Following the death of Tecumseh at the Battle of the Thames in 1813 and the defeat of the British in the War of 1812, the Shawnees and many other tribes in the Midwest could maintain neither their traditional culture nor their autonomy from the advancing white settlements. 1 Black Hoof, Wapapilethe, and Chilitica were three chiefs who guided the Shawnees away from hunting and trading with the French and the British. Their leadership encouraged the Shawnees at Wapakoneta, Ohio, and in southeastern Missouri to begin seeking accommodations with the United States government to ensure their tribe’s survival.

From 1825 to 1833 many Shawnees removed to what is now the state of Kansas from their lands in Missouri, Ohio, and Indiana. Most of the approximately twelve hundred Shawnees who settled in Indian Territory favored some adaptations to American culture. 2 Those Shawnees who advocated acculturation, compromising with the dominant society by borrowing some cultural traits while retaining their own cultural autonomy, requested the assistance of missionaries whom they hoped would facilitate improved conditions for the tribe. Shawnee requests for missionary aid created conflicts between the missionaries and the Shawnees. The disputes that arose over the propagation of Christianity and the integration of the Shawnees into American culture is the focus of this article.

The first agreement that began the Shawnees’ removal to Indian Territory was the treaty of Castor Hill, signed on November 7, 1825, by the Black Bob band of the Cape Girardeau Shawnees. One of the bands that left Cape Girardeau, Missouri, as a result of this treaty was the Fish band. These Shawnees removed to Indian Territory in the spring of 1830. The Fish band settled on the northeast corner of the 1.6 million-acre reservation that stretched from the mouth of the Kansas River beyond Fort Riley to the Solomon Fork of the Kansas River. 3

The first deputation of the Ohio Shawnees to arrive in Kansas was led by William Perry, Cornstalk, and Tecumseh’s brother the Prophet. They started from Wapakoneta, Ohio, on September 20, 1826, and finally arrived on May 14, 1828. The journey’s length

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**The author would like to thank Dr. R. David Edmunds for his assistance in producing this article.**

1. R. David Edmunds, Tecumseh and the Quest for Indian Leadership (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1984), 211.
Conflicting Cultures in Indian Territory, 1833–1834

by Stephen A. Warren

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and the deplorable conditions that the Wapakoneta Shawnees experienced were indicative of many of the Shawnee removals. One chief lamented:

We your red friends & brothers Shawnees wish to represent to you our situation brought on us by re-moving to a new country, when we arrive hear [sic] our horses were poor we had traveled a long ways & had met with many losses, many of our horses died after we arrive at this place for the want of food. We were unable in consequence of poor hors-es & the want of agricultural implements to raise grain to bread, and if we had hogs given to us when we arrive we have not had time to raise pork.

Some of us have tried to get meat in the woods. we find there is hardly a deer. . . . we hope you will represent our situation to the President and to Congress.1

Lack of supplies, exhausted horses, and white depre-dations plagued many of the Shawnees on their way to Indian Territory following the treaties of 1825 and 1831.2 Separate Shawnee bands in Ohio, Indiana, and Missouri were debilitated economically by the losses incurred during their removal to Indian Territory in 1833 and 1834. These losses forced them to make compromises with the missionaries and agents, who brought “improvements” such as plows, mills, and oxen. Together the Shawnees and the missionaries hoped to use these tools to increase the number of acres under cultivation and to ensure the tribe’s food supply. The Shawnees’ desperate need for these sup-pplies following removal to Indian Territory allowed the missionaries and agents to use these improve-ments as a tool to advance Indian assimilation and thus eradicate tribal culture. The missionaries and agents operated with the authority that the tribe would become extinct if they did not give up communal land holding and Shawnee religious prac-tices and become a part of white society.

