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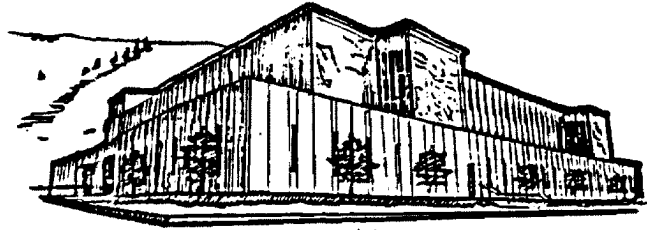
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PAPISTS, PRESBYTERS, AND PRIMERS:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CATHOLIC AND PRESBYTERIAN
MISSION SCHOOLS AMONG THE NAVAJO,
1898-1928

by

Sally J. Southwick

B.A., University of Minnesota--Minneapolis, 1987

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

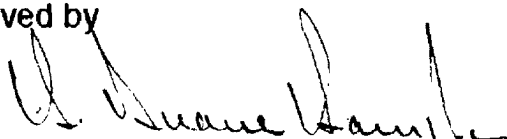
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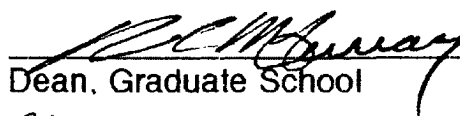
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Papists, Presbyters, and Primers: A Comparative Study of Catholic and Presbyterian Mission Schools among the Navajo, 1898-1928

Director: Professor H. Duane Hampton 

In the Treaty of 1868, the United States promised to build and to staff schools for Navajo children, but soon relied heavily on churches to provide formal education for the Navajo. Between 1898 and 1928 both Catholic and Presbyterian churches established mission schools within the same area of the reservation. Their proximity brought them into competition, which creates the basis for a comparative study. This study examines the missions' multi-faceted purposes, their development, their institutional organizations, their roles within the context of federal Indian policy, and the missionaries' relations with tribal members.

This study relies on archival research, which includes the St. Michaels' Franciscan Papers (AZ 500) and the Berard Haile Papers (AZ 132) at the University of Arizona Library's Special Collections, primary documents, which include missionary memoirs in the Ganado Presbyterian Church library, and a variety of secondary sources. It analyzes the mission schools according to their own objectives, tribal reception, and national assimilation aims.

The Catholics strove to create a lasting community of converted Navajo by adapting their proselytization to the tribe's language and culture and cultivating relationships with local clan leaders. The Presbyterians stressed both evangelism and acculturation and hoped to establish self-supporting a congregation. Both used education to transform the tribe and achieved varied degrees of success on the different levels of their objectives.

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Finally, thanks to Barry, who reminded me not to take any of this too seriously.

1 April 1993

1. Introduction

From the beginnings of recorded history in the Southwest, disparate cultures have met and influenced each other, both amicably and forcefully. Since the reservation period of the mid-nineteenth century, cultural contact between the tribes, such as the Navajo, and whites has occurred largely through the unilateral direction of the United States and its representatives. More specifically, missionaries and educators arrived among the Navajo with a prescribed assignment to influence the Navajo through proselytization and instruction. They brought with them expectations and a strong sense of purpose, but little, if any, knowledge of the country or of the tribe's tradition and objectives. Instead of the societal vacuum that they anticipated, or tenuous customs that they planned to supplant readily with their own, these agents of white civilization encountered the rich, resilient culture of a people rooted in their land and capable of adapting to forces beyond their control.

The Navajo world began in the land. In their origin mythology, the emergence story, three subterranean worlds preceded creation of the *Dinéh* (People) in the fourth world, before they climbed into the fifth world, their ancestral home within the four sacred mountains. From this collective memory, many of the geological formations and seasonal phenomena received spiritual significance that enhanced their physical importance and their place in the Navajo mind.¹

Topographical and geographical diversity characterize the Colorado Plateau which spreads across the Four Corners area from the western slopes of

¹ Peter Iverson, The Navajo Nation, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), xxvi-xxix; Raymond Friday Locke, The Book of the Navajo, (Los Angeles: Mankind Publishing Co., 4th ed., 1976), 58-79; James F. Downs, The Navajo, (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 1972), 19.

the Rockies to beyond the Grand Canyon. In the center of it, the ancestral home of the Navajo, the land varies dramatically. Mountain ranges run north to south with peaks that rise to 10,000 feet, towering over the desert plains that lie a mile or more below.² Amidst these extremes, steep canyons and winding valleys carve designs into the land, while mesas rise from it in small clusters of natural statues or in a single, large mass that blocks the horizon.

The varied altitudes create three different climates and soil zones that nurture divergent plant life. In the subhumid mountains that comprise a small portion of the Navajo land, large evergreens, such as white pine, grow in dense forests. Below them in the upland plains, the steppe supports juniper, red cedar, pinyon, greasewood, and sagebrush. The remainder--over half of the total area--consists of flat alluvial plains with a desert climate, no substantial rivers or streams, unstable soil, few trees, and scattered patches of cactus, yucca, sage, and assorted grasses. Throughout the year, seasonal weather patterns bring extreme temperatures, violent wind storms, spring and summer droughts, and only late summer rainfall that often causes flooding.³

Life in such a diverse landscape requires flexibility, creativity, and respect. Early in their tenure on the Colorado Plateau, the Navajo accepted nature in its role as absolute master and began to adapt their livelihood to survive under its harsh conditions.⁴ From the neighboring Puebloan tribes they learned appropriate flood-plain irrigation techniques to farm arable valleys and canyonlands. Spanish explorers and settlers in the area brought with them domestic animals, including the goats and sheep that slowly became central to

² Iverson, 6; The Franciscan Fathers, An Ethnologic Dictionary of the Navaho Language, (St. Michaels, Arizona: St. Michaels Press, 1910), 32.

³ Clyde Kluckhohn and Dorothea Leighton, The Navaho, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974 rev. ed.), 45-48; Iverson, 6; Franciscan Fathers, 31-32.

⁴ Locke, 31.

the Navajo way of life.⁵ By the early eighteenth century, the Navajo had begun to integrate stockraising into their agricultural and hunting patterns and managed their own flocks rather than relying on raiding as they had in the past.⁶ In the latter part of the century, herding assumed significance equal to farming as the Navajo diversified their economy to make maximum use of seasonal conditions.⁷

Transhumance best suited the varied soil, vegetation, and climate. For both their fields and flocks, as well as personal necessity, the Navajo needed first to consider the accessibility of reliable water sources. In the warmer months, mountains and mesas provided pools and steady streams, whereas in winter, they had to seek areas below the melting line, yet near a wood supply.⁸ Cooler highlands between 6,000 and 7,000 feet thus became summer residences and the winter lowlands served as the base for the remainder of the year.⁹

The broader needs of the crops and the flocks corresponded to the seasonal shifts for water. Where water and soil allowed, the Navajo planted melons, squash, beans, and pumpkins to supplement their subsistence on corn, which held both nutritional and spiritual value.¹⁰ Fields planted near springs or another water source required frequent irrigation throughout the growing season as well as regular hoeing and weeding during the early summer months.¹¹ After the September harvest, the Navajo moved back to their main winter homesites. Herding necessitated reliable water sources and wide

⁵ Downs, 11.

⁶ Klara B. Kelley and Peter M. Whiteley, Navajoland: Family and Settlement and Land Use, (Tsaile, AZ: Navajo Community College Press, 1989), 19.

⁷ Iverson, 5-6.

⁸ Kelley and Whiteley, 59-60.

⁹ Downs, 42; Franciscan Fathers, 329.

¹⁰ Kelley and Whiteley, 58; Downs, 92, Franciscan Fathers, 204.

¹¹ *Ibid.*; Locke, 6.

expanses of range in order to prevent overgrazing and its ensuing erosion. Navajo values that equated large flocks with familial wealth and the tendency of sheep to remain in a familiar area, unless prodded onward by herders or goats, both contributed to the highly mobile pattern of stockraising.¹²

Although they moved their flocks to maintain the seasonal integrity of the range resources, the Navajo always returned home to the hogan. Life centered on these rounded earth and log structures, that resembled earthen wombs, blended into the landscape, and were sacred because they had originally been gifts from the Holy People.¹³ Located near quality drinking water, good range, and a wood supply, the sturdy winter hogan served as a fairly permanent family residence. In contrast, the summer shades provided shelter near the fields and grazing areas and could be moved as necessary.¹⁴

In proximity to the homesite, the number of hogans clustered depended on the size of the extended family and the extent to which they pooled their resources. Where combined flocks did not exceed an ecologically reasonable size, a number of relatives used range and water resources communally. Similarly, individual family members inherited fields, but all worked together to produce food for the entire group.¹⁵ In large areas with abundant water, range, and timber, the family cluster expanded to include cousins and their extended families, thereby forming an "outfit" who cooperated in a community and shared responsibilities.¹⁶ Most seasonal movement occurred within a prescribed area traditionally used by the family or group of families, which created locally recognized, generationally inherited rights to the resources.¹⁷

¹² Downs, 92, 49, 58; Kelley and Whiteley, 59.

¹³ Locke, 13, 15; Kluckhohn and Leighton, 89.

¹⁴ Franciscan Fathers, 49, 329, 334.

¹⁵ Downs, 12; Kelley and Whiteley, 52; Kluckhohn and Leighton, 105-106.

¹⁶ Locke, 17-19.

¹⁷ Locke, 18; Downs, 43.

Within the single family unit, women commanded the greatest respect, because the Navajo passed both identity and inheritance matrilineally. Extended families consisted of biologically related women, their husbands, and children.¹⁸ Although men often performed political or social negotiations on behalf of their outfits, received recognition for their abilities as ceremonial singers, and always worked the fields and tended the flocks, ultimate authority, final decisions, and primary ownership rested with their wives or, for unmarried men, their mothers.¹⁹ Individuals traced their direct clan membership through their mothers and their secondary clan identity through their father's mother, making maternal first cousins, in effect, brothers, but a father's nieces and nephews merely cousins to his children. Due to this line of relations, the Navajo considered intermarriage of clan members incestuous and used the clan system to maintain healthy societal order.²⁰ Clans operated independently of each other, with territorial authority, but without chiefs, a Navajo cultural characteristic that frustrated later representatives of the United States government.²¹ A conscious sense of tribal identity did not develop until fairly recently in the reservation period.²²

Throughout Navajoland, however, clan members shared common values and beliefs that integrated nature and spirituality into their transhumant way of life. Stories of the past, after emergence into the fifth world, happened within the sacred mountains that set the boundaries of *Diné'tah*, the land of the Navajo. With local landmarks such as the mesas and canyons as a stage, the Holy People plotted, schemed, and acted much like the immortal gods of Greek

¹⁸ Kluckhohn and Leighton, 100; Locke, 16.

¹⁹ Downs, 22-23.

²⁰ Locke, 20.

²¹ Downs, 36, 123.

²² Kluckhohn and Leighton, 123; Downs, 122.

mythology in their divine yet human personalities. Stories of the main deity, Changing Woman and her sister, White Shell Woman, instructed children and adults alike in proper social relations and responsible behavior. Woven into the fabric of realities on the land, oral tradition reinforced the wholeness and sacred character of all facets of life.²³ Like the Holy People, human nature contained both good and evil, with male and female complementing each other. Nature dominated life and made it dangerous, but also imbued it with importance and immediacy. Due to this predominance of the present, the Navajo emphasized health, pragmatism, and harmonious relations, with family and the larger world, both physical and spiritual.²⁴

In such a society, teaching the young occurred as a natural part of daily life within the extended family. Traditional education consisted of both practical skills and transmission of cultural and clan identity. To survive as adults, children needed to learn the importance of water, responsibility for the sheep and goats, farming techniques and food preservation, how to build a hogan or summer shade, how to interpret weather patterns, and to appreciate variance in the landscape. To instill in them a sense of responsibility and identity, adults gave children animals of their own at an early age. Thus, herding also served as a socialization process.²⁵ They also grew into their roles in their clan according to gender and birth order. All understood, through participation in family routines, the legends, taboos, social behavior, and expectations of the larger tribal society. Through this learning process, Navajo children also developed healthy self-esteem and respect for their elders.²⁶ They became well-

²³ Ibid., 133, 178; Locke, 45.

²⁴ Kluckhohn and Leighton, 179-180, 297-299, 303-304, 309-312, 314.

²⁵ Locke, 24; Iverson, 7; Franciscan Fathers, 257; Downs, 29-30, 58.

²⁶ Robert W. Young, "A Brief History of Navajo Education," in The Navajo Yearbook R.W. Young, comp., Report No. 8, (Window Rock, AZ: The Navajo Agency, 1961), 11; Hildegard Thompson, The Navajos' Long Walk for Education: A History of Navajo Education, (Tsalie, AZ: Navajo Community College Press, 1975), 25-26.

prepared for life on the arid plateau in the footsteps of their ancestors.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the United States had intruded into the formerly self-contained Navajo culture and society. White settlers expanded to the West and their unmediated infringement on tribal lands drew the federal government into a series of wars and treaties, culminating in the Navajo war of 1863-1864 and the Treaty of 1868. United States Indian Policy relied on reservations as a solution for the problems with tribes in the western territories. By isolating them from white society, the U.S. government hoped to put an end to hostilities and to control all contact with the tribes.

Once the tribes removed--whether quietly or not--to the circumscribed lands, federal planners could pursue their ultimate goal of tribal assimilation.²⁷ To achieve this end, the politicians and agents enlisted the assistance of missionaries and educators, in the firm belief that the forces of Christianization and instructed civilization could best transform the Indians. With federal approval and societal support, the churches implemented educational programs among the Navajo in two distinct phases between 1868 and 1928. During the first three decades, the Presbyterian Church became involved in Navajo education through the federal government's Peace Policy. The denomination found itself unprepared for the assignment of "civilizing" the pastoral tribe and quickly returned the responsibility to the government.

The United States then provided a single school at the agency with a staff that fell far short of the one school for every thirty children for which the Navajo and the U.S. had agreed to in the treaty of 1868. The school operated as the only government school on the reservation until almost the turn of the century. Navajo traditional education provided children with both practical skills

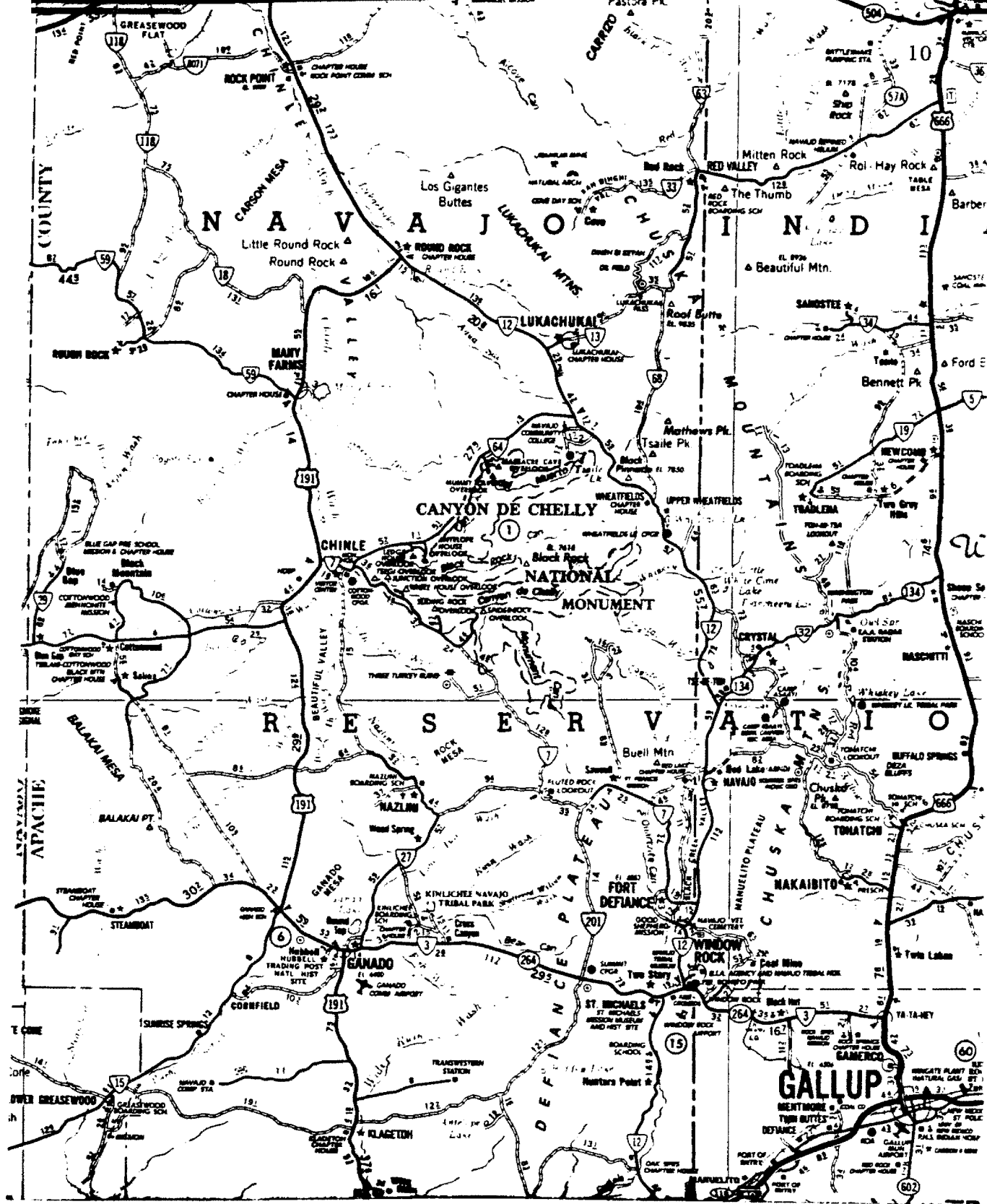
²⁷ Margaret Szasz, Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination, 1928-1973, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974), 8-9, 11-12.

and identity, thereby enculturating them into full tribal life. In contrast, Americans promoted formal schooling designed to alienate Navajo children from their tribe and then to assimilate them into the dominant culture. These three decades provided the Navajo ample opportunity to compare their traditional education with the U.S. government's promises and offerings. Their experiences influenced their reactions to the second phase of educational attempts on or near the reservation.

From 1898 to 1928, the United States intensified education efforts among the Navajo through the renewed and diversified mission participation that marked the second phase of assimilation attempts. This time both the Catholic and Presbyterian churches supplemented increased federal school development. At the turn of the century, Franciscans completed a new mission at St. Michael, Arizona, just south of the Navajo agency headquarters at Fort Defiance and on non-reservation land. With Franciscan assistance, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament founded a boarding school on adjacent land in 1902. They intended to provide Christian education and training to Navajo children without removing them to more distant boarding schools, such as Santa Fe.

After its abortive attempt to establish a mission at Fort Defiance in the nineteenth century, the Presbyterian church renewed its efforts to the Navajo and began to build a new mission at Ganado in 1902. For the first ten years, the Presbyterians operated a small day school in the manse and later in the back of the church. In 1912 the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions transferred the boarding school at Jewett, New Mexico to the mission site at Ganado. The new location lay 27 miles west of St. Michaels, across the fairly fertile, forested, and relatively populous Defiance Plateau. This placed the two schools in close geographical proximity and in direct competition for students from the same clans.

Representative of the larger, overlapping efforts at mission education to the Navajo, the Catholic and Presbyterian boarding schools create an intriguing comparison from their founding years until 1928, during a period of Navajo self-sufficiency. Several factors influenced the course and consequences of cultural contact between the missionary educators and the local tribal members and thus provide the criteria for three levels of critical analysis of the schools. The two churches' staffs belonged to separate subcultures within white American society and acted within dissimilar institutional structures that maintained unequal relations with the federal government. Within the national context of the time, the churches shared the ultimate goal of Christianizing the Navajo through education, but they differed on the degree to which they considered this goal synonymous with absolute acculturation. As a result of these differences, the missionaries' attitudes toward the tribe varied, as did their perceptions of their roles, and they pursued separate, though occasionally corresponding, sectarian missiologies / mission mentalities. In turn, this affected the implementation, growth, and adaptation of their mission goals, as well as their perception of their progress toward these goals. Crucially, these factors influenced the Navajo reaction and reception of the schools and the missionaries on both personal and broader social levels. After thirty years of work, the Catholic and Presbyterian mission educators achieved different successes from each other, in light of what they both sought commonly to accomplish, the transformation of the Navajo.



