[190] "Delaware Town," Where the Wilson Meets the James, Center for Archaeological Research: Missouri State University, accessed March 23, 2018, https://delawaretown.missouristate.edu/delaware.html.
[191] Letter from Richard Graham to William Clark, 3 October 1822, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archaeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
[192] Letter from John Campbell to Richard Graham, 25 July 1825, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archaeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis. See also, Letter from John Campbell to Richard Graham, 20 September 1825, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archaeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
[193] Letter from John Rodney to John Campbell, 2 April 1826, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.

livestock and then selling it to Native Americans at outrageous prices.[194] The scarcity of food and lack of game to hunt even led some Delawares to steal hogs from nearby Anglo-American settlers.[195] Starvation was a real issue, especially for those who lacked funds to purchase food.[196]

The lack of game for the Delaware to hunt also further strained the already tenuous relationship between newly arrived Native Americans and the Osage. One of William Anderson's sons was even killed by Osages while away, probably on a hunting foray. Indian Agent John Campbell, apparently concerned that the killing of Anderson's son would lead to retaliation and further violence, reported the murder to Graham.[197] The death of Anderson's son combined with multiple other deaths at the hands of the Osage brought the Native Americans of southwest Missouri and northwest Arkansas once again to the brink of war.[198]

Due to the elements set forth in earlier treaties, the United States was obligated to protect both the Delaware and Osage. As such, American officials were distressed by the implications that war between the Native Americans in the region could bring not only to themselves but to Anglo-American settlers caught in the ensuing violence. Superintendent of Indian Affairs William Clark quickly sent a message to the Delaware discouraging the course of action the Delawares were planning to take against the Osage.

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[194] Letter from Menard to William Clark, 15 February 1824, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
[195] Letter from John Campbell to Richard Graham, 20 September 1825, "Delaware Town Collection."
[196] Bowes, 107.
[197] Letter from John Campbell to Richard Graham, 27 September 1825, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
[198] Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History*, 365-366.

The letter was full of veiled threats to end support for the Delaware but to support of the Osage, causing war to be averted once again.[199]

However, it is important to note that the situation for the Delaware in Missouri—as was the case in Indiana—was not one of constant desperation, as a simple overview might imply. In fact, the Delaware, along with the Shawnee and various other Native Americans, were somewhat successful during their stay in the region west of the Mississippi, economically speaking. Some settlements were known for their successes with livestock, trade, or other ventures.[200]

Archeological excavations at the site of Delaware Town on the James Fork also reveal a degree of wealth. According to anthropologist Neil Lopinot, the amount of material culture found in the site of Delaware Town denotes wealth that would have been almost unheard of for the time and place. Metal goods—possibly made by the government appointed blacksmith James Pool—[201] fine ceramic goods, beads, and a plethora of other items were excavated at the site of what was possibly even the home of Chief William Anderson himself.[202] Many of these items found would not have even been present on most Anglo-American settlements in Missouri in the same period.[203]

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[199] Letter from Richard Graham to Delawares, 20 June 1826, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
[200] Letter from Hopkins to Richard Graham, 6 August 1825, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
[201] The same James Pool who continued his services as the blacksmith for the Delaware in Indian Territory and still did so in Kansas when Mormon missionaries spoke to the Delaware in 1831.
[202] Artifacts from Delaware Town excavation currently held at the Center for Archaeological Research at Missouri State University, Springfield, Missouri. See "Delaware Town Artifacts Collection," Center for Archaeological Research: Missouri State University, Springfield, MO.
[203] Neal Lopinot, "Native Americans in Southwest Missouri," *American History TV*, C-SPAN 3, November 6, 2017, https://www.c-span.org/video/?438657-2/native-americans-southwest-missouri.