Most Shawnees disagreed. Although chiefs such as Wapapillete, Black Hoof, and Chilitica believed in cooperation and the modification of their traditional practices through the aid of the United States govern-ment, none wanted to completely abandon their cul-ture.3 After they arrived in Kansas, the Shawnees at-tempted to recreate the way of life thought to have been practiced in Ohio and Missouri. They hoped that the mission-aries would assist them in agriculture and in main-taining good relations with the federal government. Black Hoof’s father, also named Black Hoof, had cooperated with Quaker missionary William Kirk in changing his tribe’s economy in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Kirk’s mission near Wapakoneta, Ohio, operated successfully only for a short time and did not convert large numbers of the tribe to the Quaker faith. Yet some agricultural suc cess was achieved through Kirk’s help. The Shawnees at Kirk’s mission enjoyed their greatest agricultural success in the years immediately preceding the War of 1812. Approximately five hundred acres of corn, squash, and other vegetables were under cultivation in the spring of 1808.4

Proacclutration Shawnees from Ohio also had experienced Baptist missionaries preceding the War of 1812. Stephen Ruddell, formerly a captive of the Shawnees, had been freed and then served as a Baptist missionary to his former captors. Ruddell helped maintain peace between Black Hoof and his rivals, Tecumseh and the Shawnee Prophet, who led factions of the more traditionally oriented Shawnees. Ruddell and Kirk’s beneficial assistance prior to the Shawnees’ removal from Ohio prompted the Indians to ask for assistance from the Baptists and Quakers after their arrival in Indian Territory.5 Shawnee settlements in Cape Girardeau incorpo-rated white agricultural techniques without the im-mediate aid of missionaries such as Ruddell and Kirk. Chief Wapapillete of Cape Girardeau ardently pur-sued peaceful relations with the Americans in his region with the assistance of missionaries. Wapapillete cooperated with white authorities when members of his band committed crimes against whites in the area. In one instance he executed a member of his tribe who had murdered a white woman. The man was “shot, killed and decapitated” by Wapapillete’s warriors. They then “brought the head to Wapapillete who sent it to be placed on a pole where the assassination took place.”6

Chief Chilitica of Cape Girardeau also main-tained friendly relations with Americans in south-eastern Missouri to keep the bands he controlled on good terms with neighboring whites. Although squatters began establishing homesteads on Shawnee land, taking as much timber as they could in the process, Chilitica reacted by enlisting the support of many Americans in the region, who petitioned the governor of Missouri in support of his band. The Missourians did not oppose the presence of Chilitica and his band and stated:

He has always sustained a good character, private-ly and morally strictly honest—almost to a proverb, and industrious in the extreme. Cultivates the soil in the summer extensively—and spends the winter seasons alternately at hunting and taking care of his stock. He is now owner of two hundred head of fine hogs, horses and cattle in proportion.7

In spite of the Missourians’ petitions, the government removed the Cape Girardeau Shawnees to Indian Territory in November 1831.8 The Cape Girardeau Shawnees’ removal is exam-ply of the removal process in many Shawnee vil-lages. Shawnees who favored adopting aspects of American culture and cooperated in maintaining peace on the frontier could not lawfully defend them-selves from being forced off their land. Neighboring whites’ petitions to the government and Shawnee co-operation did not prevent incoming white settlers from illegally using the Cape Girardeau Shawnees’ land. These illegal en-

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8. R. David Edmunds, “ ‘A Watchful Safeguard to our Habitations.’”
9. Ibid, 2. Robert L. Wilson to Lyman C. Draper, June 28, 1887, Shawnee file, Draper Manuscripts, Great Lakes–Ohio Valley Indian Archives, Glenn E. Black Laboratory of Archeology, Bloomington, Ind., heremafter cited as Draper Manuscripts.
10. Godfrey Lesieur to John Miller, October 6, 1831, U.S. Office of Indian Affairs, St. Louis Superintendency (also known as William Clark Collection), Library and Archives Division, Kansas State Historical Society.
11. Chilitica to John Miller, October 1831, ibid.  