Adapted from Automobile Club of Southern California (1989).

II. Early Attempts at Formal Education among the Navajo, 1868-1898

Thirty years before Franciscan friars founded St. Michael's mission at Tsohotso, two events transpired that would affect future sectarian efforts to educate the Navajo. On 1 June 1868, Lt. General William T. Sherman and Indian Peace Commissioner Samuel F. Tappan concluded negotiations for the "Treaty Between the United States and the Navajo Tribe of Indians."¹ Of less immediate impact for the Navajo, Ulysses S. Grant became President of the United States.

Although Grant's Indian policy later determined the beginning of formal Navajo education, the treaty ushered in a new era in the tribe's history, an era in which both Franciscans and Presbyterians played persisting parts. In 1863-64 the Navajo fought a short, intense war against the United States Army, during which the federal soldiers destroyed as much tribal property as possible.² Facing winter starvation, the majority of the tribe surrendered and marched under armed guard more than 300 miles to Bosque Redondo, a designated reservation on the Pecos River near Fort Sumner in eastern New Mexico Territory.³

The Navajo survived at the Bosque for four years. Removed from the land of their ancestors, a land inseparable from tribal identity, the tribe became spiritually ill, while alkaline soil and water offered insufficient means of physical sustenance.⁴ Unable to support themselves, as they had in their homeland, the

¹ Charles J. Kappler, comp., Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties, Vol. 2, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), Serial Number (SN) 4624, pp. 1015-1019.

² Garrick Bailey and Roberta Glenn Bailey, A History of the Navajos: The Reservation Years (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1986), 9. In a scorched earth policy meant to force a surrender, troops burned orchards, fields, and homes, and sheep.

³ *Ibid.*, 10. A few Navajo avoided capture by hiding in remote canyons.

⁴ Locke, 365; John O. Baxter, "Restocking the Navajo Reservation after Bosque Redondo," New Mexico Historical Society, LVIII, No. 4 (1983), 326.

Navajo relied on the U.S. government for necessities. Responding to more of a financial than a moral burden, the federal government chose to negotiate returning the Navajo to their own land. In his annual report as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, H. G. Taylor summarized the situation:

The reservation proving to be unsuitable, and the Navajoes becoming very much dissatisfied and threatening to leave, and the government being at a heavy expenditure to support them, it was deemed advisable to procure for them a new location, and hence this treaty was made, which provides a reservation in their old home.⁵

After conclusion of the treaty, the Navajo did not wait for its ratification, but headed west on 18 June 1868, under the military escort of Lt. Colonel Charles J. Whiting.⁶ Although the forced four-year sojourn at Bosque Redondo occupies little space in the centuries-long continuum of Navajo history in the Southwest, the experience of the “Long Walk” serves as a focal point in tribal memory.⁷ The Navajo returned to their land to face a new beginning, not only in terms of rebuilding their socio-economic base, but also in their identity as a conquered people and in political relationship to the United States government.

As obligated by the treaty, the Navajo agreed to live peacefully on the prescribed land, a square lot of 3.5 million acres overlapping the Arizona-New Mexico border.⁸ The reservation included only a small portion of their ante-bellum domain and excluded the best agricultural areas, yet the Navajo rejoiced to be home.⁹ Canyon de Chelly and the Chuska Mountains lay at the heart of the negotiated area, just north of the Defiance plateau, on either side of which the Catholics and the Presbyterians later built their schools. The

⁵ Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (RCIA) 1868, House Executive Document No. 1, 40th Congress, 3rd Session, SN 1366, p. 464.

⁶ Ibid., 624; Baxter, 330.

⁷ Kluckhohn and Leighton, 41.

⁸ Bailey and Bailey, 26.

⁹ Locke, 384.

government located the agency headquarters at Fort Defiance, just south of the reservation boundary in Arizona.¹⁰ Its location served government purposes, but its distance from most of the tribe's population eventually proved to be an impediment to good relations. Executive orders issued by Presidents Hayes and Arthur eventually expanded the reservation boundaries to encompass vast tracts of traditional Navajo land, as needed for the rejuvenating tribe and their livestock.¹¹

When locating the agency at Fort Defiance, the government overlooked a primary cultural attribute of the Navajo, namely their transhumant life of sheep-herding. In his 1874 report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Edward P. Smith noted that, "The Navajoes are an industrious, agricultural, and pastoral people, giving especial attention to sheep-raising, from the wool of which they manufacture a superior blanket."¹² During the course of the year, families tended their corn fields and apricot orchards, as seasons dictated, while moving their flocks to water and grazing areas. Annually, at the beginning of September, the tribal members came to the agency for annuities guaranteed under Article VIII of the treaty.¹³ Due to the rugged terrain, the Navajo traveled to the agency only when necessary, affording little contact between themselves and the whites stationed there.

Navajo livelihood and agency location created inevitable conflict in the matter of schools. Under Article III of the treaty of 1868, the United States

¹⁰ Richard K. Smith and J. Melvin Nelson, Datelines and By-Lines: A Sketchbook of Presbyterian Beginnings and Growth in Arizona, (Phoenix: Synod of Arizona Press, 1969), 6. The fort had been established in 1851 for the Third Infantry.

¹¹ Bureau of Education, Indian Education and Civilization, special report, 1888, Senate Executive Document No. 95, 48th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 2264, pp. 510-11; Iverson, 11.

¹² RCIA 1874, House Executive Document No. 1, 43rd Congress, 2nd Session, SN 1939, p. 372.

¹³ Kappler, Treaty, 1017. "Such articles of clothing, goods, or raw materials in lieu thereof, as the agent may make his estimate for, not exceeding in value five dollars per Indian--each Indian being encouraged to manufacture their own clothing, blankets, etc.; to be furnished with no article which they can manufacture themselves."

promised "to cause to be built at some point within said reservation...a school-house and chapel, so soon as a sufficient number of children can be induced to attend school..."¹⁴ Article VI revealed the U.S. government's admission to education as necessary that "to insure the civilization of the Indians entering into this treaty."¹⁵ The article stipulated that the Navajo would compel their children, between ages six and sixteen, to attend school. For its part, the United States agreed that,

...for every thirty children between said ages who can be induced or compelled to attend school, a house shall be provided, and a teacher competent to teach the elementary branches of an English education shall be furnished, who will reside among said Indians, and faithfully discharge his or her duties as a teacher.¹⁶

Both articles neglected to specify which variety of school the government would provide--whether day or boarding, industrial or agricultural--suggesting that the government had not considered the scattered settlement patterns of the mobile tribal members and their children.¹⁷ For years, officials in the Indian Office debated the type of school most suited for all the tribes. Not until the first school at Fort Defiance floundered in 1872 did federal agents resolutely acknowledge the necessity of boarding schools for the Navajo.

While the Navajo began reservation life on the semi-arid plateau, the new Grant administration in Washington initiated an Indian policy that embodied the prevalent idealism of the post-Civil War age of reform. Weariness from war both between the states and with tribes on the Plains, motivated the federal government to pursue more harmonious relations with the Indians. In addition to this practical consideration, Grant and the Republican Congress also

¹⁴ Kappler, Treaty, 1016.

¹⁵ Ibid., 1017.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Michael J. Wamer, "Protestant Missionary Work with the Navajo Indians from 1846 to 1912," (Ph.D. diss., University of New Mexico, 1977), 114.

moral call of those who had supported emancipation of slaves and, with apparent victory of the cause in hand, turned their attention to other national, societal injustices. After his acquaintances in the Society of Friends (Quakers) recommended a patient, pacifist approach to replace the Army's dealings with tribes, President Grant authorized the creation of the Board of Indian Commissioners (B.I.C.) in 1869.¹⁸ The Board promulgated and supervised implementation of a central part of Grant's Peace Policy.

Complicated in theory, and more so in practice, the policy sought to "civilize" the tribes through the benevolent influence of missionaries. Christianizing the Indians would ameliorate their purported aggressive nature and alleviate belligerent relations with whites. Toward this end, the government, through the Board of Indian Commissioners, enlisted the aid of various missionary societies.¹⁹ In so doing, it turned national obligations over to churches, who possessed scant knowledge of tribal issues. Different denominations, selected by the Board, nominated persons for specific agency positions, thus providing tribes with government representatives presumably untainted by partisan corruption. Ely S. Parker, a Seneca and Commissioner of Indian Affairs at the time, expressed his approval of directly involving missionary societies. In his 1870 report, he clearly lauded the new policy, noting that by the President's direction

...a correspondence was opened with different missionary associations explaining to them the purpose and desire of the

¹⁸ Robert H. Keller, Jr., American Protestantism and United States Indian Policy, 1869-1882, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 19-20. In 1867 Congress had created the Peace Commission, composed of both civilian and military negotiators, including Samuel F. Tappan, who helped negotiate the Navajo Treaty. It differed from the B.I.C. in that the latter was composed solely of civilians, men "free of political bias and pecuniary interest." Francis Paul Prucha, American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian, 1865-1900, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), 28.

¹⁹ Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners (BIC), 1871, Senate Executive Document No. 39, 41st Congress, 3rd Session, SN 1440, p. 5. Felix Brunot, Secretary of the BIC, noted also in the report that the Army bill of that year had prevented officers from holding civil positions such as Indian agency appointments in care of denominations, 4.

Government, to combine with the material progress of the Indian race, means for their moral and intellectual improvement, and, if they concurred in the plan, asking them to designate the names of such persons, possessing good Christian characters, as would be willing to accept the position and discharge the duties of Indian agents, and who would, at the same time, lend their personal and official influence to such educational and missionary or religious enterprises as the societies might undertake. The plan is obviously a wise and humane one.²⁰

Vincent Colyer, Secretary of the Board, opened the correspondence with the societies in June, then awaited their response.²¹

Within the month, John C. Lowrie replied on behalf of the Presbyterian Church, expressing the positive reaction of its Board of Foreign Missions to the proposed plan.²² At Colyer's suggestion, the Presbyterians began an immediate search for a suitable nominee for the position of Navajo agent.²³ With a favorable Presbyterian response, Colyer extended his offer to the church to include the Hopi, Pueblos, Pima, and Maricopa tribes, whom he collectively described as, "an agricultural people, docile, and much more manageable than the Navajoes."²⁴

As other denominations replied affirmatively throughout the summer, Colyer decided to allot the reservations further and proposed a draft of the allocations to Secretary of the Interior Jacob Cox.²⁵ The various mission societies assumed responsibilities for staffing the seventy-three agencies over a period of two or three years, in slightly different distribution than Colyer had

²⁰ RCIA 1870, House Executive Document No. 1, 41st Congress, 3rd Session, SN 1449, p. 474. Parker also supported termination of the treaty system in 1869; Prucha, 66.

²¹ Keller, 33.

²² BIC report, 1871, Senate Executive Document No. 39, 43rd Congress, 3rd Session, SN 1440, p. 94.

²³ Ibid., 94-95. Nominees were not necessarily Presbyterians.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., 98; Prucha, 53.

envisioned.²⁶ By 1872, the Methodists had received the most agencies, with fourteen, while the Presbyterians had acquired nine. Thirteen other denominations, including the Roman Catholic church, divided the remaining fifty reservation assignments.²⁷

Colyer had devised his distribution haphazardly and with scant information about the previous work of the mission societies among the various tribes.²⁸ By some measure, the denomination with the first missionaries among a tribe qualified for allocation of the corresponding agency, yet in other cases Colyer considered only the contemporary activity of churches on any given reservation.²⁹ Whatever the justification for the allotment, Catholics viewed the arrangement with indignation. By their own calculations, which also fluctuated, but primarily took previous mission activity into account, the Catholic church should have received thirty-eight agencies.³⁰ The Board of Indian Commissioners' plan designated only seven for Catholic responsibility. While political patronage played some role in the assignments, especially in the case of the Methodists, anti-Catholic prejudice likely lay at the root of the decisions. Colyer and the Indian Office reportedly ignored the 1867 Report on the Condition of the Indian Tribes that extolled the work done by Catholics and imparted tribal requests for priests.³¹ Protestants comprised the majority of the American population and most of the reform movement from which the Peace Policy evolved, and held many of the offices in the Interior Department.

In response to the perceived injustice of the situation, the Catholic

²⁶ Keller, Appendix 3, pp. 233-235. For example, the Presbyterians did accept the Navajo and Hopi, as well as Laguna Pueblo, but left the Pima-Maricopa agencies to the Dutch Reformed.

²⁷ Prucha, 53.

²⁸ Keller, 33-36.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Prucha, 56.

³¹ Keller, 38.

Church created the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions (B.C.I.M.) in 1874.³² Through the BCIM, the church conducted its business with the federal government and coordinated its mission projects throughout the country. When the Franciscans and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament later established the school at St. Michaels in 1902, they did so under the auspices of the BCIM. Throughout the life of the Peace Policy and for decades thereafter, the Catholic Bureau flourished nationally and far exceeded Protestant mission efforts.³³

Ironically, the reform policy designed to promote peaceful relations with the tribes begot sectarian divisions, rivalry, and decidedly non-Christian animosity.³⁴ Rather than work together toward a common cause, the churches accentuated their divisions in the mission field. Protestant denominations operated mainly on the local congregational level and propagated American culture undistinguished from Christianity.³⁵ This differed from the Catholic approach which ensconced Christianity within a global context, somewhat subordinated Western civilization, and thus allowed a small degree of cultural adaptation in evangelization. Additionally, the Catholic system of religious orders specialized mission efforts according to different cultural situations, while providing missionaries with organizational support. Where the missionaries were less strict, tribes found it relatively easier to choose desirable elements from the Catholic emphasis on its interpretation of the Gospel than from the Protestants' complete package of American Christian culture. Such differences influenced the BCIM's longevity during the late nineteenth century.

³² Francis Paul Prucha, The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888-1912, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), 2. The BCIM assumed its permanent form in 1879.

³³ R. Pierce Beaver, Church, State, and the American Indians: Two and a Half Centuries of Partnership in Missions Between Protestant Churches and Government, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), 137.

³⁴ Keller, 38; Dario F. Robertson, "The Catholic Mission and the Indian Reservation," Social Thought 3, (National Conference on Catholic Charities, Fall 1977), 19.

³⁵ Beaver, 156.

The appointment of agents by the participating denominations constituted only one part of the Peace Policy. Although the presence of morally sound government employees theoretically contributed to the Christianization of tribes, the mission workers bore the crux of responsibility for transforming the Indians. Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, H.R. Clum asserted in 1871 that, "one of the most potent agencies for the civilization of the race is that of education."³⁶ His statement reflected the Protestant conviction of the Board of Indian Commissioners and generations of reformers who promoted Indian education. In order to assimilate tribes, missionaries had to instruct them in Christian ways, replacing their "ignorant, savage" culture with "superior" white civilization, a matter of demonstration, imposition, and persuasion.³⁷ During the Peace Policy years, however, the government did not create a cohesive Indian education program nor even set standards for missions to follow, and with concomitant Reconstruction responsibilities, it never funded Indian schools to which it had been obligated by treaties.³⁸ Attempted schools at Fort Defiance exemplified the lack of consistency that characterizes the late nineteenth century policy on the Navajo reservation.

Before the Board of Indian Commissioners formally offered the Navajo agency to the Presbyterians, the Board of Foreign Missions placed missionaries and a teacher at Fort Defiance.³⁹ The Reverend James M. Roberts and his wife arrived on the new reservation in early 1869. Although the government had not yet provided a school, as stipulated by treaty, Charity A. Gaston moved from the

³⁶ RCIA 1871, House Executive Document No. 1, 42nd Congress, 2nd Session, SN 1505, p. 421.

³⁷ Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response, 1787-1882, (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965) 15; Locke, 416.

³⁸ Davida Woerner, "Education Among the Navajo: An Historical Study," (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1941), 20.

³⁹ Smith and Nelson, 6-7.

Presbyterian school at Santa Fe in October to teach at the Navajo agency.⁴¹ The new agent, Captain Frank T. Bennett, prepared a room in the agency building, and Gaston began to teach in November.⁴¹ During the winter, twenty-two to thirty students attended, but they came to school irregularly, due to herding and family obligations.⁴² By April, few children attended with any frequency, causing Bennett to close the school for the summer, while families tended their crops.⁴² Still traumatized by the incarceration at Bosque Redondo, most Navajo desired no contact with government representatives and continued to educate their children traditionally.

Despite the problem of inconsistent attendance, Gaston expressed optimism about educating the Navajo. She described the children as “easily controlled” and observed that “they are quick to learn and have retentive memories, but are unused to constant application of the mind.”⁴⁴ After teaching less than a year, Gaston realized that a day school could have little impact on the transhumant tribe. She failed to comprehend that her lessons in English alphabet and sounds offered no practical value for children whose lives centered on herding and farming. Roberts and Agent Bennett agreed that the fertile San Juan valley to the north would be a better location for a school with a farm, but in hopeful expectation they opened the Fort Defiance school again in the fall.⁴⁵

By 1871 James H. Miller, a Presbyterian elder, replaced Bennett as agent

⁴¹ RCIA 1870, House Executive Document No. 1, 41st Congress, 3rd Session, SN 1449, p. 614; Bruce L. Taylor, “The Board of Foreign Missions and the Navajo Indian Mission of the 19th Century,” American Presbyterians 65, No. 3 (Fall 1987), 207-208.

⁴¹ Taylor, 207-208.

⁴² RCIA 1870, p. 614.

⁴³ *Ibid.*; Taylor, 209.

⁴⁴ RCIA 1870, p. 618.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*; Woerner, 23. Succeeding agents also recommended the San Juan location, but the school remained at the agency.

and the Reverend John A. Menaul arrived to augment the staff before the departure of the Reverend and Mrs. Roberts.⁴⁶ In his report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Miller complained that the reservation still lacked a chapel and schoolhouse--as promised in Article III of the treaty--the agency buildings needed repair, and Gaston deserved an increased salary.⁴⁷ Such laments appeared routinely in agency reports for years thereafter and comprised a standard feature of life and the state of education at Fort Defiance. That year, 1871, the Presbyterians officially assumed responsibility for the agency. For the next decade, the church appointed six agents and no missionaries, giving the denomination one of the worst records among the Peace Policy participants.⁴⁸ Within months of Menaul's arrival, he and Gaston married, then, in 1872, moved to Laguna Pueblo.⁴⁹ Before the move, the teacher exuded enthusiasm in her annual report, noted how rapidly students learned mathematics and English and stated that the Navajo better understood the school's purpose.⁵⁰ The Menauls' departure from Fort Defiance ended the first agency school.

For the duration of the Peace Policy, the Presbyterians consistently failed to provide the Navajo with educational opportunities. The Presbyterians complained about the difficult assignment of Southwestern agencies and, in 1873, offered them to other Protestant denominations, to no avail.⁵¹ Rather than seeking to understand the various tribal situations and to meet concrete needs,

⁴⁶ Bailey and Bailey, 63; Taylor, 210.

⁴⁷ RCIA 1871, House Executive Document No. 1, 42nd Congress, 2nd Session, SN 1505, pp. 793-794.

⁴⁸ Keller, Appendix 3, pp. 234-35. Presbyterian agents averaged 1.9 years at their posts, which tied them with the Episcopalians for shortest tenure. This compares with the Orthodox Friends at 3.3 years and the Catholics at 3.1. Presbyterians held first place for highest turn-over rate, with 12 different agents assigned to the Hopi agency from 1871-1880.

⁴⁹ Locke, 408. The Menauls established a school there.

⁵⁰ RCIA, 1871, pp. 791-2.