The Delaware in southwestern Missouri were also key to trade in the region. As historian Lynn Morrow explains, the "'great interior highway,' developed by the Indian trade, continued to be the most important Ozarks transportation route."[204] Traders often found themselves in "competition for the immense Indian wealth" present in the region.[205] The Delaware, while mostly discouraging the sale of goods such as alcohol to their people, often encouraged trading posts to be set up nearby for their convenience.[206] Some traders, such as William Gillis, actually enjoyed a very positive relationship with the Delaware and were encouraged by the same to build and trade on Delaware land—sometimes to the dismay of others.[207] This success for traders attracted enough attention that by 1826 complaints were made as to the number of unauthorized traders who tried to set up shop on Delaware land for their own interests, regardless of the legalities.[208]

The success of the Delaware did not outweigh the problems they faced, however. Lack of game, white encroachment, flooding, and a continued reliance on buying goods which continued to rise in price caused many to seek a home elsewhere once again. In 1829 the Delaware, still under the leadership of Chief William Anderson, agreed to sign yet another treaty with the United States. This treaty, as a supplement to the earlier

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[204] Lynn Morrow, "Trader William Gilliss and Delaware Migration in Southern Missouri," in *The Ozarks in Missouri History: Discoveries in an American Region*, ed. Lynn Morrow (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2013), 24.
[205] Ibid., 26.
[206] Letter from Richard Graham to William Clark, 22 September 1824, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
[207] William Marshall, sent a complaint to local Indian Agent James Campbell that William Gilliss was practicing trade with the Delawares even though he was apparently not licensed to do so. See Letter from William Marshall to James Campbell, 8 December 1826, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
[208] Letter from John Campbell to Richard Graham, 9 December 1826, "Delaware Town Collection," unpublished collection, Center for Archaeological Research: Missouri State University, original from Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.

Treaty of St. Mary's in 1818, stipulated that the Delaware would remove entirely from Missouri to the newly created Indian Territory, specifically to a location which is now in modern-day Kansas. The government promised to furnish horses and supplies for the move, as well as to erect a grist and saw mill along with tools for farming, and finally to provide an additional annuity over and above what the Delaware already received.[209] The treaty also held land for the purpose of building schools and allowed Delaware leaders—along with a government appointed representative, Reverend Isaac McCoy[210]—to go and survey the land promised to them before removing there.[211]

Though the United States government promised assistance in the move, some Delaware—specifically a group led by Chief William Anderson, then in his 70s—decided to move themselves and their goods beforehand in October of 1830. By December of the same year, the majority of the Delaware who had resided at James Fork had migrated to Kansas.[212] It was in Kansas, just west of Independence, Missouri—where the Mormon missionaries initially established themselves upon their arrival in western Missouri—that the majority of Delaware resided the winter of 1831. Though clearly this group of Delaware was not among the "poor Indians" and were able to make the move on their own, they would still face a hard winter and the difficulties which go with any attempt to move and rebuild.

It was at this new home in Kansas that the Mormon missionaries encountered the Delaware people. Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, and Frederick G. Williams were

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[209] Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., "Treaty with the Delawares, 1829," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 217-218.
[210] Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History*, 370.
[211] Kappler, "Treaty with the Delawares, 1829," 218.
[212] Louise Barry, *The Beginning of the West: Annals of the Kansas Gateway to the American West, 1540-1854* (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972), 178-179.

among those missionaries who initially travelled to the Delaware, leaving two of their companions—Ziba Peterson and Peter Whitmer—to set up a tailor shop in Independence, Missouri, to provide income.[213] The missionaries arrived in January of 1831, after having spent a night in a nearby Shawnee settlement. One of the missionaries, Parley P. Pratt, gave the following account of their experience there with the Delaware, one of the only surviving accounts of the encounter:

> Passing through the tribe of Shawnees we tarried one night with them, and the next day crossed the Kansas river and entered among the Delawares. We immediately inquired for the residence of the principal Chief, and were soon introduced to an aged and venerable looking man, who had long stood at the head of the Delawares, and been looked up to as the Great Grandfather, or Sachem of ten nations or tribes.
>
> He was seated on a sofa of furs, skins and blankets, before a fire in the centre of his lodge; which was a comfortable cabin, consisting of two large rooms. His wives were neatly dressed, partly in calicoes and partly in skins; and wore a vast amount of silver ornaments. As we entered his cabin he took us by the hand and with a hearty welcome, and then motioned us to be seated on a pleasant seat of blankets, or robes. His wives, at his bidding, set before us a tin pan full of beans and corn boiled together, which proved to be good eating; although three of us made use alternatively of the same wooden spoon.
>
> There was an interpreter present and through him we commenced to make known our errand, and to tell him of the Book of Mormon. We asked him to call the council his nation together and give us a hearing in full. He promised to consider on it till next day, in the meantime recommending us to a certain Mr. [James] Pool for entertainment; this was their blacksmith, employed by government. The man entertained us kindly and comfortably. Next morning we again called on Mr. [William] Anderson, the old chief, and explained to him something of the Book [of Mormon]. He was at first unwilling to call his council; made several excuses, and finally refused; as he had ever been opposed to the introduction of missionaries among his tribe.
>
> We continued the conversation a little longer, till he at last began to understand the nature of the Book [of Mormon]. He then changed his mind; became suddenly interested, and requested us to proceed no further with our conversation till he could call a council. He despatched a messenger, and in about an hour had some forty men collected around us in his lodge, who, after shaking us by the hand, were seated in silence; and in a grave and dignified manner awaited the announcement of what we had to offer. The chief then requested us