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Lack of supplies, exhausted horses, and white deprivations plagued many of the Shawnees on their way to Indian Territory following the treaties of 1825 and 1831.2 Separate Shawnee bands in Ohio, Indiana, and Missouri were debilitated economically by the losses incurred during their removal to Indian Territory in 1833 and 1834. These losses forced them to make compromises with the missionaries and agents, who brought “improvements” such as plows, mills, and oxen. Together the Shawnees and the missionaries hoped that these tools would increase the number of acres under cultivation and to ensure the tribe’s food supply. The Shawnees’ desperate need for these supplies following removal to Indian Territory allowed the missionaries and agents to use these improvements as a tool to advance Indian assimilation and thus eradicating tribal culture. The missionaries and agents also sought to use the Shawnees to maintain good relations with the federal government and to cooperate with Quaker missionary William Kirk in changing his tribe’s economy in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Kirk’s mission near Wapakoneta, Ohio, operated successfully only for a short time and did not convert large numbers of the tribe to the Quaker faith. Yet some agricultural success was achieved through Kirk’s help. The Shawnees at Kirk’s mission enjoyed their greatest agricultural success in the years immediately preceding the War of 1812. Approximately five hundred acres of corn, squash, and other vegetables were under cultivation in the spring of 1808.3

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croachments resulted in the forced resettlement of the Missouri Shawnees to Indian Territory.12

Difficulties arose between the Ohio and Missouri Shawnees when they arrived in Indian Territory because each faction of the tribe wanted to invite the missionaries whom they had known prior to removal. This situation was further complicated by the two main factions of the tribe having been separated for many years, and many of the Ohio and Missouri Shawnees had little affinity for one another. The largest schism occurred between Tecumseh and Black Hoof during the War of 1812. Tecumseh and the Prophet rejected the United States by allying their faction of the tribe with the British. The elder Black Hoof, the most powerful Ohio chief at the time, made alliances with the United States, which was quickly overtaking the British in the region. American victory strengthened Black Hoof’s following and increased the enmity between the Shawnees. Differences such as these resulted in the Shawnees’ inability to agree over which missionaries to invite to the territory. As a result, both the Methodists and Baptists arrived in the summer of 1830.13

The younger Black Hoof moved to Kansas with John Perry and Cornstalk. These chiefs were part of the pro-American faction in Ohio that had gained power following the British defeat in 1815. Black Hoof and John Perry were willing to cooperate with the government. Following their arrival in Indian Territory, they petitioned their subagent Major John Campbell for the assistance of the Baptist missionaries they had known in Ohio. Stephen Ruddell did not appear, but Isaac McCoy, another prominent Baptist who had worked at Fort Wayne in Indiana and at Carey mission in Michigan, arrived on the Shawnee reservation in August 1830 with plans to establish a mission.14

The Shawnees’ failure to agree upon one missionary organization created a conflict in July 1830 when the Cape Girardeau chief, Fish, asked Shawnee agent George Vashon to write to “Jesse Greene, presiding elder of the Missouri district of the Methodist Episcopal Church, asking that a Methodist missionary be sent to them.”15 In response, the Methodist missionary society dispatched Thomas Johnson and Alexander McCallister to establish a mission among the Shawnees. Johnson and McCallister did not arrive, however, until November 19, 1830.16

Fish’s request for a Methodist mission greatly disappointed McCoy, who felt that Johnson and McCallister had cheated him out of a position that belonged solely to the Baptists. McCoy found Fish’s small band of forty members appealing because of their desire for assimilation and missionary support. In fact, Fish was white and was active in both Shawnee and American society. McCoy hoped that the Baptist plan of assimilating the Shawnees through emphasizing education and separation from the influence of white civilization could be promoted to the entire tribe through Fish.17 McCoy mistakenly believed that one chief could unite the entire tribe under the Baptist effort and failed to recognize the many different Shawnee communities that were forced to live together on the reservation.