⁵¹ Keller, 58-59.

the Presbyterians--like their peers--assumed that the tribes would be interested in their Christian programs. With the Navajo, the church representatives did not know or try to learn that the tribe desired only a return to normal life after the Long Walk. Instead, the denomination sent missionaries to the agency with the static goal of assimilation. When the church nominated men for the position of Navajo agent, it tended to consider the piety of the nominee, rather than his qualifications for the demanding work.⁵² Presbyterian lack of enthusiasm and poor selection of agents resulted in agents who alternately neglected or offended the tribe they were employed to serve. The church frustrated itself through its ignorance of the realities of the Navajo situation. Unprepared to commit the resources or to acquire the knowledge necessary to fulfill their assigned task, the Presbyterians returned to the U.S. government the main responsibility for transforming the Navajo.

During the following decade, 1872-1881, the Navajo had no school and agents annually stated their expectations of renewing educational work on the reservation. In 1874, Agent William F.M. Arny employed a Baptist, Professor Valentine Freise as a teacher at the agency, yet mentioned nothing about Freise actively teaching.⁵³ The Commissioner's 1876 report listed the Navajo as having one day school, yet Agent Alexander Irving made no note of it.⁵⁴ To the contrary, he lamented the lack of educational facilities and recommended the centrally-located Chuska Valley as a school site more suitable to the Navajo.⁵⁵ The following year he reiterated his plea, referring once more to the pastoral character of Navajo life and to what he perceived as their interest in education,

⁵² Smith and Nelson, 31.

⁵³ RCIA 1874, House Executive Document No. 1, 43rd Congress, 2nd Session, SN 1639, p. 615; Taylor, 215.

⁵⁴ RCIA 1876, House Executive Document No. 1, 44th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 1749, p.621.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 513.

if made available.⁵⁶ His successor, Agent John C. Pyle, considered the situation as one “profoundly to be regretted” and blamed the Department of the Interior for not fulfilling treaty obligations, most notably the provision of comfortable schools at advantageous locations with necessary supplies.⁵⁷ Finally in 1881 the Presbyterian Home Missionary Society sent another missionary couple, Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Perkins, to the agency, under much the same circumstances as they had thirteen years before.⁵⁸

Captain Bennett, who acted as agent in late 1879-1880, during an interlude in Agent Galen Eastman’s corrupt and complicated career at Fort Defiance, made the first solid plans for a boarding school at the agency.⁵⁹ Upon Eastman’s reinstatement in 1881, work on the school commenced and, with Dr. H. Kendall in charge, it opened in December of that year.⁶⁰ Although Eastman boasted about the school, others offered contradictory testimony. After visiting the agency in April 1881, Captain John Bourke described the school as:

one miserable squalid dark and musty adobe dungeon, not much more capacious than the cubby hole of an oyster schooner. It was about 12x10x7 in height. No light ever penetrated but one small window let darkness out from this den and one small door gave exit to some of the mustiness...⁶¹

Despite his political influence, Eastman abandoned the post and Dennis (Matt) Riordan succeeded him. Popular with the Navajo and one of the few

⁵⁶ RCIA 1877, House Executive Document No. 1, 45th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 1800, pp. 554-55.

⁵⁷ RCIA 1878, House Executive Document No. 1, 45th Congress, 3rd Session, SN 1850, p. 604.

⁵⁸ Woerner, 28; Taylor, 218. In 1877 mission school activity came under the direction of the Women’s Board of Home Missions. Agency reports do not mention the couple again.

⁵⁹ Ibid. Eastman’s tenure was characterized by trouble with the distribution of annuities.

⁶⁰ RCIA 1882, House Executive Document No. 1, 47th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 2100, p. 188.

⁶¹ Lansing B. Bloom, ed., “Bourke on the Southwest, VIII,” *New Mexico Historical Review* XI, (1936), 85. Bourke also referred to Eastman as “a psalm-singing hypocrite whom the Navajoes despised and detested and whom they tried to kill.”

agents ever to tour the reservation, Riordan lasted only one year as agent and wrote an impassioned, condemning report at his resignation. In it he also accused Eastman of opening the school in an unfinished building with none of the facilities necessary for teaching.⁶² He bluntly stated that “the school is not a success thus far, and the United States Government is to blame” and continued, “the indifference, the neglect of the legislative branch of the Government in regard to this important work, is not conducive to serenity of disposition.”⁶³ Like other rare and qualified agents before him, Riordan considered the Navajo as very intelligent, but lacked the federal and mission funding necessary to help them. The government had contracted with the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions to operate the school, yet neither side upheld its obligations and the school continued to flounder after Riordan’s departure.⁶⁴

By this time, Grant’s official Peace Policy had ended. Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz dealt the final blow to the chronically ill policy in 1881 when he opened reservations to all denominations interested in mission activity among the tribes.⁶⁵ This ended the main constitutional problem of the violation of religious freedom, but vestiges of the church-state controversy remained. For another decade the federal government continued to contract with mission groups for schools, mainly boarding schools, but denominations now had equal access to federal assistance for Indian education.⁶⁶ The contract school system

⁶² RCIA 1883, House Executive Document No. 1, 48th Congress, 1st Session, SN 2191, p. 180.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Woerner, 29-30.

⁶⁵ Prucha, 1976, p. 57. Exceptions would be made in cases where additional missions would cause sectarian rivalry or violate treaty stipulations.

⁶⁶ Prucha, 1979, pp. 3-4. In its special report of 1888, the Bureau of Education described a contract school as “one wherein the Government pays a stated sum for each pupil, and the religious society provides teachers and pays their salaries and other expenses of the school. The buildings are generally furnished by the society.” Senate Executive Document No. 95, 48th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 2264, p. 173.

served in part to compensate for the government's lack of substantive Indian education policy.

Although the potential for a rival contract boarding school existed, none materialized in the 1880s and the Fort Defiance school--although enlarged--continued on its ineffectual course. From 1878-1886 the Navajo land base increased four times by executive orders, incorporating Fort Defiance on reservation land in 1880 and nearly quadrupling the size of the reservation, while Navajo population almost doubled from 9,000 in 1868 to an estimated 18,000 in 1892.⁶⁷ In terms of education, thousands more children spread over greater expanses of territory needed schools according to treaty promises. The Superintendent of Indian Schools, John B. Riley listed the Navajo school-age population as 8,000 in 1886, yet the capacity of the Fort Defiance school was a meager 80 with an average attendance of 39.⁶⁸ If the government had committed itself to fulfilling the idealistic terms of the 1868 treaty, the Navajo would have required over 250 schools with qualified teachers. Like others before and after him, Riley blamed the government for not providing the requisite funding.

What the Presbyterians had been unwilling or unable to do, the Methodist Episcopal Church endeavored successfully to accomplish beginning in 1890. Mary Eldridge and Mary Raymond arrived from Kansas in the fall and began a small mission with classes for adults in Jewett, New Mexico, just east of the reservation boundary.⁶⁹ The following year the Methodist Ladies Home Missionary Society opened a mission on the San Juan river to the north, the site

⁶⁷ Bailey and Bailey, 80, 73.

⁶⁸ RCIA 1886, House Executive Document No. 1, 49th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 2467, pp. 172-3.

⁶⁹ Woerner, 61.

of the day school they later started in 1896.⁷⁰ For most of the decade, they conducted the only substantial mission and educational work among the Navajo.

Meanwhile, the Indian office continued its perennial debate over the type of schools best suited for tribal education, whether boarding or day, on the reservation or removed from it. In her earliest efforts, Charity Gaston lamented the transient nature of her students' attendance and regarded keeping the children under constant supervision as the only means of effectual education.⁷¹ Agents at Fort Defiance regularly expressed their concern about the unsuitable location of the boarding school and consistently requested schools, especially boarding schools, at other locations. Yet those who wielded the requisite power to effect change in Indian education seldom listened to temporary employees at agencies or considered the tribes and their unique needs on a case-by-case basis.

From the time of the Peace Policy onward, most of the Commissioners of Indian Affairs and their appointed Superintendents of Indian Schools agreed that schools on the reservation were superior to those at distant locations. Tribes naturally favored keeping their children nearby and cooperated with educational planners more readily when they could visit the schools often. For the size of the Navajo population and reservation, schools needed to be either on tribal land or within close proximity to make attendance by any meaningful percentage of the children a reality. The Commissioners rarely acknowledged more substantial factors regarding the Navajo, but continued with the debate as an almost philosophical one, rather than address specific practical and legal

⁷⁰ RCIA 1891, House Executive Document No. 1, 52nd Congress, 1st Session, SN 2934, p. 310.

⁷¹ RCIA 1870, House Executive Document No. 1, 41st Congress, 3rd Session, SN 1449, p. 618.

matters.

With the cessation of official sectarian involvement in Indian affairs, the Indian office alone faced the responsibility of directing education policy. In this new era, Commissioner Hiram Price favored day schools as the most expedient means of providing influence among tribes and of fulfilling treaties, such as the one with the Navajo.⁷² In 1886 Commissioner J.D.C. Atkins asserted his view that day schools on reservations were the most economical, only to be contradicted by his Superintendent of Indian Schools, John B. Riley. Mincing no words, Riley declared,

If it be admitted that education affords the true solution to the Indian problem, then it must be admitted that the boarding school is the very key to the solution...only by complete isolation of the Indian child from his antecedents can he be satisfactorily educated, and the extra expense attendant thereon is more than compensated by the thoroughness of the work.⁷³

Riley voiced the aggressive assimilationist beliefs that marked Indian affairs for the following seven years.

Most vociferous of the boarding school advocates, Thomas Jefferson Morgan spent his tumultuous tenure as Indian Commissioner, from 1889 to 1893, forging a standardized national Indian school program. His plans for Indian education as such did not cause the turbulence in his career, but rather his opposition to the system of contract schools and Catholic religious education in any Indian schools elicited spirited criticism.⁷⁴

Morgan's utopia consisted of boarding schools far removed from

⁷² RCIA 1883, House Executive Document No. 1, 48th Congress, 1st Session, SN 2191, p. 25.

⁷³ RCIA 1886, House Executive Document No. 1, 49th Congress, 1st Session, SN 2467, pp. 100, 137.

⁷⁴ Prucha, 1979, pp. 10-25. Catholics held the most contracts with the government for providing tribes with schools. As a Baptist minister, Morgan addressed the sectarian implications of the system, and the ensuing controversies over denominational views overshadowed the constitutional issues.

reservations--which, in themselves, he considered "an abomination that should
 ✧ cease to exist"--where children would be purged of all tribal ways and be absorbed into national life "not as Indians, but as American citizens."⁷⁵ Recognizing the unattainability of such a wide-spread network of schools to isolate thousands of children from their tribal cultures, Morgan instead called for a more realistic, but equally comprehensive education program of boarding schools wherever possible. His 1890 annual report contained his "Rules for Indian Schools," which included curricula, lists of acceptable books, stipulations about food and clothing, and even applications to determine the moral suitability of teachers.⁷⁶

Illustrating a problem endemic to national Indian affairs, Morgan occupied his post only for the duration of the Harrison presidency and left office before implementing his program. His successor, Daniel M. Browning, encouraged a combined system of boarding schools for younger children and day schools for older ones to finish education, while also involving parents in local school activity.⁷⁷ Under such erratic national direction and with precious few appropriations from a complementarily capricious Congress, Navajo agents could do little more than convey their observations and renew their annual pleas for more schools of any variety at almost any location other than Fort Defiance.

Although Morgan failed to enact his drastic assimilation policy of boarding schools, his term in office generated a legal medium for effecting the implementation of his basic goals. In July 1892, Congress passed the Compulsory Indian Education Act. It provided the Commissioner, under

⁷⁵ RCIA 1889, House Executive Document No. 1, 51st Congress, 1st Session, SN 2725, pp. 8, 6, 3.

⁷⁶ RCIA 1890, House Executive Document No. 1, 51st Congress, 2nd Session, SN 2841, CL-CLII.

⁷⁷ RCIA 1896, House Document No. 5, 54th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 3489, p. 13.

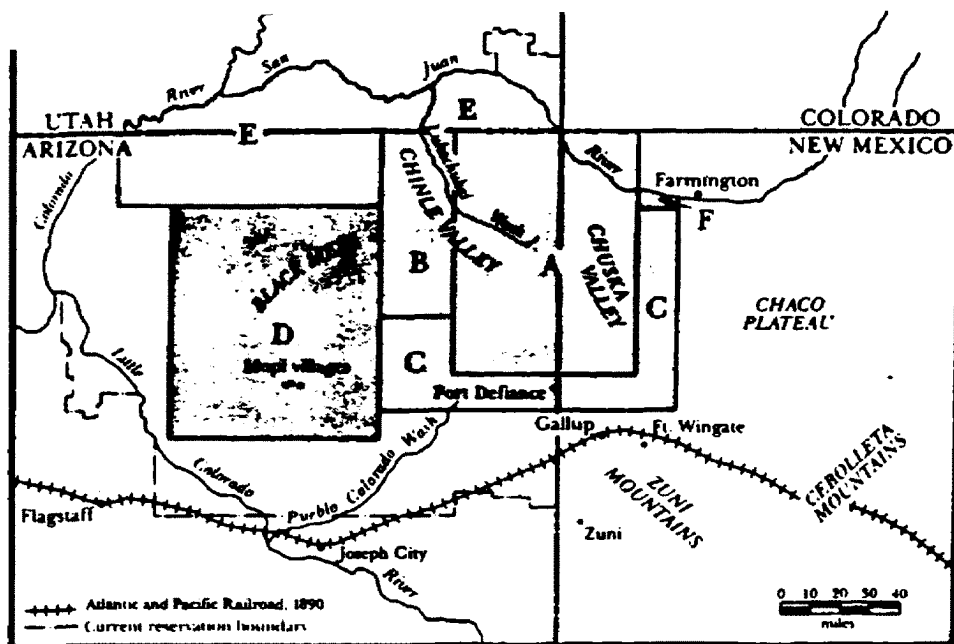
direction of the Secretary of the Interior, the authority to enforce attendance at Indian schools provided for tribes.⁷⁸ For the Navajo, this law of potential power meant virtually nothing at the time; low attendance was not the problem.

In the late 1890s, Navajo Constant Williams reported annually his expectations for new schools in the year to come. Finally in 1896, government day schools opened at Tohatchi in New Mexico and at Supai, west of the Navajo reservation but under agency jurisdiction.⁷⁹ This signaled the beginning, albeit a dilatory one, of lasting, formal education for the tribe. Eventually the government began to provide the facilities to which it had committed itself thirty years before. Meanwhile, the churches turned their attentions to the Navajo and hastened to fill the vacuum of evangelical and educational work on the reservation. In 1896 the Roman Catholics obtained land southwest of Fort Defiance and began St. Michaels, which in time became one of the largest missions and schools among the Navajo.⁸⁰

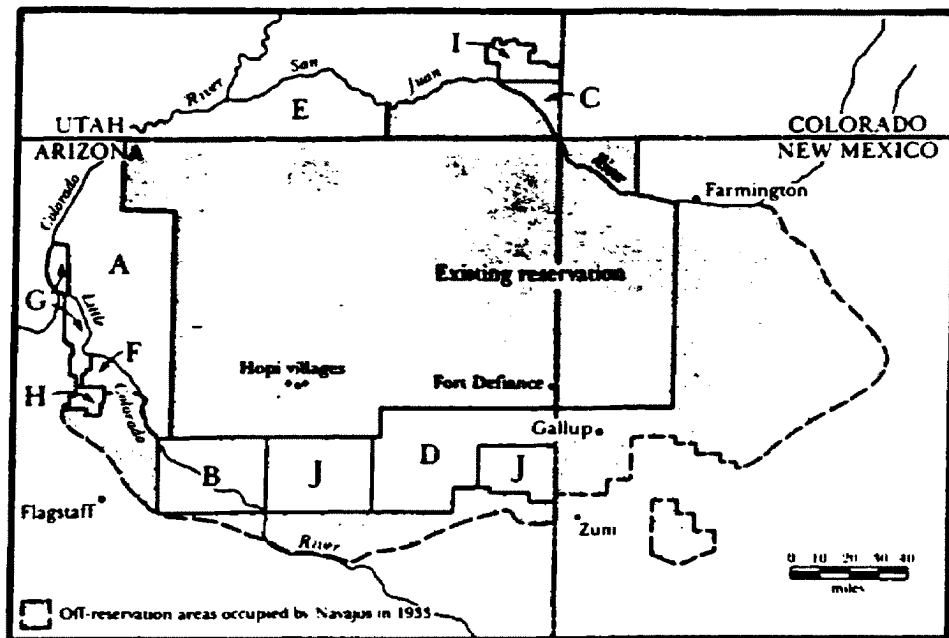
⁷⁸ RCIA 1892, House Executive Document No.1, 52nd Congress, 2nd Session, SN 3088, p. 722; Woerner, 44.

⁷⁹ RCIA 1896, House Document No. 5, 54th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 3489, p. 14; Woerner, 48.

⁸⁰ Woerner, 63.



Map 3. Growth of Navajo land base, 1868-1886. A, Treaty of June 1868. B, Executive order of Oct. 29, 1878. C, Executive order of Jan. 6, 1880. D, Executive order of Dec. 16, 1882, the "Moqui Reservation," partially occupied by Navajos. E, Executive order of May 17, 1884. F, Executive order of Apr. 24, 1886. Adapted from Williams (1970).



Map 5. Growth of Navajo land base, 1900-1933. A, Executive order of Jan. 8, 1900. B, Executive order of Nov. 14, 1901. C, Executive order of May 15, 1905. D, Executive order of Nov. 7, 1907. E, The "Paiute Strip": returned to the public domain in 1892; Navajo 1908-1922; public domain 1922-1929; removed from homestead entry 1929-1933; Navajo 1933. F, Executive order of May 7, 1917. G, Act of May 23, 1930. H, Act of Feb. 21, 1931. I, Act of Mar. 1, 1933. J, Act of June 14, 1933. Adapted from Williams (1970).

Adapted from Bailey and Bailey, pp. 80, 114.

III. Catholic Educational Efforts among the Navajo at St. Michaels, 1898-1928

At St. Michael's the Franciscans established their first permanent mission among the Navajo, but initial contact between the two groups had occurred over two centuries earlier, in the period of Spanish exploration of the Southwest. As early as 1627, Franciscan friars encountered the Navajo in the Acoma-Laguna area, but delayed proselytizing the tribe until 1745.¹ In the following year Fray Delgado and Fray Yrigoyen ventured from the mission at Isleta pueblo in an attempt to found four missions for the Navajo in the Cebolleta area to the northwest.² The two friars succeeded in establishing two of the four missions and induced a few hundred Navajo to settle at Cebolleta and Encinal.³ Although some of the Navajo allowed their children to be baptized, they rejected the Spanish domination that accompanied Christianity and the restrictive way of life dictated by settlement.⁴ As missionaries in later centuries discovered, the tribe preferred to make their home on the free range.

Some of the Catholic tradition remained with the eastern clans until the next period of contact with a conquering culture. After the removal of the Navajo to Bosque Redondo in 1864, U.S. Army officers recommended that the Catholic Church send a priest to the encampment, because the band from the Cebolleta area professed Catholicism as their faith.⁵ In accordance, a friar, Father Michael

¹Edward H. Spicer, Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico, and the United States on the Indians of the Southwest, 1533-1960, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1962), 211-12.

²Frank D. Reeve, "The Navaho-Spanish Peace, 1720's - 1770's," New Mexico Historical Review 34 (1959), 13.

³Klara B. Kelley and Peter M. Whiteley, Navajoland: Family and Settlement and Land Use, (Tsaile, AZ: Navajo Community College Press, 1989), 21; Zephyrin Engelhart, The Franciscans in Arizona, (Harbor Springs, MI: Holy Childhood Indian School, 1899), 208. Engelhart states that 500-600 Navajo settled temporarily in the area.

⁴Ibid.; Reeve, 26.

⁵Robert L. Wilken, Anselm Weber, O.F.M.: Missionary to the Navaho, 1898-1921, (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1955), 15.