[213] Church Educational System, *Church History in the Fulness of Times: Student Manual* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2003), 85.

> to proceed; or rather, begin where we began before and to complete our communication.[214]

From that point Oliver Cowdery stood to speak to the assembled leaders regarding *The Book of Mormon*, Joseph Smith, and the history of the Native American people in ancient times according to Mormon scripture. He pointedly gave the speech a touch of "Indian flare," using terms such as "red men," "pale faces," "Great Spirit," "moons," and so on. Cowdery finished the sermon by presenting a copy of *The Book of Mormon* to Chief William Anderson.[215]

After conferring with those present for a period, Chief Anderson made a reply to the missionaries through a translator.

> "We are truly thankful to our white friends who have come so far, and been at such pains to tell us good news, and especially this new news concerning the Book of our forefathers; it makes us glad in here"—placing his hand on his heart.
>
> "It is now winter, we are new settlers in this place; the snow is deep, our cattle and horses are dying, our wigwams are poor; we have much to do in the spring—to build houses, and fence and make farms; but we will build a council house, and meet together, and you shall read to us and teach us more concerning the Book of our fathers and the will of the Great Spirit."[216]

The missionaries again lodged with the government appointed blacksmith, James Pool, and continued to teach among the Delaware for a few days. According to Pratt, a number of the Delaware continued to express interest in the Mormon message and multiple copies of *The Book of Mormon* were distributed. Some even "took great pains to tell the news to others, in their own language."[217] It is important to point out here, however, that

[214] Pratt, 29-30.
[215] Ibid., 30-31.
[216] Ibid., 31.
[217] Ibid., 31.

Pratt did not speak the Delaware language and does not explain in his writing how or *if* he even knew exactly what message or points of importance was being spread among the Delaware people regarding *The Book of Mormon* or the missionaries themselves. It is perhaps possible that either the information was relayed to him, that there were some English-speaking Delaware among those present, or perhaps that the blacksmith James Pool assisted in the matter as an interpreter.[218]

However, the fact that the Delaware, and especially Chief Anderson himself, were receptive to the words brought by the Mormons is intriguing. After all, Anderson himself had been resistant to the efforts of other Christian denominations and individuals before—including the Baptist denomination via the influential Isaac McCoy. Some Delaware had certainly been receptive to Christianity in the past—a fact made clear by the number of Moravian converts in the Ohio region. Most of those who followed the Moravians, however, left with them to settle elsewhere rather than joining their Delaware brethren who traveled westward. So, what was it about the Mormons and their new book that appealed to the Delaware?

It is possible that Anderson was attempting to gain some sort of political power or prestige by allying himself with one Christian faction over another, but this does not seem likely in this case. Other Native American people had done the same in the past, and there were certainly political divisions among the western Delaware. However, by the time the Mormons arrived in 1831, Anderson had more or less secured power among the majority of the Delaware in the region. But, if power and prestige was the goal of

[218] Ibid., 31. Pratt mentions that Pool acted as an interpreter but does not explain in what capacity or at what times. Nor is it known how qualified Pool was as an interpreter, though he had lived among the Delaware for many years by this point.