McCoy was distraught at the prospect of establishing a mission among the Ohio Shawnees. He felt that proacculturation Ohio chiefs such as Cornstalk and William Perry “felt little desire for schools, and still less to hear preaching.” He lamented that “I felt a disappointment which I could not remedy.” However, lack of cooperation between the Cape Girardeau Shawnees and the Ohio Shawnees did not disturb chiefs Cornstalk and William Perry. Unlike McCoy, the Ohio Shawnees realized that the Missouri and Ohio Shawnees did not make decisions as a unified tribe.18

John Campbell helped to quell McCoy’s misgivings. Subagent Campbell was aware of the divisions within the tribe and downplayed the Methodists’ success with the Cape Girardeau band. In November 1830 when Thomas Johnson arrived at the reservation in response to Fish’s request, Campbell informed Johnson that the Baptists already had established a

From 1826 to 1828 the Prophet led the first depredation of the Ohio Shawnees to Kansas. There the tribe’s traditional culture was threatened by missionaries and agents who sought Indian assimilation.
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Johnson charges his ill success with these chiefs and their bands to the interference of Campbell, but I have always considered this to be unjust.”

In spite of the many testimonials in Campbell’s defense, his open alliance with the Baptists gave Thomas Johnson the perfect opportunity to challenge the subagent’s power. Johnson’s indictment of Campbell solicited an immediate response from Campbell’s superiors. As a result, Johnson was bewildered and asked Campbell “why the two missions were opposed to each other . . . because they were all one people.”

Part of the Ohio Shawnees’ opposition to Johnson stemmed from his plan for assimilating the Shawnees into American society. Johnson believed that ‘those who have yielded to . . . are always found first, in opening farms, raising stock, accumulating property and adopting the habits of civilized life.’ Yet difficulties arose in this plan when the Methodists used resources on the Shawnee reservation, such as timber, for personal purposes. The Shawnees approved of this assistance but were angered by the Methodists’ use of their property.

The Methodists’ heavy emphasis on agriculture, however, coincided with the tribe’s rationale for enlisting missionary support in the summer of 1830. Upon arriving on the Shawnee reservation, McCoy found that “few were . . . The Baptist operation was chronically plagued by underfunding, and they could not afford to compete with the Methodists.”

The Methodists’ emphasis on agriculture was reinforced by training in the “industrial arts” for men, and “the business of the house” for women. Of the six men and women employed at the Methodist mission in the summer of 1833, only one man, the Reverend E.T. By the summer of 1833, thirty-eight acres of land were under cultivation, largely through the efforts of the children.

In exchange for their labor, the Methodists supplied them with a new home, separate from their families.

Manual labor boarding schools were essential to the Methodists’ missionary operation. They believed that boarding schools were an effective means of ‘creating the self respect which is of so much importance in civilized life.’ Boarding schools were used to “civilize” the Shawnees by destroying tribal bonds. Centralized missions disrupted communal farming and tribal affiliation by eradicating family ties. The Shawnee children attended class early in the morning and evening, interspersed by labor for the mission throughout the morning and afternoon. The Methodists hoped that the Shawnees would assimilate into American society by owning their land independently “as an encouragement to enterprise” following their education at the school.”
mission and that the Shawnees did not need another one. But Johnson disregarded Campbell, met with Fish, and established the Methodist mission near present-day Turner in Wyandotte County. The Shawnee Baptist mission was in present-day Mission, Kansas, approximately three miles west of the Kansas–Missouri border.

In May 1833 enmity between Johnson and Campbell reached its apex when Johnson requested that General William Clark, superintendent of Indian Affairs for the St. Louis Superintendency, remove Campbell from office. Johnson accused Campbell of habitual drunkenness and of telling the Shawnees not to attend school. Campbell defended himself by explaining that when some of the Ohio Shawnees requested advice upon enrolling their children in school, he had recommended the Baptist institution. In his reply to Clark’s inquiry he admitted, “If this is a crime, I am guilty.”

The Ohio Shawnees wrote a letter to Clark in Campbell’s defense. They charged that Johnson was trying to establish the Methodists among their band by attempting to remove Campbell. Chiefs John Perry and Corntalk clearly wished to remain autonomous from the Methodists’ influence. Perry and other Ohio chiefs stated:

This man Johnston [sic] speaks bad of all our friends the Missionaries and he meddles himself too much about our business. he dont want anybody to have schools but himself and he is forcing our brothers the redskins. This we dont like. We gave him leave to have a school for our friend Fish, but we dont want him to meddle himself with our peo-ple. Let him stay with Fishes party and do good if he can for them. We are satisfied. . . . Our father Clark this man Johnston cultivates too much of our land and builds many houses and cuts too much of our timber.