Fleurant, and two minor clerics endeavored to operate a mission and a school for the captive tribe in late 1864, but the death of the priest within a year forced the church to abandon the post, yet not to desert the Navajo for long.⁶

During the early Peace Policy years, the Catholic Church concentrated its efforts on its assigned reservations. With the inception of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions in 1874, the church attempted to expand its ministry where possible until the Indian mission field opened entirely in 1881. Thereafter, denominational competition to apply for mission sites on reservations and to enter into contracts with the federal government for schools promoted sectarian haste and inhibited comprehensive program planning.⁷

1890 marked both the theoretical closing of the American frontier and the turning point in Indian Affairs.⁸ While implementation of the Dawes Act affected Indian missions to some extent, the gradual elimination of the contract system proved to have the greater implication, especially for the Catholics, who operated the most schools under contract.⁹ The removal of pressure to attain government allotments benefited all religious organizations, to the degree that they could then examine their mission priorities at length and formulate better strategies for the field. After 1897, new Indian mission schools, on or near reservations, received no funding from the U.S. government.¹⁰ These new sectarian schools, free from connection to or influence by the government, provided tribes with an alternative to the compulsory federal education system

⁶ Wilken, 15. Wilken's biography chronicles Weber's career at St. Michaels, but provides little analysis of the mission or the church's purposes.

⁷ Ibid., 18.

⁸ Henry Warner Bowden, American Indians and Christian Missions, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 197.

⁹ Prucha, 1979, 41.

¹⁰ Both the St. Michaels and, later, Ganado schools received their funding from sectarian sources independent of federal funding. Robert W. Young, ed., The Navajo Yearbook (Window Rock, AZ: Navajo Agency, 1958), 19. Congress reduced contract school funding throughout the 1890s and severed appropriations completely in 1900; Prucha, 1976, 318.

and a semblance of autonomy from the Great Father's didactic dictates.

In the 1890s the Navajo near Fort Defiance experienced their first independent schooling, offered by the woman who had just begun her formal vocation as Foundress of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People (S.B.S.). Born 26 November 1858 Katherine M. Drexel grew up in Philadelphia, where her father, Frank M. Drexel earned notoriety as a successful financier (of Drexel and Morgan banking) and Catholic philanthropist.¹¹ Although she traveled widely in Europe with her family in 1874, and again after her mother's death in 1883, enjoying the land, people, and great works of art and architecture, her later trip through the American West influenced her most deeply and inspired her for a lifetime.¹²

During the troublesome (to Catholic Indian missions) Peace Policy years, Monsignor Stephan of the BCIM and Abbot Marty called on the famed Drexel charity for support, thereby initiating an important, lasting relationship with Katherine. After her father's death in 1885, she and her sisters joined the monsignor and an old family friend, Bishop O'Connor of Omaha, on an extensive tour of the Indian missions and reservations. She observed the tremendous needs of the tribes and considered the inadequate state of Catholic missions among them. When her ensuing efforts, via the bishop, to find missionaries to go west yielded little fruit, she took her request directly to Pope Leo XIII during an 1886 visit in Europe.¹³ He recommended that *she* become a missionary. As heiress to the family fortune, she immediately funded the building and operating of fourteen Indian schools, then entered the Order of the

¹¹Sr. Consuela Marie Duffy, S.B.S., Katherine Drexel: A Biography, (Cornwells Heights, PA: Mother Katherine Drexel Guild, S.B.S., 1966), 15; Wilken, 22.

¹² Mother M. Agatha, S.B.S. "Catholic Education and the Indian," in Essays on Catholic Education in the United States, Roy Joseph Deferrari, ed., (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1942), 536.

¹³ Ibid.

Sisters of Mercy as a novice in Pittsburgh in May, 1889.¹⁴ Two years later, she founded the order of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and became Reverend Mother M. Katherine.¹⁵ In her constitution for the congregation, drafted in May 1907, Mother Katherine stated the special objective of the Sisters as, "...to apply themselves zealously to the service of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament by endeavoring to lead the Indian and Colored Races to the knowledge and love of God." In order to "procure...the education, sanctification and salvation of the Indian," she prescribed instruction "in religious and other useful knowledge according to their needs and capacities."¹⁶

Mother Katherine first provided an educational facility for the Navajo in 1886, when she commissioned the building of St. Catherine's Indian School in Santa Fe. For seven years it functioned under the directorship of the Benedictine Fathers and the Sisters of Loretto as a contract school for tribes in the Southwest, mostly local Pueblos, but also educated children from the surrounding area whose parents allowed them to be transported from their reservations.¹⁷ After the government contract expired, Mother Katherine sent nine new Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament there in 1894, and then began to turn her attentions directly to the Navajo. The tribe then numbered over 20,000 individuals, but the government offered their children education only at the

¹⁴ Mother M. Agatha, 536-537, estimates that by 1893 Mother Katherine had spent \$1,000,000 on Indian schools; after she founded the order, her funding exceeded \$7,000,000, of which \$3,000,000 went to support S.B.S. mission schools.

¹⁵ Wilken, 22. Catholic custom directs use of the first (i.e. religious) name of a person belonging to a religious order, hence the succeeding references to Katherine Drexel as Mother Katherine. See Kristie Lee Butler, Along the Padres' Trail: St. Michael's Mission to the Navajo, 1898-1939, (St. Michaels, AZ: St. Michaels Museum Press, 1991), 20.

¹⁶ John Tracy Ellis, Documents of American Catholic History, (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1962), 571-72.

¹⁷ Mother M. Agatha, 543. As a congregant of Mother Katherine's order, Mother M. Agatha concludes her article (552) with the exhortation for Catholic youth to "seize the torch of faith...and bear it to the uttermost parts of our continent until every Red man is brought, a child of God, into the fold of the Catholic Church!" In her prose at least, she surpasses her Superior in expressed zeal.

boarding school at Ft. Defiance.¹⁶

St. Michael's manifested the first Catholic success in their attempt to establish a mission among the Navajo after the abortive attempt at Bosque Redondo. When the Reverend Roberts and the Menauls abandoned the Presbyterian post at Fort Defiance in 1872, Father Gasparri, S.J. of Albuquerque, with support from Bishop Lamy of New Mexico, petitioned Agent Frank Bennett in vain to allow the Jesuits to assume the assignment.¹⁹ In February of 1887, Archbishop Salpointe visited Fort Defiance with the intent to negotiate a school site, but postponed plans for a Navajo school until his 1889 travels through the reservation with Agent C.E. Vandever.²⁰ They selected Wipo Spring on the eastern edge of Hopi land with the design of serving both tribes in the area. In this, they neglected to consider the persistent inter-tribal animosity; no school developed and none would likely have prospered in that remote location.²¹

While Mother Katherine attended to the changed status of St. Catherine's in Santa Fe in 1893, Archbishop Chapelle in the cathedral nearby promoted the decisive action on the part of Monsignor Stephan of the BCIM to buy land for a Navajo mission.²² The task required patience and finesse, but in October 1895 Stephan managed to purchase (for \$3,600) 240 acres of land located six miles south of the reservation boundary.²³ In Arizona Territory, especially in the rugged Navajo terrain, the federal government had not yet surveyed some

¹⁶ Ibid.; RCIA 1894, House Executive Document No. 1, 53rd Congress, 3rd Session, SN 3306, pp.99, 568.

¹⁹ Wilken, 16. Wilken states no reason for the government's denial of the offer and Agent Bennett made no mention of it in his annual report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

²⁰ Wilken, 17.

²¹ Ibid., 18, 23.

²² Woerner, 63.

²³ Wilken, 25; Emmanuel Trockur, O.F.M., "Franciscans Among the Navajo Indians," The Provincial Chronicle of St. John the Baptist, XIV (1941-42), 38-40. Trockur explains Mother Katherine's efforts to circumvent government complications in the matter.

areas, thus preventing the BCIM from filing homestead claims on the land. When the area was finally surveyed, they learned that forty of the acres belonged to the railroad to the south and local traders owned two other parts. The church expended an additional \$6,400 to acquire these tracts.²⁴

The land consisted of broad meadows seasonally filled with bright flowers, a meandering stream, cottonwood groves, and former fields of melons and maize. Spanish visitors referred to the area as *Cienega Amarilla* (Yellow Marsh), while the Navajo knew it as *Tsohotso* (Big Meadow). When the Franciscans arrived, they named it St. Michael's, both for the Archangel and for Mother Katherine's father's estate.²⁵ Years earlier, aspiring entrepreneurs built a trading post on the land and erected fences; an adobe building without a roof remained when the title passed to the Catholics.²⁶

With the long-deliberated location for a Navajo mission finally settled, the BCIM required a religious order to accept the mission and provide its staff. Monsignor Stephan appealed to Father Gottfried Schilling, O.F.M. to enlist the help of the Franciscan Province of St. John the Baptist in Cincinnati.²⁷ With more romance than historical sense, Father Gottfried wrote to Father Raphael Hesse at the Province that the Navajo "...still remember the Spanish Franciscans who labored among them in the beginning of this century or the end of the preceding century" and that the tribe had petitioned Monsignor Stephan for Catholic missionaries on several occasions. Not only were the Navajo receptive, but, Father Gottfried asserted, they also spoke some English

²⁴ Trockur, 42-43, explains the purchase of scrip, the process of acquiring clear title to the land, and the role of surveying. The process was further complicated by the purchase of land for the school; records of the ensuing transactions, in all of their complex legalese, can be found in the correspondence between Charles Lusk of the BCIM, Father Anselm Weber, and Mother Katherine, on "Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, 1873-1920" microfilm (Tucson: Arizona Historical Society); Butler, 17.

²⁵ Wilken, 24, 26; Mother M. Agatha, 543; Woemer, 63.

²⁶ Wilken, 24-26.

²⁷ Butler, 17.

“and so the matter of language difficulties will hardly be a matter of serious concern.” In addition, he extolled the “good and healthful climate” of the Defiance Plateau area.²⁸ Mother Katherine promised to contribute significantly to the project and expressed her preference for the Franciscans over the Benedictines, who already had missionaries in the field.²⁹ The Provincial Council voted in favor of accepting the mission in October, 1897 and Bishop Bourgade of Tucson granted permission in March, 1898.³⁰

After receiving confirmation of the title for the mission land and the commitment by the Province in Cincinnati, Mother Katherine recommended that the Franciscan staff leave for the Southwest in July. In accordance with the wishes of their new benefactress, the Provincial assigned Father Juvenal Schnorbus as superior, Father Anselm Weber as assistant, and Brother Placidus Buerger.³¹ Of the three, only Father Juvenal departed for the post during the summer, leaving in early August to prepare the old building for new residency. Once in Gallup, he contracted men for the required masonry and carpentry, then returned to Ohio within the month, leaving Father Martin of Gallup to oversee the repairs.³² The three friars awaited word from Gallup about the restoration before leaving by train at the beginning of October.³³

The journey via Kansas City, where they celebrated the feast day of St. Francis, lasted five days and brought them to an impressive landscape that differed greatly from the verdant fields of the Midwest. Of the terrain between Gallup and St. Michael’s, Father Juvenal wrote, “a most desolate country, if you

²⁸ Butler, 17, from Father Gottfried’s letter of 3 September 1897.

²⁹ Wilken, 29, states that she offered to pay the friars’ salaries; Duffy, 221, explains that she promised to assume half of the mission’s operating costs.

³⁰ Butler, 18.

³¹ Wilken, 30-31.

³² Ibid. The walls needed to be plastered, two chimneys erected, and the interior partitioned into a chapel, a kitchen, and four bedrooms.

³³ Ibid., 33.

except the picturesque rocks.” The cool meadows of what became their home proved a more welcoming sight, although Father Anselm expressed his sense of disappointment when he saw no Navajo nearby, but only a “lone coyote.”³⁴

The diversity in the personalities of the three almost matched the variety of scenery along their trip. The oldest at forty-six, Brother Placid planned a medical ministry with the use of Epsom salts and busied himself with cooking for the two priests. Father Juvenal, at thirty-six, had most recently taught Latin, kept the Franciscan rules rigorously, was thin and fair, and pursued an interest in botany. His age-mate and assistant, Father Anselm, had previously damaged his health through excessive study, looked like a scholar with his round glasses, and hoped that the Southwestern climate would rejuvenate him.³⁵

To initiate their new mission, the friars first blessed and dedicated the chapel on Sunday, 9 October 1898, and offered Mass in it on the following Tuesday. With this proper beginning, they then commenced with the business at hand: meeting the Navajo, who had since discovered their new neighbors. It took the Franciscans little time to realize that their flock spoke no English, and the Athabaskan tongue, with its tones, glottal stops, and gutturals, daunted them. The Navajo appeared curious about the arrival of the men in the long, dark robes, but other than erecting a large cross outside the mission, the friars knew of no way to explain their purpose and plans.³⁶

As a solution to this communication problem, they created the first school at St. Michael's. Sam E. Day worked as a surveyor for the railroad and the government in the 1880s before becoming a trader with the Navajo. Monsignor Stephan purchased the post that had belonged to Day's former partners and,

³⁴ Wilken, 30-31.

³⁵ Ibid., 33-35. Wilken's work concentrates on Fr. Anselm and thus gives more detail about his background and personality.

³⁶ Ibid., 36.

after the survey of the meadow, title to some of the land on which Day held homesteading rights.³⁷ When the Franciscans arrived, Day operated a trading post southeast of the mission. He and his wife, Anna, had three sons who had grown up in the area and spoke Navajo fluently, but had never received formal schooling. As an educational barter, the Days proposed that the boys teach the Franciscans Navajo in exchange for tutoring in English, literature, geography, and mathematics.³⁸ The education of both parties began in January, 1899. To structure their Navajo learning, Father Juvenal worked with Charley Day from the front of a dictionary, translating lists of words, while Father Anselm and Sam Jr. started at the back; within two months they met in the "L" section. From there, they proceeded to pictures in the Montgomery Ward catalog.³⁹

Before they had completed their alphabetized translations, some Navajo boys also began attending school with the Days. The boys, including Charley Yazzie and Albert (Chee) Slinkey, came of their own accord, boarded at the mission, and enjoyed Brother Placid's cooking.⁴⁰ Although the friars did not consider their first school a success by conventional parochial standards, the boys' presence demonstrated Navajo interest in what the mission offered and helped sow Franciscan influence in the area.⁴¹ The friars learned readily from their language instructors, but to hasten their efficacy to communicate they hired

³⁷ Trockur, 40-41, 44-45.

³⁸ Wilken, 43; Butler, 23. The Days came from Iowa and although Anna had been a school teacher, life at the trading post occupied too much of her time for her to educate the boys sufficiently.

³⁹ Butler, 23; examples of Father Juvenal's lists are exhibited in Saint Michaels Historical Museum.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 27; Wilken, 46.

⁴¹ Ibid.

Frank Walker as an interpreter at the end of the year.⁴² Later, Walker's ties to some of the Navajo headmen proved instrumental to recruitment for the St. Michael's boarding school.

One of the headmen, Charlie (Tso) Mitchell, visited the mission in late February, 1900, and later brought two more tribal leaders, Chee Dodge and Peshlakai (Silversmith), who were also friends of Walker, to meet the priests and to observe their activities.⁴³ After the friars assisted them and other local tribesmen with ill family members, some of the Navajo decided that the *e'nishodi* (long robes) had demonstrated their trustworthiness.⁴⁴

At this time, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament experienced some difficulty getting students for St. Catherine's school. Mother Katherine turned to the friars at St. Michael's for help in recruiting ten Navajo boys.⁴⁵ Before the Franciscans could persuade their new acquaintances to send any children, Charlie Mitchell agreed to visit the school in Santa Fe to observe the sisters and their treatment of the pupils. Upon his return, he enthusiastically supported the idea. In June, Father Juvenal augmented Mitchell's promotional work by visiting the headman's family near Tsaile and participating in Navajo life while congenially explaining his faith. Mitchell promised to have children ready for school in October.⁴⁶

Before the beginning of the school year, Father Juvenal transferred to a

⁴² Wilken, 68, cites December, 1899 as the date when Frank began work at the mission, while Butler, 24, claims he was hired in January, 1900. At the time he was 25, the son of an Irishman and a Navajo woman, and had previously worked as an interpreter at Fort Defiance, 1887-1894. Mother Katherine paid Walker's wage of \$25 per month plus board. See Franciscan Papers, St. Michaels, Arizona, University of Arizona Library Special Collections, AZ 500, Box 23 (Catholic Organizations: Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament), Folder 1, typed letter from Fr. Anselm to M. Katherine, 8 February 1900.

⁴³ Wilken, 75.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 76; Butler, 27.

⁴⁵ Wilken, 75.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 76-77.

monastery in the East, after concluding that the regular life of religious observance better suited his personality than the unpredictability of the mission field. Father Anselm, however, held different, more flexible views on mission work and assumed the role of superior after Juvenal resigned.⁴⁷ For his assistants, the Province appointed Father Leopold Ostermann, a thirty-six year old Ohio native and former language instructor, and Father Berard Haile, a twenty-six year old Austrian (though also born in Ohio) who had served in a Lithuanian parish prior to his Navajo assignment and had impressed his superiors with his ability to learn the Slavic tongue.⁴⁸ Within days of their arrival, Father Leopold accompanied Father Anselm to Tsaile, where they visited Mitchell and the others, to nurture their growing friendship and reaffirm the headmen's commitment to send children for St. Catherine's school.⁴⁹

Encouraged by the success of the Franciscans in conveying the school's purpose and the willingness of the Navajo to send some of their children there, Mother Katherine decided to bring her designs for a school specifically for the Navajo to fruition and thus pursue her missiological objective.⁵⁰ She believed a boarding school on or near the reservation would benefit all; children could remain close to home and their parents would then be able to visit without traveling far and have a greater sense of security about their children's well-being. Mother Katherine, who devoted herself and her resources primarily to Indian schools, knew of the special difficulties in Navajo education and wasted

⁴⁷ Trockur, 45, Wilken, 73-74, and Butler, 29, indicate some tension between the two priests, and mention that both offered to resign the post rather than jeopardize the mission.

⁴⁸ Butler, 29, gives evidence that contradicts popular belief about Fr. Berard's eagerness to learn Navajo. She quotes him as recalling that, rather than plunging into the task, he "...went into the chicken business for eggs, hawks and bed bugs as a hobby...and several years passed between studying hens and their comfort and the study of a foreign Navaho language."

⁴⁹ Butler, 30; Wilken, 77-78.

⁵⁰ Franciscan Papers, AZ 500, Box 9, Folder 1 (St. Michael's Indian School), unsigned typed sheet.

no time enlisting Father Anselm's help.⁵¹

Before commencing with formal educational work, they needed to decide where to build the school. Father Anselm preferred the San Juan area and, while still the mission assistant, wrote to Mother Katherine about his reasons. First, he expected difficulty in founding a school at St. Michael's due to the proximity of the federal school at Ft. Defiance and the relatively degenerate nature of the Navajo living near the agency and the railroad.⁵² He observed the successful work of Mary Eldridge and Mary Tripp at the Methodist Episcopal Church's mission at Jewett (Hogback) and expected that the possibilities for irrigation could induce the Navajo to settle near a Catholic boarding school.⁵³ Furthermore, Father Anselm surmised that contact with the Mexicans in the territory had predisposed the Navajo to Catholicism.⁵⁴ Apart from the San Juan, he knew of trader Don Lorenzo Hubbell's suggestion for a mission and school at Ganado, west of St. Michael's across the Defiance Plateau and sufficiently removed from agency influence.⁵⁵ In the end, Mother Katherine's visit to the mission in October, 1900 convinced her that a school near the mission would fare the best.⁵⁶

The land issue still plagued the mission and consumed much of Father Anselm's time in 1901. An additional survey revealed that the first one had been too liberal in its measurements, forcing Mother Katherine to buy some of what proved to be Sam Day's and another trader's lands, with improvement value added. Because of her plans to establish a farming community by the school and mission, she found it necessary to obtain the quitclaims and scrip for

⁵¹ AZ 500, Box 9, Folder 1, unsigned typed sheet.

⁵² AZ 500, Box 23, Folder 1, typed letter of 8 February 1900.

⁵³ *Ibid.*; Wilken, 59-60, 65.

⁵⁴ AZ 500, Box 23, Folder 1.