Anderson, then why would he choose to support the newly arrived Mormons over the highly influential and locally present Baptist denomination and Isaac McCoy, or even the Methodist sect whose denominational influence at least kept Baptist efforts in check? Chief Anderson and his people most likely would have seen the Mormons as just another Christian sect, thus explaining some of the initial resistance to the message the missionaries brought. However, supporting the few missionaries who represented a Christian entity based mostly in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio would have given the Delaware in Indian Territory little to gain; the Delaware would not be able to play the motivations of the Mormons against other Christian denominations in the area in an effective manner, nor would the Mormons be able to supply much in regard to goods, services, or education—some of the few aspects offered by Christians which many Delaware did support. In short, Anderson and the Delaware had little to no immediate gain in terms of either local or internal politics by choosing to hear out or support the Mormons. However, as the Anglo-American Mormons seemed intent on the idea that the Native Americans were divinely given the American continent, it is possible that a motion of support for the Mormons did appeal to Anderson as a political tool for dealings with the United States on a grander scale. However, such an idea is impossible to verify as there is no record indicating such thinking by Anderson or the Delaware on the matter.

Of course, one cannot completely discredit the idea of personal belief. After all, Anderson himself was in his seventies by this time and it is possible that thoughts of the afterlife were on his mind during the twilight years of his life. However, this too does not give a sufficient explanation for either Anderson or the other Delaware gathered there in regard to their positive reception of Mormonism. No baptisms were reported by the

missionaries, the very fact that they are not reported by the missionaries most likely meaning they did not take place. For the Mormons, as with other Christian denominations, baptism was a key element of salvation itself. Additionally, Anderson's band of Delaware had been continually resistant to Christian conversion—not surprising considering the foul taste Christianity had left in their mouth after events such as the massacre at Gnadenhütten and continued relocation of the Delaware by Christian Anglo-American entities. Also, while the Delaware, though adaptive by both choice and necessity, had implemented many aspects of Anglo-American culture (adoption of Anglo-American ways by Native Americans was certainly supported by the Mormons) widespread acceptance of Christianity was not among those adoptions. The western Delaware still pointedly maintained a great many aspects of their traditional culture and held firm to their cultural identity. Furthermore, Anderson asked the missionaries to return at a later date, implying that Chief Anderson and his council wished further deliberation before making any lasting decisions.

It is also possible that the discourse offered by Cowdery and the Mormon missionaries appealed to some aspects of Delaware cultural traditions. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth century period was, after all, an era of Native American prophets. The Delaware Neolin, Shawnee Tenskwatawa, and the Seneca Handsome Lake among others, had all emerged during this period and spread their own respective messages regarding Native American salvation. Similar in many ways to the experience of Joseph Smith—which Cowdery pointed out during his speech to the Delaware—many of these Native American prophets had experienced life-altering visions of the divine. In some cases—the Delaware Neolin for example—these indigenous prophets even saw and

received sacred words or texts of sorts during their revelatory experiences. The idea of Joseph Smith experiencing his own vision of the divine and subsequently being given a holy text regarding the Native American people was certainly not an alien one to Anderson and the Delaware. Consequently, Cowdery's sermon may very well have appealed to the Delawares' own cultural experiences of interaction between humanity and the divine. Also similar to the rhetoric of the various Native American prophets, the Mormon message and *The Book of Mormon* was, in many ways, intended pointedly for the benefit of the Native Americans themselves—a rather unique idea compared to other Christian denominations of the time.[219] Finally, it is important to note that while Cowdery speaks regarding *The Book of Mormon*, nowhere in Pratt's account does he mention any discourse regarding *The Bible* (which Mormons also regarded as scripture), which many Delaware likely associated with broken promises by Anglo-American Christians.

Most importantly, it is very likely that the Mormon idea of the American continent as a place divinely promised to the Native American people was promising to a population who had been repeatedly removed from their traditional lands as the Delaware had. They had been removed from their original homes in the Delaware region, to Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, and finally to Indian Territory—not to mention the general diaspora to other regions by various splinter groups of the Delaware people—and had suffered many hardships and indignities in just a few generations as a result of such removal. As with many Native American people, the Delaware intimately tied their

[219] Ibid., 29. Recall that Pratt, in his autobiography points out that it was not until Anderson "began to understand the nature of the Book [of Mormon]" that he became interested in what the Mormons had to say.

own identity to their traditional lands, lands taken from them during the many decades of Indian Removal. The Mormon rhetoric, unlike that of most other Christians of the time, advocated for the Native American right to own their land of promise which had been granted to them by the Great Spirit. Though the Mormons saw their own role and assimilation as the correct gateway for Native American salvation and progress, the support of a Christian organization who advocated Native American land ownership was certainly appealing to the oft removed Delaware people. In all likelihood, it was this part of the message brought by the Mormons that was most influential in the Delaware's positive reception of the Mormons missionaries' communications.