Other whites in the area, such as Robert Johnson, came to Campbell’s defense, stating that “[T]he methodists’ heavy emphasis on agriculture, however, coincided with the tribe’s rationale for enlisting missionary support in the summer of 1830. Upon arriving on the Shawnee reservation, McCoy found that “few were so comfortably or so de-cently clothed as to make it pleasant for them to at-tend school.” The Methodists also were aware of these problems, and they clothed and fed many of the Shawnees who were in regular attendance at their mission. The Baptist operation was chronically plagued by understaffing, and they could not afford to compete with the Methodists.

The Methodists’ emphasis on agriculture was reinforced by training in the “industrial arts” for men, and “the business of the house” for women. Of the six men and women employed at the Methodist mission in the summer of 1833, only one man, the Reverend E.T. McCoy, was in charge of instructing the Shawnees at the Methodist school. Two men and two women, including Thomas Johnson’s wife, Sarah, were in charge of training the Shawnee boys and girls in labor common to their gender-relat-ed fields. All children worked at the mission. By the summer of 1833, thirty-eight acres of land were under cultivation, largely through the efforts of the children. In exchange for their labor, the Methodists supplied them with a new home, separate from their families.

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The manual labor school could not fully erase the close bonds between Shawnee families. The Methodists attempted to remedy this by preaching to the parents. They realized that the success of their schools has been in exact proportion to the influence of the Gospel upon the hearts of the parents of the children, and in no instance have we been able to succeed in bringing under a regular course of instruction, where the influence of the Christian religion was not previously felt by the parent or guardian of that child.

Despite the fact that they emphasized the assimilation of the Shawnee children, the Methodists recognized that a lasting influence could not be attained without also converting and assimilating Shawnee adults.

Thomas Johnson augmented the Methodist efforts at the manual labor school through preaching and other religious festivals such as camp meetings. He achieved some initial success by delivering a sermon on the creation that adhered to several basic points of the Shawnees' creation beliefs. Their familiarity with the sermon's message pleased the Shawnees in council; they "later agreed that the preacher knew just what they did, only better." Johnson realized that he could gain recognition from the tribe through the sermon because "the Shawnees had a tradition of the creation that in all essential points agrees substantially with the Bible account." Johnson and the Methodist missionaries also used their evangelism to appeal to the Shawnees. Methodist camp meetings were strikingly similar in practice to the Shawnees' Green Corn Festival and the feast for "Our Grandmother." During the Green Corn Festival "the chief would sit in the center of a circle and make music" while "the men and women would dance" around the chief. The fervent activity of the festival resembled the Methodist camp meeting in which people gathered for many nights, camping in a circle around a central preaching site. The camp meeting, according to Russell E. Richey, "was a historical drama, a play that the Methodists performed for themselves and the world, a staging of their own history by which they drew upon and shared what had created them." The evangelical nature of the Methodist religion resembled many aspects of Shawnee religion and was an avenue through which the Methodists initiated their involvement with the tribe.

That the Shawnees were racially different from the Methodists who worked among them did not inhibit the Shawnees' chances of becoming Americanized. In 1842 J.C. Berryman, who served as superintendent of the Methodist manual labor school and worked among the Shawnees and the Kickapoos, reported that "From experiments already made, we are fully satisfied that there is no essential difference between white and red children; the difference is all in circumstance."

Because the Methodists believed that the Shawnees were capable of becoming the equals of whites, they did not believe that it was necessary for them to totally acquire the Shawnee culture. Johnson believed that the best way to "find access to those who are capable of understanding the nature and enjoying the influence of our holy religion" was through first improving the economic situation of the Shawnees, then educating them as soon as possible in the English language. In fact, as soon as a sizeable congregation of Shawnees began to regularly attend the Methodist mission, compromises between the two cultures began to decrease. Johnson told the Methodists "grand object was to bring the Shawnees to a correct understanding of our language, and enable them to speak it fluently."

