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James B. Finley Letters

9-9-1848

Letter from Squire Gray Eyes & John M. Armstrong to James B. Finley

Squire Gray Eyes

John M. Armstrong

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Wm. Lloyd Garrison

Rev. James B. Furley

Ohio Conference
Newark

Ohio

Care of Rev. J. Humble

Gary &
W. M. Channing
Knox
Oct 9. 48

Wyandott Station Sept. 9th 48

Dear Brother

Since the meeting of the official members of M. E. Church here, whose proceedings were sent to you informing you and the Ohio Conference of its decision, the enemy has been at work. It seems that our slave-dealing missionaries are willing to resort to any means what ever to maintain their grasp upon the Indians. Here in the Wyandott nation a meeting was got up composed of non-professors slave-dealers infidels inebriates and back-sliders and passed certain preamble and resolutions and sent them to the Ohio Conference. Now we solemnly protest against the proceeding of that meeting having any force or validity whatever. In the first place it could not be called a national meeting there being but 47 Wyandottes present. In the second place a large majority of those present were not members of the Church. It is reasonable to conclude that there were some present who would vote out of the world religion itself were it in their power, if their voice in life is any indication of sentiment. We deny the right of any such body to dictate or interfere or intermeddle in ^{any} Church matter whatever. The man whose name is appended ^{as secretary} to the resolutions referred ^{to} as secretary has involved himself in slavery since we came to

this country. he professes no religion. Spends whole weeks in a neighboring village in a state of intoxication, a man who has done more than any other ten men in the nation to lead our young people into habits of intemperance. Such is the man who is the master spirit of the faction got up in favor of the new church and with his aids have succeeded too well in dividing our ranks. Old man Hicks his two sons (F. A. Hick & Little Chief) and David Young of the official members have deserted our old ship. At a meeting of the official members these four brethren agreed to come back and stay with us if a majority of the membership decided against them. but having had time to consult their advisors out of the church have since refused to comply with their agreement.

Our present missionary has deeply galled and betrayed us. he has always held out the idea to us that he was ~~not~~ in his sentiments and that he might when a suitable opportunity presented itself go with or rather remain with us in the old church but his subsequent conduct shows that his pretensions were shallow and deceptive. When we were about to adopt measures to erect a new church building some of

our official members objected alledging that the south might ^{claim} it. Our missionary spoke up and said that that need not be urged as an objection for it was certain that which ever way the Wyandott societies went the church property would go, and now he sings a very different song "if there be only twelve members go with us we have a parsonage and meetinghouse we can still hold our meetings" such is the language now.

Pray for us dear brother that the Lord may give us wisdom in this our time of trouble.

Your brothers in Christ.

Squire Gray Eyes

John M. Armstrong

Rev J. B. Finley
Ohio Conference

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Wyandott Nation Sept 9th '48

Dear Brother

Since the meeting of the official members of M.E. Church here whose proceedings were sent to you informing you and the Ohio Conference of its decision, the enemy has been at work.

It seems that our slave dealing missionaries are willing to resort to any means whatever to maintain their grasp upon the Indians. Here in the Wyandott nation a meeting was got up composed of nonprofessers slave dealers infidels inebriates and backsliders and passed a certain preamble and resolutions and sent them to the Ohio Conf.

Now we solemnly protest against the proceeding of that meeting having any force or validity whatever. In the first place it could not be called a national meeting there being but 47 Wyandotts present. In the second place a large majority of those present were not members of the church. It is reasonable to conclude that there were some present who would vote out of the world religion itself were it in their power, if their course in life is any indication of sentiment.

We deny the right of any such body to dictate interfere or intermeddle in any church matter whatever. The man whose name is appended as secretary to the resolutions referred to has involved himself in slavery since we came to this country. He professes no religion, spends whole weeks in a neighboring village in a state of intoxication, a man who has done worse than any other ten men in the nation to lead our young people into habits of intemperance. Such is the man who is master spirit of the faction got up in favor of the new church and with his aids have succeeded too well in dividing our ranks. Old man Hicks his two sons (F.A. Hick & Little Chief) and David Young of the official members have deserted our old ship. At a meeting of the official members these four brethren agreed to come back and stay with us if a majority of the membership decided against them. But having had time to consult their advisors out of the church have since refused to comply with this agreement.

Our present missionary has deeply galled and betrayed us. He has always held out the idea to us that he was northern in his sentiments and that he might when a suitable opportunity presented itself go with or rather remain with us in the old church but his subsequent conduct shows that his pretensions were shallow and deceptive. When we were about to adopt measures to erect a new church building some of our official members objected alledging that the South might claim it. Our missionary spoke up and said that that need not be urged as an objection for it was certain that which ever way the Wyandott Societys went the church property would go, and now he sings a very different song. "If there be only twelve members go with us we have a parsonage and meetinghouse we can still hold our meetings." Such is the language now.

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Squire Grey Eyes

John M. Armstrong

Rev. J.B. Finley

Ohio Conference