Regardless of the reasoning behind Anderson's willingness to hear out the Mormons, the missionaries soon left Indian Territory and travelled back to Missouri. Upon their return to Independence, the missionaries reported their initial success to Joseph Smith.[220] This success was short-lived however, as the missionaries had failed to appropriate the necessary license required to preach in Indian Territory. Local Indian agents and religious leaders—including Isaac McCoy, who had for some time sought to set up among the Delaware on behalf of the Baptist denomination with little success—each challenged the Mormons' right to communicate with the Indians. Though the Mormons petitioned Superintendent of Indians Affairs William Clark in St. Louis for a license to preach, a reply was apparently never sent, and to their dismay they were no longer allowed to continue their work with the Delaware. The Lamanite mission effectively came to an end.

[220] Letter from Joseph Smith Jr. to Hyrum Smith, 3 March 1831, quoted in Romig, 28. It is uncertain whether Cowdery was "uncertain" as to the reception of Mormonism and *The Book of Mormon* by the Delaware themselves, or if he was referring to difficulties caused by their ejection from Indian Territory.

The Delaware were able to rebuild and become successful on their lands in Kansas, though as far as is known the Mormons were not able to return to meet with them again in the spring as they had intended. By the fall of 1831, the majority of the Delaware who still remained in Missouri had made their way to their new lands in Kansas. Chief William Anderson had a letter written to the Secretary of War on September 22, 1831.

> I inform you that nearly all our nation are on the land that Government has laid off for us; and I hope if the Government fulfil all its promises, that before many years the balance of my nation, who are now scattered… will all come here on this land. We are well pleased with our present situation. The land is good, and also the wood and water, but the game is very scarce….
>
> Father: I told the surveyor who came to lay off our land, that I wished Congress to put a strong word in our hand, so that we could live here forever in peace, and never be removed….
>
> Father: I shake hands with you for all my nation, and pray the Great Spirit to preserve you where you are, for the good of the red skins.[221]

Chief Anderson was able to see most of his people moved to their new land before his death just a few months later in October of 1831. It is unclear as to the exact location of Anderson's burial,[222] but a commemorative stone can be found today in Delaware Indian Cemetery, most commonly known as White Church Cemetery, in Wyandotte County, Kansas.[223] Though the Delaware were able, for a time, to prosper once again in the region, little did Anderson know the problems his people would face in the coming decades. White encroachment, conflict between various Native Americans and among

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[221] Senate Document No. 512, 23rd Congress, 1833-1835, *Correspondence on the emigration of Indians, 1831-33*, volume II, 599, from American Memory: A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774-1875.
[222] Ruby Cranor, *"Kik Tha We Nund" the Delaware Chief William Anderson and His Descendants* (Bartlesville, Oklahoma: 1991), 14.
[223] *Find A Grave*, database and images, "memorial page for Chief William "Kickthawenund" Anderson," Find a Grave Memorial no. 134148923, FindAGrave.com, accessed March 27, 2018, https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/134148923/william-anderson.

Anglo-Americans, and a plethora of other issues would continue to plague the Delaware people as they searched for a place where they could live “forever in peace” as Anderson had hoped.

CONCLUSION

The era of removal for Native American tribes of the northeastern woodlands clearly played an integral role in the Lamanite Mission of 1830-1831. Only by understanding the nuances of how Removal affected each tribe—the Seneca, Wyandot, Shawnee, and Delaware—can important aspects of the proselytization effort be understood more fully. At the very least, doing so places the Native Americans themselves center stage in this narrative—an important fact considering that the Native Americans have heretofore been either sidelined or blatantly ignored in telling the history of the Lamanite Mission. Understanding removal also explains why the four Native American groups affected were located as they were for the Mormons to visit them in the first place; they had either been reduced to a mere fraction of their original homelands or removed entirely from them by the time the Mormons arrived. Most importantly, however, viewing the Lamanite Mission while taking into consideration the age of Native American removal from the Old Northwest grants insight into the possibilities of *why* Native Americans reacted to Mormonism as they did during the young church's first missionary effort.