The Methodists' success among Fish's band of Cape Girardeau Shawnees did not alleviate the ongoing dispute between Johnson and the Ohio Shawnees. John Perry, Cornstalk, and other Ohio chiefs contended that Johnson used Shawnee

29. Thomas Johnson to Secretary of War, September 19, 1834, ibid.
31. Robert L. Wilson to Lyman C. Draper, June 28, 1887, Draper Manuscripts.
35. Thomas Johnson to Secretary of War, September 19, 1834, Schools, 1824–1873.
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Despite the fact that they emphasized the assimilation of the Shawnee children, the Methodists recognized that a lasting influence could not be attained without also converting and assimilating Shawnee adults. Thomas Johnson augmented the Methodist efforts at the manual labor school through preaching and other religious festivals such as camp meetings. He achieved some initial success by delivering a sermon on the creation that adhered to several basic points of the Shawnees’ creation beliefs. Their familiarity with the sermon’s message pleased the Shawnees in council; they “later agreed that the preacher knew just what they did, only better.” Johnson realized that he could gain recognition from the tribe through the sermon because “the Shawnees had a tradition of the creation that in all essential points agrees substantially with the Bible account.”30

The fervent activity of the festival resembled the Methodist camp meeting in which people gathered for many nights, camping in a circle around a central preaching site. The camp meeting, according to Russell E. Richey, “was a historical drama, a play that the Methodists performed for themselves and the world, a staging of their own history by which they drew upon and shared what had created them.”32 The evangelical nature of the Methodist religion resembled many aspects of Shawnee religion and was an avenue through which the Methodists initiated their involvement with the tribe.

That the Shawnees were racially different from the Methodists who worked among them did not inhibit the Shawnees’ chances of becoming Americanized. In 1842 J.C. Berryman, who served as superintendent of the Methodist manual labor school and worked among the Shawnees and the Kickapoos, reported that “from experiments already made, we are fully satisfied that there is no essential difference between white and red children; the difference is all in circumstance.”33

Because the Methodists believed that the Shawnees were capable of becoming the equals of whites, they did not believe that it was necessary for them to totally acquiesce to Shawnee culture. Johnson believed that the best way to “find access to those who are capable of understanding the nature and enjoying the influence of our holy religion” was through first improving the economic situation of the Shawnees, then educating them as soon as possible in the English language.34 In fact, as soon as a sizeable congregation of Shawnees began to regularly attend the Methodist mission, compromises between the two cultures began to decrease. Johnson felt that the Methodists “grand object was to bring the Shawnees to a correct understanding of our language, and enable them to speak it fluently.”35

The Methodists’ success among Fish’s band of Cape Girardeau Shawnees did not alleviate the ongoing dispute between Johnson and the Ohio Shawnees. John Perry, Cornstalk, and other Ohio chiefs contended that Johnson used Shawnee

29. Thomas Johnson to Secretary of War, September 19, 1834, ibid.
31. Robert L. Wilson to Lyman C. Draper, June 28, 1887, Draper Manuscripts.
35. Thomas Johnson to Secretary of War, September 19, 1834, Schools, 1824–1873.
resources, such as timber, without the approval of the entire tribe. One of the essential reasons for Johnson's use of Shawnee resources was not simply greed, however, but a desire to be self-sufficient. The meager funds allotted to their program, the lack of missionaries, and teachers, Robert Simserwell, a missionary who worked closely with McCoy on the Shawnee reservation, wrote: "How hard my dear brother that among the many thousands of Baptists in our United States, all professing an interest in the cause of Christ, yet not a sufficient number found to engage in their cause." 41

The Baptist missionaries who were employed at the Shawnee reservation worked both in the separate Shawnee villages and at the central mission. The Baptists preferred that their students continue to live with their parents. Boarding many children at the mission was expensive and made the missionaries "so entangled in secular concerns and so much engaged in corporeal labor that it is impossible to attend to true missionary labor." Village schools also allowed the Baptists to impart instruction to both children and parents and to train native teachers to help the Shawnees "prosecute their studies." 41