⁵⁵ Wilken, 67.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 87.

all of the acreage which Monsignor Stephan had supposedly procured years before.⁵⁷

On her trip to the mission in the fall of 1901, Mother Katherine met with the headmen--Mitchell, Dodge, and Peshlakai--at Red Lake to talk with them about the closer school that she would offer for their children.⁵⁸ The exchange galvanized her plans enough for her to detour to Keams Canyon to visit the government school being constructed by the contractors she had in mind for St. Michael's. When she took bids on 1 November, the J. H. Owen Company of Minneapolis won, to her satisfaction.⁵⁹ After a later visit by Father Anselm to their Flagstaff home, Timothy and Michael Riordan--the younger brothers of Dennis (Matt) Riordan, who had served as a Navajo agent in the 1880s--offered to supply lumber for the mission and school needs at a 25% discount.⁶⁰

While Owen's men constructed the school, the Catholics concerned themselves with obtaining students for the first year's class. In this matter, their methods differed most from the federal Indian policy and the actions of the agents at Fort Defiance. Since 1892 the United States government enforced compulsory attendance at Indian boarding and day schools, regardless of the relative availability and capacity of its schools for tribes such as the Navajo.⁶¹

To execute the attendance order, Navajo agents attempted to obtain children by means which augmented the tribe's dislike and distrust of white policies, sentiments which had been steadily increasing since the inception of

⁵⁷ Trockur, 53-56.

⁵⁸ Wilken, 81.

⁵⁹ Wilken, 83, 85.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 89; Trockur, 56. See also Michael Riordan's scrapbooks from the period, in the Blanche Riordan Chambers Collection at Northern Arizona University's Cline Library, Collection 4. Matt's papers are presumed lost, but Mike kept copies of anything pertaining to the extended family, including letters from Matt and numerous articles that he (Mike) wrote about Catholic missions and his experiences with the Navajo.

⁶¹ Woerner, 44; RCIA 1892, House Executive Document No. 1, 52nd Congress, 2nd Sessions, SN 3088, p. 722.

the Treaty of 1868. In compliance to pressure from agents in 1882, the Navajo sent eleven boys and one girl to Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, including three sons of Chief Manuelito, who had signed the treaty. Within months, one of Manuelito's children died at the school and another immediately after his return to the reservation. Compounding this tragedy, the son of Torlino, another headman, died at Carlisle the next year.⁶² This turned the influential headmen against boarding school education and their opinions affected the attitudes of their clans and neighbors.

In an effort to ameliorate the impact of these deaths, Agent Dennis M. Riordan visited Carlisle and recruited a young couple--recent graduates--to teach at the Fort Defiance school. Robert Stewart, a Creek, and Antoinette Williams Stewart, a Navajo, stayed at the agency for an unspecified length of time. Later, Cora Eyre, a Pawnee, joined them as an assistant, but the agents succeeding Riordan neglect to mention any of the three in their annual reports.⁶³

Agent Riordan's efforts effected a minimal, if any, improvement in the tribe's attitude toward formal education, an attitude that worsened with the law of 1892 and culminated in the infamous Black Horse-Shipley incident of that year.⁶⁴ Word of the school at Fort Defiance had spread, but people opposed the idea, wondering "who wants to give his children away to somebody else, especially to a white man?"⁶⁵ Rather than send their children away with strangers, parents hid them if agents or school representatives came near.

⁶² Woerner, 36; Wilken, 76; neither author mentions if Torlino's son was the same Tom Torlino, whose famed photograph appears in history textbooks and several collections of Native American photos of the reservation period.

⁶³ Woerner, 35.

⁶⁴ Frank Mitchell, Navajo Blessingway Singer: The Autobiography of Frank Mitchell, 1881-1967, Charlotte J. Frisbie and David P. McAllester, ed., (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1978). For additional accounts, see: Frank D. Reeve, "The Government and the Navaho, 1883-1888," New Mexico Historical Review 18 (1943); Butler, 33; Iverson, 22; Wilken, 100; Woerner, 45.

⁶⁵ Mitchell, 49.

One of the few headmen to favor schooling, Chee Dodge had learned English at Bosque Redondo and sought to influence those who traded at his store at Round Rock.⁶⁶ In 1892 the new agent, David (or Dana) Shipley made known his plans to use police force, if necessary, to collect children for the agency school, including children from the area between Round Rock and Shiprock, where people "very much opposed" the idea.⁶⁷ To his credit, Shipley agreed to meet at Round Rock to explain his purposes; to theirs, the Navajo and their spokesman, Black Horse, listened to him three times before beginning to stone him. A nearby group of disinterested gamblers scurried Shipley into Dodge's store, which Black Horse's group besieged. A group of soldiers from Fort Wingate were fortuitously hunting bears near Tsaile and came to the agent's rescue, but not before doing their part to explain white education's benefits. In the end, Shipley resigned and Lieutenant E.H. Plummer assumed the post.⁶⁸

At that time, the government estimated that 3,000 Navajo children qualified for school, yet the capacity of the one and only boarding school, at Fort Defiance, remained at 130, with many in attendance held against their will.⁶⁹ Plummer reported that,

The progress of educational work has been seriously retarded and great prejudice against it aroused by the practice of kidnapping children for the school, sending children off the reservation to school without the knowledge or consent of the parents, and by cruel treatment of children attending school.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Mitchell, 50; Butler, 25. Dodge was born in 1860 and acted as a child interpreter for officers.

⁶⁷ Mitchell, 50, gives no reason why the Navajo living in this area spoke out more strongly against schools than those elsewhere.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 51-54.

⁶⁹ Mitchell, 56; RCIA 1893, House Executive Document No. 1, 53rd Congress, 2nd Session, SN 3210, p. 15.

⁷⁰ RCIA 1893, p. 110.

Despite this, Plummer believed the Navajo desired education.

Frank Mitchell, clan nephew of Charlie Mitchell, attended the Ft. Defiance school for half a year during Plummer's term and recalled the Navajo mindset and the discipline. Parents did not trust the whites at the agency and considered them foreigners who would take their children far away and possibly kill them.⁷¹ Once at the school, many children tried to run away and received whippings and extra chores as punishment. After catching him stealing apples, a teacher spanked Mitchell with a strap and locked him up for the remainder of the day. Different teachers practiced varied forms of punishment, such as hitting pupils and forcing them to stand in a corner for hours, or to carry heavy logs back and forth across the yard all day. After his few months there, Mitchell refused to return to school again until ten years later, when he stayed approximately one year before he decided he had had enough white education.⁷²

To get students for the school with the least parental tension, agents resorted to bribery. In return for children, they issued shovels, axes, coffee with mills and pots, pails, and assorted food.⁷³ In the economically depressed years of the mid-1890s, many parents took advantage of the agents' offerings, while others refused the bribes and renewed their opposition to the school based on what such bribery reflected about the agents' characters.⁷⁴ In such situations, the parents voluntarily accepted the food and utensils, but forced their children to school as readily as past agents who used coercion.⁷⁵

Little changed in the intervening decade before the opening of St.

⁷¹ Mitchell, 55; Spicer, 223.

⁷² Ibid., 67-68.

⁷³ Ibid., 55, 73.

⁷⁴ Mitchell, 55, does not mention personal pride as a factor.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 56.

Michael's school; indeed, such stringent policies solidified under Commissioner of Indian Affairs William A. Jones, the last of the aggressive assimilationists. In 1900 he proposed a stricter compulsory school law to "...hasten the final accomplishment of the Government plan of absorption of tribes and extinguishment of reservations."⁷⁶ After defining civilized education's goal as "...the breaking up of tribal customs, manners, and barbarous usages," he ordered an end to the ration system, reiterated the need for tribes to become farmers, and decreed that all Indians should cut their hair and dress only in "citizen's" (i.e. white) clothing.⁷⁷ Jones upheld former Commissioner Morgan's belief in the superiority of non-reservation boarding schools and lauded the role of mission schools. In his view, "the god-fearing, earnest, and sincere mission teacher is an immense power for good in uplifting the Indian race, developing the spiritual nature of its people, and making sober, religious men and women."⁷⁸

Although the Franciscans worried about the proximity of Ft. Defiance, the government school's juxtaposition favored St. Michael's. They discovered that the agents' bribery, which had troubled Father Anselm especially in 1900, contrasted with their own method of obtaining students and their presentation of the school's purposes.⁷⁹ For St. Michael's school, they continued their customary travels throughout the reservation and their visits with headmen. As Father Juvenal had done, the three friars after him sought to improve their Navajo abilities, to learn about the culture, and to communicate with their tribal

⁷⁶ RCIA 1900, House Document No. 5, 56th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 4101, p. 35.

⁷⁷ RCIA 1901, House Document No. 5, 57th Congress, 1st Session, SN 4290, pp. 9, 6; RCIA 1902, House Document No. 5, 57th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 4458, p. 29; Navajo Agent G.W. Hayzett attempted to comply with the hair-cutting orders and succeeded somewhat, Wilken, 48.

⁷⁸ RCIA 1903, House Document No. 5, 58th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 4645, p. 22.

⁷⁹ AZ 500, Box 23, Folder 1, letter from Fr. Anselm to Mother Katherine. He claimed that the agent had given wagons to all parents who brought three children to the school and refused issues to those who brought none.

friends, thus winning the tribe's trust.⁸⁰

Perhaps through serendipity, perhaps providence, the Franciscans also knew the right headmen. Chee Dodge, who spoke English, already supported education--as an advantage in dealing with Americans--before the Round Rock incident. After that, in 1893, Dodge, Charlie Mitchell, Peshlakai, and a dozen other clan leaders traveled with the diplomatic Lieutenant Plummer to the Chicago Columbian Exposition.⁸¹ While there, Plummer carefully presented his Navajo guests with the best offerings of white civilization and an impressive demonstration of education's benefits. Although the trip did not convince all of the headmen that white schools presented the Navajo anything of use, it softened their opposition.

Apart from auspicious acquaintances, independent factors advanced the Catholic cause. Charlie Mitchell's visit to St. Catherine's in Santa Fe impressed him greatly.⁸² In deciding to locate the school on the same compound as the mission, Mother Katherine confirmed the demonstrated commitment of the church to the Navajo. Unlike government agents who came and went with the seasons, the Franciscans proved their intent to stay among the people by their efforts to learn the language and their eagerness to travel among them.⁸³ This alacrity with which the friars tried to understand Navajo culture, values, and social relations advanced them in Navajo esteem more than any gifts or wares could. Mother Katherine's visit in May, 1901 further demonstrated the sincerity of the missionaries, particularly because of her willingness to travel across the country to be present at a Mountain Chant ceremony where she met the

⁸⁰ Wilken, 77, 98-100.

⁸¹ Woerner, 47; Butler, 24-25.

⁸² Butler, 31; Wilken, 75, 79.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 32; *ibid.*, 83.

headmen and their kin.⁶⁴ Although she lived far away, she still attempted to learn the Navajo way and about concerns of the tribe.

The Catholics' presentation of their educational plans set them apart from their government peers as much as did their actions among the Navajo. First and foremost, they respected the tribe's independent nature and emphasized that attendance at St. Michael's school was not compulsory. This policy, more than their program, swayed Navajo opinion in their favor. It contrasted sharply with the federally-forced separation of children from their families and offered them both a choice and, with it, a sense of autonomy.⁶⁵

Unlike the government's overt goal of assimilation, the Franciscans couched their pedagogical plans in tribal values and took a long-term view of transforming the tribe. Both Father Anselm, during his frequent calls at hogans, and Mother Katherine, during her time at the Mountain Chant, reassured the parents of eligible children that they would be welcome to visit the school at any time, to ascertain their children's welfare and to observe the teachers, and they could stay as long as they deemed necessary.⁶⁶ Indeed, Catholic educational objectives included strengthening the family by encouraging the students to become better, more responsible and committed community members.⁶⁷ Father Anselm assured the headmen that the friars and sisters would care for the children as if they were their own and that,

The school and education, however are not ends in themselves, but rather the means toward an end which is better living, and our interest in your children shall not cease when they have finished school for we shall always consider them as one large family that they

⁶⁴ Wilken, 81-83; for a description of the trip, see Sister M. Agatha's account, "Navajo Adventure," in Mission Fields at Home (Cornwells Heights, PA: Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, October, 1952 Navajo Jubilee Issue), AZ 500, Box 9, Folder 1.

⁶⁵ Butler, 33.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 31; Wilken, 83.

⁶⁷ Wilken, 78, 100.

may turn to us at all times for advice and assistance.⁸⁸

His oratorical style as well as his words met with positive Navajo response. The children would gain knowledge of the white world's ways, while also learning to read and write their native language, close to home and in a community setting. To the headmen who, like Dodge, already endorsed formal education, but disliked federal government directives, St. Michael's school presented a worthy alternative to Ft. Defiance. Within a few short years, other Navajo arrived at the same conclusion.

In the fall of 1901 Mother Katherine left the reservation with assurances of pupils for the school's first year, slated to begin in late 1902. She returned to St. Michael's in April to inspect the progress of Owen's workers and found the construction work on schedule to her satisfaction.⁸⁹ With plans to return for the opening, she selected the sisters who would accompany her in the fall and remain as the school's first teachers. By October they commenced their travels to the Southwest and, on Sunday the 19th, Mother Katherine arrived at St. Michael's with Sr. M. Evangelist, Sr. Agatha, and Sr. Angela. On Wednesday Josephine Whorton Drexel (cousin of the foundress), Sr. Ambrose, and Sr. Mary of the Annunciation joined them. The final group, Srs. Inez, Gertrude, Theresa, and Josephine, reached its destination with bags and boxes in tow on Friday, the 24th.⁹⁰

Meanwhile, Father Anselm, with Frank Walker and Charlie Mitchell as traveling companions, traversed the plateau to the north and revisited the families who had promised children earlier. Peshlakai remembered his words and offered the priest the pick of his 19 children, a response similar to that of the

⁸⁸ Butler, 31-32, quotation from Anselm's article in Der Sendbote 28 (1901).

⁸⁹ Duffy, 225.

⁹⁰ Wilken, 96-97; Trockur, 56-57. On 1 September a post office opened by the mission and the name St. Michaels became official.

Navajo at Red Rock.⁹¹ A second trip in late November produced 21 children, assembled for the ride to school, many of whom came from the families of Black Horse and the others who had opposed Shipley ten years before. On 3 December, Father Berard celebrated Solemn High Mass to open the school with these 21 new pupils.⁹² Charlie Mitchell added nine of his children to the group, which totaled 50 by late December, and between 54 and 56 by the end of the school-year.⁹³

In 1903 Sister M. Evangelist wrote a report for the Navajo agent (then G.W. Hayzlett) and described the school's architecture, rather than its progress. For \$70,000 Mother Katherine had provided a "fine school building, constructed of native Arizona stone" with a main corridor and two wings. The longer wing contained dining and kitchen facilities, a bakery, and the boys' dormitory with bathrooms. The smaller wing housed classrooms on the first floor, the chapel on the second, and an infirmary on the third. The girls' dormitory shared the east wing with the laundry, sewing and recreation rooms. Of the 440 acres belonging to the school, the gardener cultivated an area necessary for supplying fresh produce. For the first year, the school work of the 36 boys and 20 girls satisfied the eleven sisters, who looked forward to greater advances in English for the second year. The first year ended on 26 August, in time for the children to return home for the harvest season, after which, in November, St. Michael's commenced again.⁹⁴

In the following year, the students demonstrated marked improvement in attendance. On the return date, 26 October 1903, 84 children enrolled and the

⁹¹ Wilken, 98-99.

⁹² Trockur, 57; AZ 500, Box 9, Folder 1, typed sheets, (n.a., n.d.), a short history of the school, p.2. 3 December is the feast day of St. Francis Xavier.

⁹³ Wilken, 103-4, states 56 children, as does the history in AZ 500 (9-1, *ibid.*), while another document in AZ 500 (9-1, four handwritten sheets on classes and attendance, n.a., n.d., p. 2) cites 54 children, with two deaths after baptism.

⁹⁴ RCIA 1903, House Document No. 5, 58th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 4645, p. 129.

sisters refused admittance to some for lack of sufficient space. Four grades formed; each attended classes from 9-11:30 a.m. and received industrial training from 1-3:45 p.m., five days a week. Classes included reading, arithmetic, language (presumably English), drawing, music and singing, geography, and science. In the afternoon girls assisted with laundry work and sewing, and learned basket-weaving from a local Navajo woman.⁹⁵ Because girls comprised a minority, the boys helped in the kitchen and bakery, in addition to their training in shoemaking and farming. Their progress pleased Sister Evangelist, who noted their "intellectual capacity." For all the classes except religious education, the sisters used English, but tolerated conversation in Navajo, unlike the teachers at Fort Defiance, who strictly forbade it. At Father Anselm's insistence, all involved treated the children gently, as though they were truly family.⁹⁶

During the next few years, enrollment increased steadily from 94 in 1905 to 125 in 1908 and to 157 in 1910.⁹⁷ The Navajo agents observed the school's progress and regularly commented upon it in their annual reports. Reuben Perry noted in 1906 that the Franciscans had "accomplished much good" and that the school "buildings are excellent, their instruction and training satisfactory, and altogether good work has been done."⁹⁸ Amidst laments over the perpetual lack of adequate educational facilities for the tribe, Estelle Reel, the Superintendent of Indian Schools, wrote enthusiastically of her visit to St.

⁹⁵ Sr. M. Evangelist, RCIA 1904, House Document No. 5, 58th Congress, 3rd Session, SN 4798, p. 144. St. Michael's school included Native crafts in its curriculum before Commissioner Leupp encouraged government schools to do so.

⁹⁶ Wilken, 105. The Superintendent of the Ft. Defiance school was Francis M. Neel, who mentioned nothing of the issue in his annual report.

⁹⁷ AZ 500, Box 9, Folder 1, single handwritten sheet; see also BCIM microfilm, reel 2, school forms.

⁹⁸ RCIA 1906, House Document No. 5, 59th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 5118, p. 183.

Michael's, which was doing "excellent work."⁹⁹

While the school impressed visitors, the sisters continued to sing their students' praises. In the eyes of Mother Stanislaus, their early abilities in arithmetic compensated for lack of English proficiency.¹⁰⁰ An anonymous sister reported similarly that, "we find the children as a rule very intelligent. Were it not for the drawback in their non-knowledge of English their classwork would be excellent, equally in our opinion that of white children."¹⁰¹ Of her charges' character, Sister Evangelist boasted, "...we have found these children generally morally good, obedient, with an exceptional aptitude for neatness and order, cheerful and industrious, intellectually above the average Indian, and, above all, great mimics..."¹⁰² None of the sisters mentioned whether they had the problem with consistency in attendance that plagued other schools.

In 1907 the land issue briefly resurfaced. President Theodore Roosevelt's Executive Order of 9 November 1907 extended the main reservation boundaries to incorporate St. Michaels. As part of the legal bargaining preceding the order, the U.S. government promised New Mexico that all new reservation land would be used only by the Navajo. By then, Mother Katherine had expended \$142, 888.50 on the mission and school, an investment she and the BCIM sought Congressional action to protect. Charles Lusk, secretary of the BCIM, requested enactment of Senate bill 6523 to pass title to the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. Instead, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, C.F. Larrabee, instructed Mother Katherine to wait until the land opened for allotment and went uncontested, at which point she could buy it,

⁹⁹ RCIA 1905, House Document No. 5, 59th Congress, 1st Session, SN 4959, p. 386.

¹⁰⁰ Butler, 44.

¹⁰¹ AZ 500, Box 9, Folder 1, page 1 of four handwritten, undated sheets describing the school.