The first of the Native Americans visited—the Seneca located at the Cattaraugus Reservation of New York—had been reduced to a mere fraction of their original homelands by the time the missionaries arrived. Those relatively few Seneca who still resided in New York by 1830 were limited to small tracts of land scattered across western New York. The once mighty Seneca had been defeated and reduced in number; yet they were also able to adapt, maintain cultural identity, and experience both economic and

spiritual "rebirth" via the efforts of tribal leaders such as Cornplanter and spiritual leaders such as Handsome Lake just prior to the Lamanite Mission. It was this spiritual rebirth and adherence to the teachings of Handsome Lake which came to fruition as a reaction to the effects of the removal era by the Seneca at the Cattaraugus Reservation that best explains the relative lack of success the Mormon missionaries had among the Seneca there. By the time the missionaries arrived, the followers of Handsome Lake had developed and spread his work enough that the Seneca had little need for the message of Mormonism. They had developed their own faith, based more in line with their own cultural traditions.

The Wyandot, the Native Americans whom the Mormons visited next on their journey west to Indian Territory, were also experiencing the effects of the Removal Era. Though they still remained on their traditional lands in the Sandusky region of Ohio—on which they had resided for nearly a century by the time the Mormons arrived in 1830—they had also been reduced to a mere fraction of their traditional landscape. To make matters worse, their immediate concern was removal west across the Mississippi to Indian Territory, a process which took place over the next decade or so after the Mormons visited them. Though of all the four groups visited, the Wyandot had been traditionally the most receptive to Christianity, their immediate concerns outweighed the need for the message brought by the Mormon missionaries. The Wyandot were also a people who had developed a tolerance for multiple religious traditions among their people, and they most likely felt no need or desire to commit solely to the Mormon faith. It is also possible that the role of the Sandusky Wyandot as intermediaries—a role that developed during the many years of conflict and adaptation that epitomized the late

eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—caused them to seek communal counsel and agreement before making any lasting commitments, just as they had done with earlier Christian efforts among them. Their immediate concern of removal from their homeland characterized their decision-making most prominently. This is clear based on the fact that they relayed their sentiments to the Mormon missionaries themselves and with their request to receive news from the missionaries once the Mormons had arrived in Indian Territory, to which the Wyandot expected soon to be removed.

The Mormons seem to have been unable or unwilling to obtain an audience with the Shawnee once they reached Indian Territory, and they stayed merely a single night among them. Though the Shawnee are most often associated with the military resistance efforts of Tecumseh and his brother Tenskwatawa, the Western Shawnee who had removed themselves west of the Mississippi long before the Indian Removal Act of 1830 had chosen the path of adaptation and cultural resistance instead. It is possible that the Mormons did not know this and, as with many Anglo-Americans, associated the Shawnee with their military exploits first and foremost. The Shawnee of Indian Territory, by the time the Mormons arrived in January of 1831, had also allowed missions of the Methodists to be built among them or alternatively supported the Baptists whose influence was felt throughout the region. These factors, either by themselves or in combination with each other, lead the Mormons to decide not to seek an audience or the Shawnee themselves to reject entertaining the newly arrived missionaries. Either way, the Mormons quickly moved on to the nearby Delaware, where they experienced their greatest success among any Native Americans during the Lamanite Mission.