The tools utilized by the Baptists for importing American culture to the Shawnees were books and other objects that the tribe would use to assimilate themselves through inculcation of the new system, every uncompounded sound which can be distinguished by the ear is indicated by a character." 42

The printing press was well received by a small portion of the tribe. The publication of a Shawnee newspaper, the Shawnee Sun, began, and the press also became a popular item among whites in Indian Territory. Ironically, the press also increased the rivalry and controversy between the Baptists and Methodists. The Methodists became alarmed at the possibility of increased Baptist success among the Shawnees through the use of the press. As a result, Johnson visited Meeker in the summer of 1834, inquiring about the possibility of using the press to publish some Methodist hymns in the Shawnee language. 43

Johnson realized that he had to adapt to the press, and he consented to teach in the Shawnee language in order to prevent the Baptists from gaining in popularity over his mission. The Baptists consented grudgingly and assisted Johnson in printing tracts for his operation. McCoy viewed the Methodists' interest in the printing press with skepticism, stating that "they had not done so much from inclination, as from the necessity of gratifying a popular desire among the Shawnees." 43 Preventing the Methodists from utilizing the press would have been a critical violation of protocol between the missions. Such an open display of enmity would undercut the benevolent purposes of the missions and make them vulnerable to renewed criticism from the Shawnee tribe itself, which already was aware of the animosity between McCoy and Johnson.

The Shawnees' frustration with the missionaries also was aggravated by the actions of the agents on the reservation. One problem involved the location of a mill site that the Shawnees had been promised by the treaty of August 8, 1831. Fort Leavenworth agent Richard Cummins believed that the tribe's choice for a mill site was on a creek that did not have a sufficient supply of water. When funding for the mill finally arrived in the fall of 1834, Cummins ignored the Shawnees' choice of location and left the final decision to Superintendent William Clark. Cummins challenged the tribal leaders in spite of the Shawnees' "full confidence in their own judge-
resources, such as timber, without the approval of the entire tribe. One of the essential reasons for Johnson’s use of Shawnee resources was not simply greed, however, but a desire to be self-sufficient. The missionaries feared that the Shawnees would abandon their villages and farms and their struggle to survive in Indian Territory was juxtaposed with the Methodist operation, which was able to continue because of Shawnee labor and reservation resources. Shawnee animosity intensified when promised treaty provisions did not arrive. The Shawnees also were angered by the Methodists’ unwillingness to assist them if they did not conform to the missionaries’ rules.

The Shawnees’ animosity toward the Methodists did not extend to the Baptist operation. The Baptists’ emphasis on educating the Shawnees in their own villages was part of an overall plan to create a stable environment for the Shawnees that gradually would evolve into a model of Christian civilization. The Baptists hoped to catalyze this design through the “improvement of their minds and manners,” the effect of the “doctrines of religion,” and the “love of virtue.” The Baptists’ emphasis on Christian teaching relegated farming to a minor aspect of the overall Baptist operation, and therefore, reservation labor and resources were not a significant part of Baptist-Shawnee relations.

The Baptists wanted every preacher in their employ to be “free as sound reason will make him to preach and teach.” Unlike the Methodists’ continual requests for laborers such as smiths and farm workers, the Baptists lamented the lack of missionaries and teachers. Robert Simerwell, a missionary who worked closely with McCoy on the Shawnee reservation, wrote: “How hard my dear brother that among the many thousands of Baptists in our United States, all professing an interest in the cause of Christ, yet not a sufficient number found to engage in their cause.”

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The tools utilized by the Baptists for importing American culture to the Shawnees were books and other objects that the tribe would use to assimilate themselves through their own free will. The Baptists also wanted a printing press to print hymns and other religious books for the Shawnees and to publish “a weekly or semi-monthly periodical devoted chiefly to the promotion of the interests of the Indians.” After repeated requests to the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, they finally received a printing press in March 1834. Jotham Meeker served as printer and immediately began to translate the Shawnee language into print using a unique phonetic system he devised. McCoy wrote that “upon the new system, every un-compounded sound which can be distinguished by the ear is indicated by a character.”