¹⁰² RCIA 1904, House Document No. 5, 58th Congress, 3rd Session, SN 4798, p. 144.

again, in legal assurance of no future problems with its title.¹⁰³ Passed on 3 March 1909, the act allowed the Secretary of the Interior to issue a patent for the land to the Sisters, thereby clearing title to the school property.¹⁰⁴

With increased enrollment, St. Michael's school expanded to six classes, comprised of five grades and one class for beginners. Study of English encompassed reading, spelling, memory lessons, composition work, penmanship, and elementary grammar, and the sisters added U.S. history to geography and map-drawing. For industrial training they taught the girls dress-making, cutting and fitting, domestic science (cooking, serving, table-setting), and an introduction to nursing. In religious instruction, the friars used the Navajo catechism they had created.¹⁰⁵

In their early years, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament implemented a more comprehensive curriculum than did the federal Indian schools, which underwent a period of change. Commissioners of Indian Affairs Francis Leupp (1905-1909) and Robert Valentine (1909-1912) displayed the Progressive views that dominated national politics at the time. In contrast to the nineteenth century views of his predecessor, Leupp had spent much of his life among tribes before assuming his post and brought to the office a more practical understanding of native needs. He considered the goal of Indian education one of "improvement, not transformation," and criticized white society for judging tribes by its own standards, rather than by culturally subjective ones.¹⁰⁶ Under Leupp's administration, Superintendent Reel began to encourage teachers to learn more about the tribes with whom they worked--their history, traditions, and

¹⁰³ Senate Report No. 629, May 1908, 60th Congress, 1st Session, SN 5219, pp. 1-4. Copies of Lusk's and Fr. Anselm's correspondence over the issue are on BCIM microfilm, reel 2.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*; (35 Stat. 781). See Young, 1958, 18; 1961, 47.

¹⁰⁵ AZ 500, Box 9, Folder 1, hand-written sheet, n.d., n.a..

¹⁰⁶ RCIA 1905, House Document No. 5, 59th Congress, 1st Session, SN 4959, pp. 1, 3, 7.

languages--and to design lessons to complement the cultural environment.¹⁰⁷ Although Leupp believed in compulsory education, he abhorred off-reservation boarding schools and gradually phased them out while promoting day schools with an improved outing system.¹⁰⁸

Providing rare continuity in the Indian Office, Valentine persisted with Leupp's plans and their implementation, securing appropriations for day schools on reservations. After a survey of tribal situations, he recognized that, "the nomadic habits of the Navajo Indians make educational facilities for these people at the present time a question of boarding schools," and pointed out the wide range required for sheep and the lack of developed irrigation further compounded the impracticality of day schools.¹⁰⁹ Valentine understood the Navajo circumstances perhaps better than any of his predecessors. When approached by Father Anselm with a request for a government boarding school at Chinle, Leupp balked, but Valentine hastened to sign the required papers shortly after he took office in 1909.¹¹⁰

Government administrators concluded through research and expenditures what the Catholics had discovered through trial and error: day schools suited the sedentary Pueblo tribes, but simply did not work with the Navajo. As Father Berard learned in his work, not only did the tribe's livelihood prevent day schools from succeeding, but the Navajo also considered day schools as useless curiosities. If they chose to give their children to foreigners

¹⁰⁷ RCIA 1906, House Document No. 5, 59th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 5118, pp. 407, 419.

¹⁰⁸ RCIA 1907, House Document No. 5, 60th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 17-20, 22; Francis E. Leupp, The Indian and His Problem, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), 128-29, 133-35. In the sparsely populated, vast Western states, rural families confronted the need to board their children in communities during the school year.

¹⁰⁹ RCIA 1910, House Document No. 1006, 61st Congress, 3rd Session, 17.

¹¹⁰ Wilken, 115-16. The Franciscans hoped a boarding school near their Chinle mission (founded in 1903) would encourage more families to stay in the area, but funding prevented them from building a mission school there.

for part of a year, then the school should, in return, provide food, clothing, and a second home. They opposed having "half a child" each day and preferred to leave the children for a season or two. Without clocks, they never knew when to arrive at the school. Because of their herds and farms, they only had access to the day school for a few short months and even then felt constricted by the need to keep camp nearby. Day schools offered little of use.¹¹¹

This early understanding of Navajo culture, so vital in successful Indian education, reflected the broader Catholic missionological methods and goals. Unlike the dominant culture's pursuit of rapid assimilation, Catholic missions focussed on a long-term process of internal change.¹¹² At St. Michaels, the Franciscans recognized the special challenges of mission work among a pastoral population spread throughout an inhospitable land and thus expected few immediate results. Rather than force external change, or even consider it relevant, the Franciscans and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament evinced no direct opposition to tribal traditions or ceremonies, but sought to preserve Navajo culture, especially language.¹¹³ As missionaries, they were primarily interested in "conformity to the Gospel rather than to white culture."¹¹⁴ Within the United States in the twentieth century, Catholic missions represented a cultural minority, more interested in their faith than in American culture.

Accompanying basic tenets of the Gospel, Catholic missions stressed the importance of human relations. In their presentation of education plans for the Navajo, the Franciscans appropriately emphasized the family's centrality in their

¹¹¹Berard Haile Papers (AZ 132), University of Arizona Special Collections, Box 5 (Navaho Culture), Folder 4, handwritten history of education, pp. 2-8. See also Woerner, 105-106, and Wilken, 123, 136.

¹¹² Wilken, 190.

¹¹³ Wilken, 191; Woerner, 109; Frank Waters, "The Navajo Missions," New Mexico Quarterly Review 20 (1950), 18.

¹¹⁴Sister Francis Mary Riggs, S.B.S., "Attitudes of Missionary Sisters toward American Indian Acculturation," (Ph.D. diss., Catholic University of America, 1967), 169.

beliefs. Children occupied a primary place in social concerns and the BCIM listed the establishment of Indian schools as its fourth objective.¹¹⁵ Beyond the family, the community at large played a part as an arena for support both of the church and of individuals. In planning for St. Michael's mission and school, Mother Katherine and her consultants sought a location where groups of Navajo had settled or could be induced to settle, because of the Catholics' desire to create a sense of community. They expected the school to fit into the settlement, indeed to help establish it, and hoped that bonds between the missionaries and students would foster new extended families.¹¹⁶

The Catholics at St. Michaels further manifested their commitment to the Navajo through their conscious effort to attend to the tribe's material needs as well as their perceived spiritual ones. In the first stages of their ministry, the Franciscans sought to develop better irrigation where possible. As early as 1901, Father Anselm began to engage himself actively in the land acquisition issue and later championed the cause on behalf of his Navajo friends.¹¹⁷ The friars, and teachers to some extent, understood the tribe's situation and needs more clearly than the agents, whose tenures rarely lasted more than two years and who had no native language skills. Importantly, the missionaries not only familiarized themselves with reservation problems, but also voiced their views to government officials, in effect acting as mediators, if not representatives for tribal interests.¹¹⁸ Teachers and priests brought government attention to health

¹¹⁵ Peter J. Rahill, The Catholic Indian Missions and Grant's Peace Policy, 1870-1884, (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953), 328; Mother M. Agatha, 534.

¹¹⁶ Butler, 32; Wilken, 192, 214.

¹¹⁷ Butler, 37, 39; Wilken 203-4; Kelley and Whiteley, 68. Fr. Anselm promoted the extension of reservation boundaries and visited President Roosevelt and the Secretary of the Interior in 1907 to plead the Navajo case, successfully. See also Fr. Anselm's letter to Mother Katherine (9 August 1914), BCIM microfilm, in which he described a trip to Washington, D.C. on behalf of the tribe.

¹¹⁸ Robertson, 18; Donald L. Parman, The Navajos and the New Deal, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 13.

issues and initiated tribal petitions to prohibit the sale of alcohol on reservation land.¹¹⁹

With such activities and the increasing success of the school, the Franciscans found it necessary to expand their ministry to other parts of the reservation. In 1899, Don Lorenzo Hubbell had invited the Catholic Church to establish a mission at Ganado, but the BCIM's delayed action gave the Presbyterians the opportunity to start a mission there, which they did in 1901. Instead of Ganado, the Franciscans set their sights on Chinle to the north and, with the approval of 16 headmen and complaint by the Methodist field matron, founded their mission there in 1903.¹²⁰ With moderate success at the first outpost, they continued the expansion with a new mission at Lukachukai in 1910. Five years later, the government built a day school there that suffered from low attendance, just as Father Berard had anticipated.¹²¹

More direct involvement at locations around the Defiance Plateau led to problems with other denominations and with the government. Even before the school opened at St. Michael's, the Franciscans petitioned Agent Hayzlett and Commissioner Jones for permission to give "non-sectarian" religious instruction in the Fort Defiance school, which they did every Wednesday and every other Thursday.¹²² Frank Mitchell later heard that both a Catholic and a Protestant instructed the children, but he had chosen to be baptized Catholic and only remembered Father Anselm, complete with his mispronunciations in Navajo.¹²³

¹¹⁹ Butler, 39; BCIM microfilm, reel 2, letter from William Ketchum to Commissioner Leupp and letter from Ketchum to Sr. Evangelista regarding medical needs of school children, 1905.

¹²⁰ Wilken, 110-111. See also letter from Fr. Anselm to Mother Katherine (2 February 1910) about the grant of 40 acres from the Indian Department for building a chapel.

¹²¹ Wilken, 121-23. The school began with 21 pupils, but soon had only 3 or 4.

¹²² Mitchell, 75; Wilken 87.

¹²³ Ibid., 65-66. The other teacher was the Dutch Reformed Reverend Fryling (also spelled Freyling by Hayzlett and Frijling by C. H. Lamar, the school's superintendent; neither stated Fryling's first name).

In 1910 the Indian Office declared a new regulation under which students had to provide parental permission slips in order to attend either the Catholic or Protestant instruction. In compliance, Fathers Anselm and Leopold traveled over 100 miles to obtain the required signatures and returned with 198. Shortly thereafter, they accused the Protestants of presenting forged permission slips for students who had preferred Catholic classes. By 1916 the issue of cheating, real or imagined, caused enough contention that Agent Peter Paquette allowed changes in religious instruction only if parents signed petitions in his presence.¹²⁴ During autumns when the children returned only slowly for the new academic year at St. Michael's school due to rumors of the priests being wizards or similar Navajo societal pariah, Father Anselm suspected the Catholics' "separated brethren" as the cause of the problem.¹²⁵

In the midst of their problems with the reformed reverends, the Franciscans encountered difficulties with the Indian Office. Commissioner Valentine issued a circular order in January 1912 that prohibited teachers from wearing "religious garb" in government schools. The Catholics viewed it as a form of blatant discrimination and protested vociferously, claiming themselves as victims of the Peace Policy's legacy. Valentine's resignation at the end of the year alleviated the problem, but not before it elicited more hard feelings. On the Navajo reservation, the Catholics deliberately proselytized only pagans and did not desire competition with local Protestants or strife with the agency.¹²⁶ After 1911, St. Michael's school remained unaffected by sectarian squabbles and expanded rapidly. Attendance exceeded capacity in 1915, when 154 children enrolled while the school remained with room only for 150.¹²⁷ An overflow

¹²⁴ Butler, 35-36.

¹²⁵ BCIM microfilm, reel 2, typed letter from Fr. Anselm to William Ketcham.

¹²⁶ Woerner, 50-60; Wilken, 197-98.

¹²⁷ RCIA 1915, House Document No. 90, 64th Congress, 1st Session, Table 19, p. 152.

situation reoccurred two years later, with 200 children enrolled over the course of the year.¹²⁸ By summer of the following year, the Sisters added a new building and expanded the wing which housed the boys' dormitory and the dining room. Boys participated in a brass band and basketball became the favorite sport of both boys and girls.¹²⁹ Because of the number of children brought to the school by their parents and the limited capacity of the buildings, the Sisters regularly turned children away. As children of the first graduates began to enroll, the school reached its maximum enrollment of almost 300.¹³⁰ In February 1925, Chee Dodge and other Navajo leaders wrote to Mother Katherine to request that she either build another school at St. Michaels or greatly expand the facilities to accommodate the number of children seeking admittance. In compliance, she authorized another building and a gymnasium, which opened up the second floor, formerly the recreation room, of the main building.¹³¹ This increased the school's capacity to 275 for eight grades and in 1928 the enrollment hovered at 254.¹³²

By that time, Catholic educational efforts among the Navajo had further expanded. They established a school at Redrock and, in 1923, chose to exert themselves to the east, where the government boarding school and Protestant mission at Toadlena influenced the beliefs of Catholic children from Tohatchi.¹³³ After Father Anselm's death in 1921, Father Berard continued his unique ministry at St. Michaels, serving as chaplain of the school, linguist, amateur

¹²⁸ RCIA 1917, House Document No. 915, 65th Congress, 2nd Session, Table 18, p. 152.

¹²⁹ AZ 500, Box 9, Folder 1, typed letter of Ella Tachini, student at St. Michael's, dated 28 January 1918. At that time, she had been at the school for ten years.

¹³⁰ Butler, 44, states the year as 1922-23, but the Reports of the Secretary of the Interior gave no school statistics from 1921-1926.

¹³¹ Duffy, 236-37.

¹³² Report of the Secretary of the Interior, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1928), Table 3, p. 279.

¹³³ AZ 500, Box 23, Folder 1, typed letter from Fr. Marcellus Troester to Mother Katherine (23 November 1923).

ethnologist, and cultural interpreter. Although few of the earliest graduates attended Mass regularly, many sent their children to the school and the second generation promised to embody more fidelity to the faith.¹³⁴ At St. Michaels, the Franciscans and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament accomplished most of their mission goals within the first three decades, yet they were unable to provide health care for the Navajo, an area in which the Presbyterians excelled at Ganado.

¹³⁴ Wilken, 124; Mitchell, 282.

and its missiology embodied the *zeitgeist* of the reform era. Even though the denomination split into Old and New Schools in the 1830s and divided against itself again on the eve of the Civil War, it retained both the tenets of reformed theology and the quintessential characteristics of the late-nineteenth century reform movement.⁴ Like other Protestants, the Presbyterian missionaries devoutly believed that the American culture represented the zenith of Western civilization and considered bringing others--especially "savage heathens"--into the fold as the highest possible good. Salvation and Americanization became synonymous as they strove to convert not only tribal systems of belief, but also native languages, traditions, housing, and modes of dress. In effect, the Presbyterian reformers sought to create white Americans with darker skin.⁵ Especially in the Southwest with its multifarious cultures, they hoped to bring tribes fully into American society.⁶ Such goals differed from the Catholics' supreme emphasis on conversion to their faith as the sole key to civilization in a broader context.

This conviction of American culture as the earthly manifestation of true Christendom coupled with the denomination's northern European cultural roots spawned an assertively ethnocentric missionization style.⁷ Furthermore, it dichotomized the world in which the missionaries proselytized and, in turn, endowed them with a dualistic outlook on Indian missions. Looking down from the pinnacle of civilization, the Presbyterians pessimistically perceived that

⁴ Banker, 30, 116. Banker provides a more detailed explanation of the denomination's divisions and the ensuing variations in Indian missions, none of which pertain significantly to this study.

⁵ Michael C. Coleman, Presbyterian Missionary Activities toward American Indians, 1837-1893, (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1985), 33, 38.

⁶ Banker, 299.

⁷ Coleman, 79, differentiates between ethnocentrism and racism and claims that the missionaries found the tribes to be the product of inferior circumstances rather than genetics.

native cultures existed in a depraved state.⁸ So certain were they that tribes existed in unredeemed degradation that they denounced all native practices without ever examining them. Whereas they might have found many beliefs and values similar to their own and useful in their presentation of the Gospel, few Presbyterians attempted to learn about the cultures in which they labored, let alone to learn from them.⁹ This held true particularly with tribal religious practices, as a Reformed missionary exemplified in observing that, "the Navahoes are a religious people, albeit their religion is false."¹⁰

From this negative outlook on the traditional lives of tribes, the Protestant missionaries received their calling. Their perception of the Indians' dire need of salvation and civilization generated a burgeoning sense of optimism and an almost militant purpose.¹¹ Not only could they fulfill a patriotic duty to create from the Navajo or Choctaw or Assiniboine, men and women worthy of American citizenship, but they also could bring the enlightenment of the Gospel to those in darkness and thereby spiritually regenerate the whole society.¹²

True to the Reformed tradition, the Presbyterians relied on the Gospel for salvation. In Calvinist *sola scriptura* doctrine, revelation came through the Word and rejection of the Word resulted in damnation.¹³ Therefore, the missionaries needed to present the Scriptures to the unconverted and bear witness to the Gospel among the unredeemed.¹⁴ Following both Calvin and Knox, who were committed to education, Presbyterians considered mission schools a priority;

⁸ Banker, 59.

⁹ Coleman, 80-81, 131.

¹⁰ Banker, 67; John Dolfin, Bringing the Gospel in Hogan and Pueblo, (Grand Rapids, MI: Van Noord Book and Publishing Company, 1921), 130.

¹¹ Coleman, 133.

¹² Banker, 208.

¹³ Michael C. Coleman, "Not Race, but Grace: Presbyterian Missionaries and American Indians, 1837- 1893," Journal of American History 67 (June 1980), 44.

¹⁴ Coleman, 1985, 15.

for understanding of the word came through literacy, and education served as the means to the greater end of salvation.¹⁵

In the face of such convictions, Catholicism, which relied upon Scripture, sacraments, and tradition, represented sacred sophistry at best or a spiritual threat at worst. On its own, Catholicism--in devoutly Protestant eyes--offered only partial conversion. Worse yet, the syncretism allowed--or even promoted--by friars in Southwestern cultures, surpassed unadulterated paganism in its diabolical perversion of the Gospel and subsequent sinfulness. During his tenure at Zuni, John Menaul referred to Catholicism as "baptized heathenism," and he, like other Presbyterians, preferred to work in mission fields untainted by Rome. Such sentiments became more prevalent as the denomination founded mission schools in the Southwest, where they charged Catholic missionaries with undermining public, non-sectarian education.¹⁶ At the turn of the century, a Presbyterian review of national mission efforts surveyed the Navajo field and concluded that, "...there are many barriers to success, chiefly due to the ignorance and superstition of the people, the influence of the medicine men, and the activity of the Roman Catholic Church."¹⁷ Despite such misgivings, the church decided to commence with a renewed witness to the Navajo. This time both the Board of Home Missions and the missionaries to the tribe sensed a common, clear commission to create Navajo congregations that would convert and transform their tribal kin.

On 6 January 1880 a Presidential executive order expanded the reservation for the second time and incorporated the area on the Pueblo

¹⁵ Banker, 111-12, 208-9.

¹⁶ Banker, 69-70, 80.

¹⁷ Belle M. Brain, The Redemption of the Red Man: An Account of Presbyterian Missions to the North American Indians of the Present Day, (New York: The Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1904), 77.

Colorado Wash that later became Ganado.¹⁶ About that time, Don Lorenzo Hubbell, then a young and enterprising New Mexican, bought an adobe building above the wash and opened a trading post.¹⁹ Fort Defiance lay thirty-five miles to the east, on the other side of the Defiance Plateau and forest, where many Navajo families came for firewood. Hubbell's good nature and equitable trading gained him an acceptance and laudable reputation with the tribe. By 1900 his success allowed him to abandon the old adobe home and build a much larger one, with room for the guests he frequently invited.²⁰ Hubbell believed that both his post and the valley in which he lived presented the potential to sustain a mission site and he offered his assistance to any denomination willing to send missionaries.²¹ Although a Catholic, Hubbell evinced no sectarian preference in his solicitation, but concluded that any mission station would draw more people into the valley.

In October 1900 the Presbyterian Synod of New Mexico convened in Phoenix and addressed the issue of founding another mission among the Navajo, after decades of absence. The meeting's delegates decided in favor of a renewed effort, a move which the Board of Home Missions hastened to approve.²² At the time, the Reverend George Logie served at the Presbyterian Church in Flagstaff, the denomination's closest church to the reservation. The Board sent its Mission Committee chair, the Reverend Dr. Thomas Moffett in

¹⁶ Bailey and Bailey, 80.

¹⁹ Frank McNitt, The Indian Traders, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), 201. McNitt notes that no specific record cites Hubbell's year of arrival and he estimates 1878 for the closest date; William J. Robinson, "A Construction Sequence for Hubbell Trading Post and Residence," The Kiva, Vol. 50, No.4 (1985), 221.

²⁰ McNitt, 216-17; *ibid.*.

²¹ Mrs. LeCharles Goodman Eckel, "History of Ganado, Arizona," Museum Notes VI (10), Museum of Northern Arizona, 1934, p.49; Michael J. Warner, "Protestant Missionary Activity among the Navajo, 1890-1912," New Mexico Historical Review XLV, 3 (July 1970), 223. Barbara Goodman Eckel was Hubbell's daughter; Martha Blue, "A View from the Bullpen: A Navajo Ken of Traders and Trading Posts," Plateau, Vol.57, No.3 (1986), 17.