In January of 1831, the Mormon missionaries visited the Delaware who had recently relocated once again, this time to Indian Territory in the modern-day state of Kansas. They were received by Chief William Anderson, who had been a key leader for the Delaware people for many decades to that point. After some discussion he decided to hear out the Mormons and, after calling together his counsel, received the message the Mormons brought—especially regarding *The Book of Mormon*—in a very positive manner. In fact, Anderson allowed the Mormons to stay among them and even invited them to return at a later date once the Delaware had more time to resettle themselves in their new home. It is the Delaware reaction that is perhaps the most curious, largely due to their negative past interactions with Christianity. This reaction can only be understood when taking into consideration the events of Delaware removal. The Removal Era had given rise to a number of Native American prophets, such as Neolin of the Delaware, Handsome Lake of the Seneca, and Tenskwatawa of the Shawnee. All these prophets had experienced interactions with the divine through visions or dreams, and the account of Joseph Smith's visions which lead to the founding of the Mormon Church, would not have been alien to the Delaware people. Yet, unlike the Seneca, the Delaware did not have one of these prophets present when the Mormons came in 1831, and thus did not have their own "new" religious basis which may have inspired them to have little interest in Mormonism. Also, though the experience of the Delaware with Christianity had been largely negative and though they were continually resistant to Christianity, the Mormon message offered something the other denominations did not; Mormonism and *The Book of Mormon* advocated for the Native American divine right to their land in the Americas and saw Native American people as one with a divine destiny. In short, in contrast to the

teaching of most other Christian denominations of the time, the message of Mormonism was uplifting and specific to Native Americans. Most importantly, the idea of a divine right to land—lands which Native American people, including the Delaware, associated with their own identity—was the most appealing aspect of the Mormons' message. It was this fact that drove their decision to receive the Mormon message in a positive manner. After all, the Delaware had experienced a diaspora during the Removal Era perhaps more grand in scale than any other Native American group of the Old Northwest. They had moved in succession from their homes along the Delaware River, to Pennsylvania, Ohio, Canada, Indiana, Texas, Missouri, and eventually to Kansas where Anderson's band resided by late 1830. The fact that the Delaware had been removed so far and so often from their traditional lands, made the Mormon message of divine Native American right to retain those lands a concept worthy for Delaware consideration.

Unfortunately, it can never be known whether or not the Delaware, or any of the other Native Americans visited during the Lamanite Mission would eventually have accepted and converted to Mormonism. The missionaries were ejected from Indian Territory, and after petitions for redress went unanswered the Lamanite Mission came to an end. The Mormons were not able to return to the Delaware the following spring as they had hoped. Most likely, the Mormon missionaries themselves saw the Lamanite Mission as a failure, as they came away from the effort without a single Native American convert. The idea of the mission ending in failure is further supported by the relative lack of attention it is given in later histories by Mormon leaders. Yet aspects of the mission were also successful. The Mormons were able to gather followers in Kirtland, Ohio, which soon became a Mormon hub. Their presence in Independence, Missouri, as a

staging ground for their efforts to proselytize the Native Americans of Indian Territory also lead to a gathering of Mormons in Missouri over the course of the next few years. Circumstances within the Mormon Church however, required them to shift much of their attention away from the idea of obtaining Native American converts, and the Mormons would face their own removals over the next few decades.

The Seneca, Wyandot, Shawnee, and Delaware also continued to face their own challenges as a result of removal; many of the problems caused by their experiences continue to this day. Yet each of these people has been able to adapt, survive, and maintain cultural identity. Though many today would assume that Native Americans are a past and defeated people, nothing could be further from the truth. Of course, they have adopted many aspects of Anglo-American culture, but in the words of historian Daniel K. Richter, "they were no more decultured by trade [or adaptation] than were twentieth-century North Americans who purchased Japanese televisions."[224] Even through continued trials which occurred after the Lamanite Mission, Native Americans have maintained cultural identity and fight to maintain legal rights and recognition.

Most importantly, the relationship between Mormons and Native Americans did not come to an end with the Lamanite Mission. In fact, over the next few decades Mormons even began to be more associated with Native Americans than with their Anglo-American brethren. Communication and relationships between Native Americans and Mormons continued, changed, and influenced decision making on both sides. Mormon doctrine concerning the destiny of Native Americans, or Lamanites, to fulfill divine promises as set forth in *The Book of Mormon* are still core aspects of the Mormon

[224] Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 2001), 175.

faith today. This relationship began with the earliest effort by the Mormons to seek out Native Americans, the Lamanite Mission. It continues to be an integral part of Mormon history and affects Mormon and Native American interaction to this day. Though the Mormon hymn, "O Stop and Tell Me, Red Man," has today been removed from official church hymnals due to its racist connotations, in many ways it still epitomizes Mormon thinking regarding Native American people and their proposed destiny.

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