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Before we left our country the commissioners told us we would get a great deal of money when we get here, but we have been here 3 years and have not got it yet, we were to ... $9000 —we looked for that amount much. We wish to know what became of that money.

The legality of the Shawnees' claims did not improve their chances of having their treaty recognized. The missionaries and agents controlled the flow of information in and out of their reservation. Subagent Marston Clark and Isaac McCoy downplayed both the sincerity of the Shawnees' demands and the number of those who had made them. McCoy wrote to Herring:

I feel confident that this matter has not originated among the Indians. I believe that, excepting the party of the Shawanoe prophet, the dissatisfaction is limited to some six ... sir, that the operations of these missions at present, both in matters of religion and education are uncommonly auspicious.

The letter convinced Herring that the Shawnees' desire to remove all non-Shawnees from their reservation was not important. In fact, McCoy manipulated the event so ... that the missionar-ies and all other Indians also be removed from the reservation, clearly indicating they wanted to regain complete control of the tribe and the land they had treated for.

The Shawnees needed the money because of the debts they had incurred to men such as Joseph Parks who had financed the removal of the Hog Creek band of the Shawnees and who acted as an interpreter for the tribe. Many of the Shawnees' urgent requests for provisions in the summer of 1833 consistently includ-ed mention of the debt to Parks, who was clamoring for his money. The Shawnees stated:

The Baptist missionaries, who arrived in Kansas in November 1830, strongly believed in assimilating the Shawnees into American society. His plan involved religious preaching, agricultural improvements, and creating boarding schools which he believed would "civilize" the Shawnees by destroying tribal bonds.

Baptists offered Christian education, not the food, clothing, and agricultural assistance the tribe so badly needed. Although the Baptists made a concerted effort to teach the Shawnees in their native tongue and pressured the federal government for improvements on their behalf, the tribe desperately required immediate assistance for survival in Indian Territory. Benevolent actions such as vaccination drives spear-headed by Baptist preacher Johnston Lykins were appreciated by the Shawnees but still did not solve their problems.

The Methodists also did not meet with the approval of a large majority of Shawnees. The mission operated for the benefit of only those Shawnees who were willing to give up their tribal affiliation. Members who wished to retain their tribal affiliation were expected to overlook the Methodist missionaries' continual destruction of the valuable timber that grew sparsely throughout the Kansas grasslands on which the Shawnee reservation was located.

Shawnee interaction with the missionaries and agents who worked with them in 1833 and 1834 was indicative of the tribe's uncertainty of how adaptations to American culture should proceed. The Shawnees realized that without assistance, survival in their changed world would be impossible. But they did not want such help if it required them to completely abandon their culture. At the same time, the Americans felt that integration into the dominant society was essential to the tribe's survival. The conflict of cultures between the Shawnees and the mis-sionaries and agents continued and, not surprisingly, was not resolved in the confrontation of the winter of 1834.

The Shawnees continued to struggle for their autonomy and the survival of their culture despite Euro-American efforts to control the tribe and sup-plant its beliefs.
Before we left our country the commissioners told us we would get a great deal of money when we get here, but we have been here 3 years and have not got it yet, we were to receive $9000—all along we expected to receive $9000—we looked for that amount much. We wish to know what became of that money.

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The letter convinced Herring that the Shawnees’ desire to remove all non-Shawnees from their reservation was not important. In fact, McCoy manipulated the event so that the Shawnees’ request and established the missionaries’ complete control over the tribe’s relations with the government.

Neither the Baptist nor the Methodist mission delivered the aid that the Shawnees had expected. The Baptists offered Christian education, not the food, clothing, and agricultural assistance the tribe so badly needed. Although the Baptists made a concerted effort to teach the Shawnees in their native tongue and pressured the federal government for improvements on their behalf, the tribe desperately required immediate assistance for survival in Indian Territory. Benevolent actions such as vaccination drives spearheaded by Baptist preacher Johnston Lykins were appreciated by the Shawnees but still did not solve their problems.

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