²² Salsbury, 14; Smith, 36.

April 1901 to accompany Logie, William R. Johnston of the Gospel Union, a Navajo guide, and a few others to Fort Defiance, where they planned to negotiate with the agent.²³

En route they sojourned briefly at Ganado, where Hubbell opened his home to them and reiterated his desire to have a mission nearby. The party noted the conditions and relative population of all the areas through which they passed. By such criteria, Ganado ranked highly; the railroad ran just to the south and Navajo families maintained seasonal fields in the surrounding valleys. Before reaching the agency, the group regarded Ganado as the place they would recommend.²⁴ While at the fort, they toured the government school and met Miss Thackara at the Episcopal Good Shepherd Hospital there. During the return to Flagstaff, they visited Ganado again, this time examining a possible site, and inquired about the water supply, and made a unanimous decision in its favor.²⁵

Moffett returned home to file a glowing report. His descriptions prompted the Secretary of the Board of Home Missions, Charles L. Thompson, to send a letter to Indian Commissioner Jones in mid-July, detailing the Presbyterians' intentions. Shortly thereafter, the Board applied for 160 acres of land two miles northeast of Hubbell's trading post and initiated the search for a qualified missionary.²⁶

In the fall of 1901, Agent Hayzlett visited the proposed mission site and concluded that Presbyterian activity there would prove detrimental to Navajo

²³ Ibid.; Eugene M. Haldeman, Historical Sketch of Ganado Mission, Ganado, Arizona, (New York: United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., 1967), 1.

²⁴ George Logie, "Finding Ganado," Ganado News Bulletin Vol.2, No.3 (June 1951), 4-6; Haldeman, 1. Haldeman notes the proximity of the following sites that later became settlements: Chinle to the north, Kinlichee to the east, Klagetoh and Wide Ruins to the south, and Cornfields to the southwest.

²⁵ Logie, 6, also mentions the Catholic mission at St. Michaels, but otherwise does not comment on it.

²⁶ Ibid., 7; Moore, 128-29; Warner, 1977, p.342.

agricultural interests in the area. Simultaneously, Charles H. Bierkemper prepared for his first mission assignment after studies at Western Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh and ordination in mid-September.²⁷ Although he had planned to serve under the Foreign Board in Africa, the prospect of malaria discouraged him. Aware of Bierkemper's character and availability, Johnson commended the new minister to Moffett, stating that,

he is a self-reliant, earnest man, with a profound missionary spirit and had done a good deal of missionary work in cities during his seminary course. He also has mechanical tendencies of mind and would, I believe, make a capable missionary for the Navajo Indians.

Because Moffett had found no candidate in his own search, he immediately wired Johnson a request to send Bierkemper to Ganado.²⁸

Bierkemper, a thin, light-haired man who turned thirty-one at the end of that year, grew up in Kittanning, Pennsylvania and knew only the country well east of the Mississippi. Like his peers in the Navajo mission field, he boarded the train west at Kansas City and marveled at the land that unfolded before him. Upon his arrival at his new home, he noted that it offered nothing but "sagebrush and rattlesnakes."²⁹ The denomination's history with the tribe did not bode well for a solitary missionary miles from the agency or from the nearest Presbyterian church. The Protestant pattern of sending missionaries alone into the field to establish congregations produced attrition problems that the Catholic church sought to alleviate by sending its missionaries in commissioned groups. Fortunately, Bierkemper did not remain single for long. At Christmas--two months after his arrival at Ganado--he traveled to Albuquerque and married Alice Narcissus Woodford, whose serendipitous attribute was experienced

²⁷ Moore, 129-30.

²⁸ Logie, 7, 12. Logie includes excerpts from correspondence between the two board members.

²⁹ Moore, 125.

training as a schoolteacher.³⁰

Because the land issue continued unsettled, Hubbell opened his home to the couple until they could build one for themselves at the mission site. For the next two years, the trader offered his unwavering hospitality including the provision of a buckboard with a team of horses.³¹ Bierkemper neither professed language ability nor expressed intent to study, but soon hired an interpreter, Tom Morgan, who later attended Hampton Institute in Virginia.³² To pursue his main missionary objective of evangelism, Bierkemper used the furnished transport to travel the surrounding countryside, visiting hogans and meeting people as best he could. Not long after he embarked on his itineration, the local Navajo began referring to this "short coat" as "the man with the whiskey name."³³

Although Hubbell's generous support stemmed, self-admittedly, from a hope that a Ganado mission would increase business at his store, he also desired education for his children and a modicum of available health care for his family, employees, and friends in the valley.³⁴ During the first two years of their service, the Board paid the Bierkempers an annual salary of \$1,000, but in practical matters, Hubbell acted as their primary benefactor.³⁵ The arrangement proved mutually beneficial, in that the couple received essential support in their strange, new environment, while Hubbell enjoyed their company and the services they offered his family.

Shortly after her arrival, Alice Woodford Bierkemper proceeded to employ herself in her profession by opening a school in Hubbell's dining room.

³⁰ Ibid., 129; Warner, 1970, p.224; Bierkemper in Salsbury, 20. Bierkemper and Woodford met and courted during his undergraduate studies at Park College in Missouri.

³¹ Haldeman, 2.

³² Barbara Hubbell Goodman in Salsbury, 17; Warner, 1970, p.225.

³³ Moore, 134; Goodman in Salsbury, 16.

³⁴ Moore, 128.

³⁵ Ibid., 129.

She taught the rudiments of a standard American education to ten students, one of whom, a six-year old girl, walked four miles to the trading post against her parents' wishes to "learn paper."³⁶ When not tending to the needs of her younger students, Bierkemper instructed curious, local Navajo women in basic sewing, a practical skill that many were eager to acquire.

In May 1902 thirteen headmen in the area granted permission allowing the Presbyterians to commence with their mission plans and the land grant was approved in the summer. The Department of the Interior approved the request for no more than 160 acres for "temporary use and occupancy" by the Board.³⁷ Fortunately, Bierkemper's "mechanical tendencies" of hand, rather than mind, included previous training as a stonemason and posthaste he set to work building an adobe manse with five rooms and an assembly hall.³⁸ Once the manse was completed, Bierkemper and his assistants continued by digging a well in the back and building a cellar with a laundry above it. Shortly thereafter, they added a kitchen and a dining room which served the day school children, who numbered eleven by then.³⁹ Between 1904 and 1906, the missionary-mason split his duties, visiting hogans around Ganado with his interpreter and working on a stone church by the manse.⁴⁰

In a reversal of his earlier reservations about the Presbyterian mission, Agent Hayzlett observed the Bierkempers' efforts and reported very favorably to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. As part of the missionary's "excellent work,"

³⁶ Ibid., 130; C.H. Bierkemper in Salsbury, 20; Salsbury, 17. The young pupil grew up to become a surgical nurse at Sage Hospital at the Ganado mission and to marry Frank Walker, the interpreter for the Franciscans.

³⁷ Moore, 130.

³⁸ Bierkemper in Salsbury, 20; Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., This is Ganado Mission: In the Heart of Navajoland, Ganado, Arizona, (n.p., n.d.), 5, 16.

³⁹ C.H. Bierkemper in Salsbury, 20. Bierkemper does not mention who helped him. Warner, 1970, p. 225.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 21; Haldeman, 2; Board publication, 17.

the agent noted that Bierkemper cared for Navajo who were sick and tried to develop water and roads in the area. Hayzlett remarked on Bierkemper's rapport with the tribe and considered him, "...very broad in his views" with "...an excellent idea as to their many needs."⁴¹ The agent's successor, Reuben Perry, reached similar conclusions and commented on Bierkemper's "considerable influence with the Indians."⁴² In addition to his activities at and near the mission, Bierkemper assisted the agents in their perpetual attempts to recruit pupils for the government schools both on and off the reservation, with a particular preference for the school in Phoenix.⁴³

With the completion of the church, missionary work in all its facets intensified. Although the Presbyterians sought to establish a mission on the San Juan during the Peace Policy years, they first brought these plans to fruition when the Dutch Reformed Church ceded its property--complete with a boarding school--at Jewett, New Mexico to the Board of Home Missions in 1906.⁴⁴ That same year, Alice Bierkemper moved her classes from the manse to a room in the back of the church, still teaching the students who appeared of their own volition.⁴⁵ Within the church itself, her classes consisted of more participants than the congregation, which, in 1907, counted just three baptized adult members.⁴⁶ The first doctor, C.H. Waterhouse, and his wife arrived to spend only a few months at the mission, an inauspicious beginning for what later emerged as the cynosure of Ganado, but enough to convince Bierkemper of its importance.⁴⁷

⁴¹ RCIA 1903, House Document No. 5, 58th Congress, 2nd Session, SN 4645, p. 128. Hayzlett also made note of Alice Bierkemper's day school.

⁴² RCIA 1904, House Document No. 5, 58th Congress, 3rd Session, SN 4798, p. 142.

⁴³ Warner, 1977, p.351.

⁴⁴ Moore, 133; Banker, 334.

⁴⁵ Salsbury, 35.

⁴⁶ Warner, 1977, p.350.

⁴⁷ Haldeman, 2.

After the Waterhouses' premature departure, Dr. James D. Kennedy came as their replacement and with indefatigable determination to serve the needy. His advent completed the mission team and its corresponding objectives of "preaching, teaching, and healing."⁴⁸ To assist him in his work, Kennedy hired Joe Tippacanoe, a graduate of Haskell Indian School in Kansas and reputedly the best interpreter on the reservation at the time.⁴⁹ Within weeks of his arrival, Kennedy gained a reputation of his own. Due to warranted skepticism about "foreign" medicine, the Navajo seldom brought their sick family members to the white doctor, leaving Kennedy no recourse but to go to them. Although he sometimes rode a horse or used a wagon, Kennedy aroused curiosity by his habit of going to hogans and sheep-camps on foot, even to Chinle, 25 miles to the north. The Navajo began referring to this peripatetic medic as the "walking doctor."⁵⁰ Kennedy remained modest about his extra-ordinary deeds. Although he showed no interest in their culture or language, he committed himself to their health, which surely helped him gain a degree of confidence among the local families and their relatives by extension. When not traversing the countryside for purposes of proselytism, Bierkemper persisted with his building projects and by 1911 he erected a one-story adobe building in which Kennedy opened the first formal hospital.⁵¹ Mainly the infirmary ministered to the medical needs of the mission's white staff which now included a farming couple, an assistant teacher, and a housekeeper; a practical nurse soon joined Kennedy.⁵²

Alice Bierkemper might have benefited from Kennedy's presence as well. After just three years in Ganado, she returned to Missouri for medical treatment

⁴⁸ Warner, 1977, p.344-5.

⁴⁹ Goodman in Salsbury, 17.

⁵⁰ Moore, 132; Haldeman, 2; Warner, 1977, p.346. See also Kennedy in Salsbury, 21.

⁵¹ Board publication, 22.

⁵² Goodman in Salsbury, 17.

and spent weeks in a Pittsburgh hospital in 1907. Doctors attributed part of her health problems to late, unsuccessful attempts at childbirth. Eventually the couple adopted two Navajo children, Elizabeth Shepherd and Charles Gray, and Bierkemper continued successfully to uphold the educational portion of the three-fold ministry.⁵³ Indeed, by 1910 the number of her students had increased to twenty and she opened the first formal Presbyterian day school.⁵⁴ Even though Bierkemper managed to sustain the interest of a consistent number of students, the Presbyterians admitted the ineluctable fact that they could not succeed in their educational evangelization without a boarding school.⁵⁵

The year 1912 marked a major turning point for the mission. With the completion of an adobe mission building and dormitory, Bierkemper finished his final tactile piece of work and prepared to move on to the next assignment in the more temperate field of northwestern Washington.⁵⁶ Hubbell, who had supported and liked the Bierkempers from the beginning, opposed the transfer and wrote to Thompson, Secretary of the Mission Board, in an effort to encourage them to reconsider the transfer. Bureaucracy carried the day and Hubbell bid farewell to the valley's first missionaries at the end of the summer.⁵⁷

In anticipation of the change in directorship, staff for the new boarding school arrived during the summer. Cora L. Moore became the principal and a teacher, Sara Cochran acted as matron, and Ellen Jones served as the teacher for two grades comprised of ten boys and twenty girls. Within the

⁵³ Moore, 133; Salsbury, 16. Bierkemper was approximately forty years old when she became pregnant.

⁵⁴ Salsbury, 35.

⁵⁵ Moore, 133; Banker, 354.

⁵⁶ Board publication, 15; Moore, 134. Bierkempers moved to Northport, near the Canadian border, the area in which they spent the remainder of their lives.

⁵⁷ Moore, 134. The Home Mission Board's records and correspondences for the years 1890-1920 were somehow lost, leaving no explanation for the decisions concerning mission personnel.

dormitory, the children ate together, but slept on separate floors; they attended classes in the church. Following the prevailing pedagogical pattern of the era, pupils studied academic subjects in the morning and the older ones worked under supervision in the afternoon.⁵⁸

In Bierkemper's stead, the Board appointed the Reverend Mr. Clarence Platt, "a very cultured gentleman, more fit to be a minister in a fashionable city church than missionary to the Navajo tribe of Indians whose language and character he did not know." Platt forbade his children to play with their Navajo peers or attend church services, due to fear of disease. He based his concerns on the fact that over half of the pupils were hospitalized during the year and both tuberculosis and trachoma plagued the tribe.⁵⁹ Within months of his arrival, Platt organized the first official church at Ganado with a congregation of three.⁶⁰

The boarding school maintained its attendance numbers with seemingly little effort and the staff continued to seek to recruit new pupils. Attempts to persuade parents on the Defiance Plateau to send their children to Ganado brought the Presbyterian missionaries into conflict with the Franciscans from St. Michaels, who also canvassed the area. Before Bierkemper's departure, Fort Defiance Superintendent Peter Paquette issued warnings to both, advising them not to pressure parents unduly nor to attempt to have children transferred from schools in which they had already enrolled.⁶¹ Paquette's requirement that he witness parental signatures for denominational preference then held for sectarian schools as well as for religious instruction in government schools. In this matter, the superintendent followed the Indian Office regulations from March

⁵⁸ Salsbury, 35; C. Moore in Salsbury, 22.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 35; Goodman in Salsbury, 17. Goodman mentions nothing of Platt's wife. See also Dorothy M. Ellerton, "Fifty Years of Serving the Master at Ganado," Ganado News Bulletin Vol.2, No.3, (June 1951), 2.

⁶⁰ Haldeman, 2; Ellerton, 2.

⁶¹ Warner, 1977, p. 353.

1910, which the Commissioner subsequently upheld, despite protests from Bierkemper and the Protestant minister at the agency.⁶²

In 1912 the Presbyterians also moved to expand their ministry, using Ganado as a base and establishing mission outposts. That year they acquired the mission at Tolchaco, north of Leupp, and then added missions at Tuba City, Indian Wells, and Fort Defiance.⁶³ Their interest in the Chinle area later engendered renewed rivalry with the Franciscans.⁶⁴

The denomination's efforts to resuscitate the mission at Jewett yielded insufficient success, which caused the Missions Board to consolidate it with their other stations and to transfer the school to Ganado in 1914. With the program came the new name, Kirkwood Memorial School.⁶⁵ Its first class consisted of 33 pupils, still in two grades.⁶⁶ Although the Presbyterians had gained few converts, those Navajo who had adopted the reformed Christian faith sent their children to Ganado.⁶⁷ This pattern appeared consistently with all mission schools for the Navajo. After the first year, expansion became necessary and the mission constructed Westminster Hall to house classes, including the new kindergarten.⁶⁸

In a spirit of optimism, the denomination began to design a program that

⁶² Warner, 1977, 354-5. The Indian office had subdivided the Navajo agency into six regions, each with a superintendent; see Underhill, 220-221.

⁶³ Ibid., 356.

⁶⁴ Woerner, 81.

⁶⁵ Banker, 365; Warner, 1977, p. 353; Salsbury, 35, 49; John Kirkwood, "Ganado Mission School," Ganado News Bulletin Vol.2, No. 3 (June 1951), 15.

⁶⁶ Salsbury, 35; RCIA 1914, House Document No. 90, 64th Congress, 1st Session, Table 14, p. 137. Although the annual commissioners' reports made note of the absence of the school at Jewett, none referred to the Ganado school as a boarding school, but always as a day school, through 1928's report.

⁶⁷ Fred G. Mitchell, "Navaho Missions," Southern Workman 50 (August 1921), p.361; Ellerton, 2.

⁶⁸ Board publication, 10; Salsbury, 35, 49. According to Salsbury, the Westminster Sunday School of Elizabeth, New Jersey contributed the funds for construction.

would both educate comprehensively and fight paganism.⁶⁹ The Board gradually developed a course of study during the century's first decade and produced a systematic plan that paralleled contemporary national curricula. Primary classes concentrated on reading, orthology, penmanship, geography, arithmetic, grammar, and history. To differentiate it from secular education, the missions schools included lessons in Bible study, Biblical lives, and, following the Protestant American mandate, exercises in patriotism.⁷⁰

Even with the youngest pupils, the Presbyterians hoped to instill the seeds of vocation that would lead to the next generation's native Christian leaders.⁷¹ Regardless of the degree of educational success, evangelism remained the primary objective of the mission's school, with the task carried out by Navajo as the ultimate practical goal.⁷² An instructor at Ganado later reflected on the school's abiding purpose and summarized it as follows:

...to train young Indians, who otherwise would not have this opportunity to become useful and effective citizens in their communities...to develop qualities of leadership, and in all, to build Christian character...to provide real opportunities of Christian faith.⁷³

In this, the denomination acknowledged that it could have no lasting impact without the continued active interest of those among whom it labored.

As the Ganado mission expanded in size and scope, Hubbell's role of benefactor diminished. Although the missionaries no longer needed his direct support, they still appreciated his presence, personality, inexhaustible hospitality, and intriguing acquaintances. Cora Moore called Hubbell's trading

⁶⁹ Woerner, 110.

⁷⁰ Banker, 264.

⁷¹ Ibid., 276.

⁷² Fred G. Mitchell, "The Romance of the Navajo Work," Ganado News Bulletin Vol.10, No.2, (March 1939), 3; Fred Mitchell in Salsbury, 29.

⁷³ Kirkwood, 15.

post "a Mecca for that lover of wild life, Theodore Roosevelt," and fondly recollected the time the former President visited with some of the schoolchildren. Not only did he shake hands with each of them, but he also repeated their names, leaving everyone with a favorable impression.⁷⁴

With a typically high attrition rate, the staff at Ganado changed almost annually.⁷⁵ In contrast, the St. Michaels' staff arrived in small groups, who fulfilled their vocational vows within a committed community and tended to remain in service at the mission. At Ganado, Minnie Orr replaced Cora Moore as principal in 1916, but stayed only two years before yielding her post to Mary Nickelson.⁷⁶ The Reverend Mirrup succeeded Platt, but shortly thereafter the Reverend Hugh D. "Shine" Smith supplanted him. In turn, Smith transferred to Tuba City and Dr. M. Luther Girton from the Tucson Indian Training School assumed the role of supervisor at the mission.⁷⁷ On Thanksgiving Day, 1916, a different change occurred; Ganado received its first automobile, a Model T Ford.⁷⁸

While the arrival of the car caused excitement, Presbyterian interests in Chinle resulted in agitation. The Franciscans established their mission post there almost two decades earlier and considered the area their exclusive,

⁷⁴ C. Moore in Salsbury, 22; Ellerton, 3.

⁷⁵ Banker, 250. Presbyterian missions witnessed the highest rate in 1880, when over 60% of those commissioned transferred from their appointed posts. Turn-over was greatest among teachers.

⁷⁶ Goodman in Salsbury, 17-18, 22.

⁷⁷ Haldeman, 2-3; Goodman in Salsbury, 18; Ellerton, 2; Girton in Salsbury, 24.

⁷⁸ Goodman in Salsbury, 17; Ellerton, 2; Eleanor M. Tilford in Salsbury, 23. Tilford was a teacher at the time and recalled the excitement.

evangelical domain.⁷⁹ Although the Presbyterians sought only a 32 acre tract, the Franciscans organized a meeting with the local Navajo in July 1917. The resultant vote of 88 to 11 weighted heavily against the Presbyterian petition to found a mission on the land and a later vote demonstrated even greater opposition to the proposal. In spite of the expressed Navajo opinion on the matter, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells granted his authorization to the denomination, a decision formally approved by the Department of the Interior in May 1919. Father Anselm Weber of St. Michaels protested the move and charged that the Presbyterians enjoyed unfair political advantages, not the least of which arose from the fact that Sells belonged to the Presbyterian Church.⁸⁰

As the denomination augmented its Ganado-based mission work amidst controversy elsewhere, Kirkwood Memorial School ran smoothly and its program expanded steadily. By 1917 enrollment had increased to 45 and the staff added a fourth grade in compensation.⁸¹ The Board of Home Missions decided in the following year to create a five-year plan that would concentrate on expanding the educational facilities at Ganado. In order to attract more students, the school needed first to offer adequate housing and a more

⁷⁹ Woerner, 86; BCIM microfilm, reel 2, handwritten letter from Fr. Berard Haile to Fr. William Ketcham, 15 December 1902. Father Berard expressed concern over Protestant proliferation in the area, noting that "our Protestant Evangelists are swarming the country." Rather than let Bierkemper found a mission at Canyon de Chelly first, the BCIM supported the Franciscans' efforts to build a mission there, not wanting, in Fr. Berard's words, "such a spot to be exclusive territory of our Protestant friends." See also Father Anselm Weber's handwritten letter to Fr. Ketcham, 24 April 1903, in which he related the meeting he and Fr. Berard held with local headmen at Chinle to get their approval for a mission. After the friars selected a site, Bierkemper arrived with the Superintendent of Presbyterian Missions for Arizona and New Mexico, evidently to select a site for their mission. The friars sped to Fort Defiance to apply to the agent for the land, before the Presbyterians could contest it.

⁸⁰ Woerner, 86-87. Sells made no mention of the dispute in his annual reports from 1916-1919, but concerned himself with his developing plan for a uniform course of study in Indian schools. One cannot help but wonder why a commissioner so extensively involved in Indian education and obviously aware of the Presbyterian activities among the Navajo did not correct the discrepancy about the Ganado school in his annual charts of enrollment and attendance.

⁸¹ Salsbury, 35.

complete plant for industrial training. The Board allocated \$125,000 for the construction of dormitories that could accommodate 200 pupils and to supplement the salaries of additional teachers.⁸² At the time, 50 pupils resulted in a very crowded dining room and teachers who eagerly anticipated more room.⁸³

Dr. Kennedy, assisted by the new staff physicians, Dr. Gary R. Burke and Dr. Alice Burke, spent his final year at Ganado attending to those afflicted by the influenza epidemic of 1918. For days at a time, the doctor traversed the countryside, in order to take medicine to the Navajo.⁸⁴ Because of Kennedy's unwavering dedication, fewer people died in the area around the mission than in other parts of the reservation. Afterwards, he transferred to Tohatchi, New Mexico and later Dr. Hutchinson assumed his duties, but never matched the Walking Doctor's good reputation with the Navajo.⁸⁵

Preceding another transition in the mission's life, the denomination further defined Ganado's goals by transferring it from the Board of Home Missions, under whose care it had consistently grown for almost twenty years, to the Unit of Medical and Educational Work.⁸⁶ One of the Unit's first actions in 1920 involved the transfer of the Reverend Fred G. Mitchell from the Training School for Indian Workers at Tolchaco to his role as supervisor at Ganado. When first offered the new position, Mitchell declined, but after a fire destroyed the Bible School facilities at Tolchaco, he packed his bags and ushered his teaching staff to the northeast.⁸⁷ Upon his arrival, the Ganado church had only

⁸² Banker, 365; Salisbury, 49.

⁸³ Salisbury, 36.

⁸⁴ Ellerton, 1.

⁸⁵ Goodman in Salisbury, 17-18; Haldeman, 5. No further mention is made of the Burkes by Ellerton et al.

⁸⁶ Salisbury, 49.

⁸⁷ Salisbury, 49; Haldeman, 3; Ellerton, 2.

16 members, but Mitchell soon changed that, and much else.⁸⁸

Linguistically the Presbyterians at the mission had long lagged behind their brethren at St. Michaels and the Dutch Reformed ministers at Rehoboth and Tohatchi. The Franciscans considered mastery of the Navajo language a priority and the Reformed ministers recognized the importance of translating the Gospel for efficacious evangelism.⁸⁹ After years of studying the language and working diligently at Tolchaco, Mitchell spoke Navajo as well as any of his peers at other mission stations. The fluency he had achieved and the friendships he had nurtured with the Navajo allowed him to translate several portions of the Bible--*Diyin God Bizaad*--into Navajo.⁹⁰ Combined with his affable nature, his language ability earned him respect in the valley and under his supervision Ganado grew rapidly.

During the first year of his administration, construction workers added an upper story to the dining hall, converting it into the girls' dormitory at a cost of \$80,000. They then began work on a power plant. Mitchell concentrated on reorganizing his Bible training school, in which he intended to train the Navajo youth who would later continue mission efforts at the various Presbyterian outposts.⁹¹ Enrollment in the four grades leapt from 63 to 87, with piano lessons added for the musically inclined.⁹²

For the next few years, the school continued its surge of growth. In 1922 Anton Dreschner served as principal for the five grades necessary to teach the 113 pupils then boarded at Ganado. By 1923 the administration added a sixth grade and, in 1924, Principal Edith Turner oversaw the 147 pupils in eight

⁸⁸ Smith and Nelson, 68.

⁸⁹ Warner, 1970, p. 226. The Reverend Leonard Brink especially devoted his service to language study and translation.

⁹⁰ Goodman in Salsbury, 18.

⁹¹ Board publication, 14; Salsbury, 50; Ellerton, 2.

⁹² Salsbury, 36.

grades.⁹³ The curriculum proceeded on the schedule of a half-day's lessons and an afternoon of work, much of which, for the boys, occurred at the power plant until 1925, when they helped to construct the industrial building and a small cottage.⁹⁴

Mitchell's most famous achievement came in 1923, but had little to do with linguistics or education per se. In a miraculous feat, he dug a well *and* found water. When the Mitchells arrived at Ganado, the valley resembled other parts of the reservation--harshly arid most of the year with late summer floods. Mrs. Mitchell described the situation candidly:

I fell heir to one little well of water, inadequate for fifty pupils; a building project of \$80,000; a budget of \$60,000; a typical group of workers; and a campus of thorny bushes and rat holes ricked with cord wood.⁹⁵

Ganado lacked water, but abounded in energetic optimism. If funds for the building projects always appeared, then surely they could find water. Mitchell's goal continued to be the training of enough Navajo evangelists to proselytize the entire tribe, which he could do only at a sufficiently large facility. To accomplish his objective, the mission required enough water to sustain the compound indefinitely. Already the mission's needs surpassed the water available in two small wells and the boarding school children, several at a time, bathed in rinse water saved from the laundry.⁹⁶ To tap the government reservoir two miles away involved too much upkeep and too great an expense.⁹⁷

In 1923 they began digging. The earliest attempts did not encourage

⁹³ Salsbury, 36.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 51. The building later became the eponymous Ellerton Hall, after Dorothy M. Ellerton, who began teaching music at Ganado in 1924; see Board publication, 9, and Goodman in Salsbury, 18.

⁹⁵ Mrs. F.G. Mitchell in Salsbury, 24.

⁹⁶ Ellerton, 2; Haldeman, 4.

⁹⁷ Fred G. Mitchell in Salsbury, 25-26.

them; either they hit solid rock or quicksand. After seeking government advice, they learned that the mission had been built on a 700 foot thick shelf of red sandstone. This fact of nature could not daunt Mitchell. Evidently his tenacity impressed the local superintendent, because the Indian Bureau provided a well crew and equipment for further attempts. While the crew labored, Mitchell, the entire Ganado staff, and the patients in the hospital prayed without ceasing. The drill bore through solid rock until a cable frayed at approximately 450 feet. Unable to continue, the crew retrieved the drill and routinely tested the hole for water. To their great surprise, and the government expert's disbelief, they not only hit water, but could pump over 4,500 gallons of clear, sand-free water an hour.⁹⁸ Mitchell then supervised the construction of a 100,000 gallon reservoir on the hill above the mission, which provided enough pressure for fire hoses and a supply of water to the upper floors of buildings.⁹⁹

Having secured a seemingly inexhaustible source of water, Mitchell and the staff continued to construct the kind of mission compound necessary for lasting success. In order to supply the desert luxury of refrigeration, they installed a Baker Ice Plant on the grounds. For visiting relatives of the students or hospital patients, the Presbyterians then added a large hogan to serve as a guest house, thereby incorporating an element of Navajo culture into the mission.¹⁰⁰ In late 1923 or early 1924, Dr. Philip R. Fulton arrived to fill the post of physician, one in which itinerant doctors had served since Kennedy's transfer. To accommodate Fulton and his wife, the building crew erected a stone house south of the hospital.¹⁰¹ In another gesture of hospitality, the staff remodeled the old workshop into a community house for additional visitors, who

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 26-27; Ellerton, 3; Haldeman, 4-5.

⁹⁹ Mitchell in Salsbury, 26; Salsbury, 50.

¹⁰⁰ Salsbury, 50.

¹⁰¹ Haldeman, 5, cites the earlier date; Salsbury, 50.

came especially for camp meetings.¹⁰² Because of his language abilities and amicability, Mitchell attracted tribal members who sought his counsel or who stopped at the mission for conversation when in the valley to trade.¹⁰³

Due in part to Mitchell's local popularity, more parents sent their children to Ganado. Soon the school's increased enrollment of 155 and the attendance of older children necessitated organization of the high school. For 1927 the whole school achieved its enrollment zenith, with 162 children registered, nine of whom attended the new Ganado Mission High School.¹⁰⁴ School principals shifted annually, yet the system displayed consistency as 21 students passed into high school in 1928 and the schedule continued in its daily division of studies and industrial training.

After nearly three decades of educational efforts at Ganado, the Presbyterians graduated four Navajo students--three girls and one boy--in 1930. With that milestone, the mission commenced upon a new phase of life. Under the administration of the newly appointed supervisor, Dr. Clarence G. Salsbury, the focus slowly shifted to medical service, beginning with the inauguration of the Training School for Nurses. Although Fred Mitchell's vision of a legion of Navajo evangelists canvassing the countryside for Christ never materialized, the Presbyterian mission under Salsbury eventually succeeded at training Navajo youth to minister to their tribe in another, more immediate form of healing.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Salsbury, 50-51.

¹⁰³ Ellerton, 3.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*; Salsbury, 36. Thereafter, enrollment declined somewhat and hovered around 150 for the next several years.

¹⁰⁵ Salsbury, 36, 54; Haldeman, 4, 6; Board publication, 12.

V. Conclusion

In February 1928 the Brookings Institution submitted The Problem of Indian Administration to the Secretary of the Interior, Hubert Work. Two years earlier, Secretary Work had instigated the project under the direction of Lewis Meriam to survey thoroughly the conditions of tribes across the country and to provide recommendations for improvements. Known as the Meriam Report, the document also provided extensive analysis of Indian education as well as of many denominations' schools and missions, their activities and achievements.¹

Meriam's staff noted two primary, related problems in the mission field. Relations among the missionaries lacked the cooperation necessary for the kind of selfless service that the churches held as their mutual goal. Especially in the area of education, the churches needed to work more harmoniously with each other and also to coordinate their activities with government efforts.²

As a general assessment, the report expected a more optimistic future for the Roman Catholics than for the various Protestants. Whereas the latter tended to be individual missionaries at isolated posts, the Catholics benefited from association with a religious order within a larger, well-organized institutional framework. Meriam's staff interpreted the Catholic missionaries' sense of belonging to a broader, if not truly universal, church as the source of their long-range view of missions and their relative tolerance of tribal customs.³

Similarly, several factors contribute to the comparative analysis of two denominationally different missions, their schools, and their accomplishments, as in the case of Roman Catholics and Presbyterians. The length and quality of

¹ Lewis Meriam and Associates, The Problem of Indian Administration, Institute for Government Research, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1928), 57.

² *Ibid.*, 812, 819.

³ *Ibid.*, 828-29.

a church's presence among a tribe determined successive missionaries' relations with tribal members. Although they allowed for personal talents and communication styles, a denomination's missionization methods--which included the commissioning of personnel separately or as a group, and the role of education in the ministerial structure--mainly influenced its mission's efforts and outcome. With a culturally transcendent theology based on the sacraments, Catholics valued tribal traditions and native languages differently than the Presbyterians, whose theology and identity were rooted in their Scottish, Calvinist heritage.⁴

Although the Catholics began their tenure among the Navajo centuries earlier, under the pall of Spanish imperialism, their return to the tribe in the nineteenth century differed little from the renewed attempts of their Presbyterian contemporaries in terms of effecting the national assimilationist agenda. In 1924, Flora Warren Seymour of the Board of Indian Commissioners stated the educational objective as, "...more than a matter of providing schools for the children and children for the schools; it is a matter of changing an entire people from one stage of culture to another."⁵ By 1928, after almost three decades, St. Michaels enrolled a maximum of 250 students and Ganado no more than 150. Their combined student attendance represented a very small fraction of the more than 10,000 school-age Navajo children whose lives they aspired to transform. In addition, many tribal members, such as Chee Dodge at St. Michaels, used the mission schools to gain the advantages of English education while avoiding direct involvement with the federal government and its representatives.

Both missions achieved mixed results regarding their denominationally

⁴ Howard L. Harrod, Mission Among the Blackfeet, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), 186-87. Harrod compares the Roman Catholic and Methodist mission efforts among the Blackfeet.

⁵ Board of Indian Commissioners, report for 1923, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1924), 14.

common goals of converting the Navajo and establishing lasting communities or congregations. At St. Michaels, the church and school started strongly and continued to grow steadily with the consistent support of Mother Katherine and the BCIM's superstructure. The Ganado Presbyterians persevered through a slow beginning with the wavering assistance of their Mission Board, but witnessed steady growth. Although both missions expanded in their first two decades, they converted mainly a few families who remained loyal to their churches through the next generation, rather than actively evangelizing their extended relatives or clans. The Franciscans and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament perceived their efforts as successful and rarely modified their missionological tactics. At Ganado, the Presbyterians sought to increase their influence through diversification and, especially under the popular Dr. Kennedy and the resourceful Reverend Mitchell, saw themselves as successful in their three-fold ministry.

The mission staffs' experiences varied the most on levels of personal and social relations with the Navajo. Although both schools shared the attractive--or less aggressive--attribute of being non-compulsory, compared to government institutions, the Catholics and Presbyterians used different approaches to recruit pupils and to evangelize the local clans.

As part of their desire to establish a Navajo community, which would include the school, the friars sought harmonious relations with and the confidence of local headmen. From the beginning the Catholics recognized the importance of learning the Navajo language to communicate. Although their motives centered on efficacious proselytization, their concerted effort to learn from the tribe before teaching made a positive impression with the families around St. Michaels. While the friars and Sisters considered educating the Navajo a prominent goal in their mission work, they integrated it, as well as

evangelism, into a broader concern for the tribe's quality of life. The friars interceded to the agents and to federal representatives on behalf of the tribe in matters of social welfare and land restoration. Especially Fathers Weber and Haile successfully fulfilled their personal and professional vocations through the mission's structured support, which allowed them flexibility in their inter-cultural relations. With the Sisters, they exemplified the church's long-term commitment to the Navajo. Although they had hoped to transform the Navajo, the Catholic presence at St. Michaels held an unintentional ramification for the tribe. In their attempts to understand and adapt somewhat to tribal culture, the friars conducted much ethnological and linguistic research that later assisted the Navajo in preserving much of their tradition amidst the continuing barrage of white pressure to acculturate.

At Ganado, the Presbyterians followed a tradition that emphasized evangelism and considered preaching the Gospel of primary importance. This approach subordinated schools to the role of generating "productive citizens." Although productive proselytism required effective communication, the missionaries relied solely on translators for the first twenty years at the mission. Rather than establish a mixed community at the new Navajo site, they built a mission compound, staffed often by isolated individuals or self-reliant married couples. These factors hindered the creation of potentially influential relations with the tribal members, but the Presbyterians found another means of generating positive attention through Dr. Kennedy's dedicated perambulations. With the arrival of Fred Mitchell, the first Ganado minister proficient in Navajo, the Presbyterians' popularity increased dramatically and school enrollment almost doubled during his tenure. Not only did Mitchell speak the language, but his successful developments of the valley's water resources and the mission's expanded health care facilities improved physical living conditions for the clans

of the area. Such expansion of the mission combined with the presence of the trading post encouraged the growth of a settlement along the wash and marked the Presbyterians' most significant achievement in transforming the tribe.

Despite their close proximity, the St. Michaels and Ganado missionaries did not compete directly for converts or students around the Defiance Plateau. In the first three decades of the century, the main Catholic and Presbyterian competition occurred at Chinle, where both churches attempted to expand their ministries, regardless of Navajo wishes in the matter. At their initial sites, each of the missionary groups acquired a degree of success and acceptance by the tribe. The Catholics established their community through language study and cultivated relations with local clans, whereas the Presbyterians found their strength and ability to adapt in their diversified ministry.

CHART #1

ST. MICHAEL'S BOARDING SCHOOL

YEAR	CAPACITY	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	AV. ENROLLMENT	AV. ATTENDANCE
1903		56 54*		11 sisters
1904		84 87* 57**		
1905		94 97**		
1906		95 92* 96**		
1907	150	117 133* 118**		97
1908	150	125 144* 127**		110
1909	150	138 175*		121 10 mos.
1910		155*		
1911	150	125		114
1912	150	117		113
1913	150	138		116.1
1914	150	140		140
1915	150	154		124.1
1916	150	127	127	113.7
1917	150	200	185	169
1918	150	200	185	169
1919	150	245	245	195
1920	150	180	180	175
1921				
1922				
1923				
1924				
1925				
1926				
1927	275			
1928	275	254		204

Data taken from the annual reports of the Commissioners of Indian Affairs and of the Board of Indian Commissioners

*Data from BCIM microfilm reel 2. BCIM Education Form

**Data from AZ 500, Box 9, Folder 1, single handwritten sheet

CHART #2

JEWETT BOARDING SCHOOL

YEAR	CAPACITY	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	AV. ENROLLMENT	AV. ATTENDANCE
1905		12		
1906	20	15		
1907	30	17		14
1908	30	13		11
1909	30	27		25 8 mos.
1910				
1911	35	34		34
1912	30	16		16

GANADO DAY / BOARDING SCHOOL

1910		20*		
1911	40	43		43
1912	20	20 23*		16
1913	35	35 23*		30
1914	35	30 33*		30
1915	35	31		28
1916	35	40 36*	39	36.9
1917	35	47 45*	42	38
1918	35	47	42	38
1919	35	48 50*	46	44
1920	35	55 63*	55	50
1921		87*		
1922		113*		
1923		141*		
1924		147*		
1925		139*		
1926		155*		
1927	145	162*		
1928	145	122		100

Data taken from annual reports of the Commissioners of Indian Affairs and the Board of Indian Commissioners

*Data from Salsbury

CHART #3

FORT DEFIANCE BOARDING SCHOOL

YEAR	CAPACITY	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	AV. ENROLLMENT	AV. ATTENDANCE
1900		187		
1901				
1902				
1903		269 with 68 sent elsewhere		
1904		280		211
1905		247		
1906		242		223
1907	220	247		233
1908	220	268		255
1909	220	270		244 10 mo
1910				
1911	228	273		266 26 emp.
1912	240	261		259 25 emp.
1913				
1914	300	290		263.5
1915	300	294		255.6
1916	300	277	210	131.9
1917	350	302	268	257
1918	350	302	268	257
1919	350	314	286	214
1920	350	379	315	297
1921				
1922				
1923				
1924				
1925				
1926				
1927	400	465		448
1928	400	602		417

Data taken from annual reports of the Commissioners of Indian Affairs and the Board of Indian Commissioners

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