

Editorial Note

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because they do not belong to that nationality, and those Protestants who not only reject these French missionaries as members of the Christian faith, but also insult the memory of them with contemptible appellations in histories, have yet much to learn about a God Who is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither Irish nor French, neither Protestant nor Catholic, but is the God and Father of all men who worthily seek after Him."

This region of the Rochester Diocese was, by right of exploration and long terms of residence, and by treaty with the Senecas and by conquest by Frontenac, a territory of predominantly French influence. The fact is that, next to the Senecas themselves, France had first right to this region. And England was the intruder and invader when, by diplomacy and war, she deprived France of 300 years of contact with the Senecas.

Nothing can be done with our early history by those historians who have a New York or a New England bias, because, Catholic missionaries played important parts when there were no Protestant missionaries. In 1626, De La Roche Dullion, a French Franciscan missionary, spent a winter among the Indians in the Lockport area of Western New York.

It was 1750, or 124 years later, when two Moravian missionaries, the first ordained Protestants, paid a brief visit, coming from Bethlehem, Pa., to Zonneschio (Geneva).

It was in 1764, or 138 years after the entrance of the first Catholic missionary, before there was a resident Protestant missionary among the Indians in Western New York. The Protestant missionary was the Rev. Samuel Kirkland, who was located with a Seneca chief at Geneva.

William Savery and other Quakers came to help the Senecas at the time of the Pickering Treaty of 1794 at Canandaigua.

This treaty reaffirmed the Phelps and Gorham purchase of Seneca lands, between Seneca Lake and the Genesee River. It was at this time, when white settlement had begun and later, after the Senecas had moved to their reservations, that Protestant missionaries had long enough terms of residence among them to establish chapels.

Contrast this very late arrival of Protestant missionaries among the Indians of the Rochester Diocese area, 100 years later, with more than a dozen French Catholic missionaries who came to the area of this diocese before 1710, and whose terms of residence, when added together, amount to more than 50 years.

Catholic missionaries really were forerunners of all forms of Christianity among the Indians. These missionaries were: Fathers Menard, LeMoine, Raffex, Chaumonot, Fremin, J. Garnier, Pieron, Valliant de Gualis, De Hue, Morain. These names may be used as a key to the index of Thwaites' "Jesuit Relations," where the leads to the biographies and writings of these men may be found.

From an historical standpoint the reports of these Catholic missionaries and the reports of French missionaries allied with them make nearly all of the written history of this region for more than a century, and, from a religious standpoint, it may be expected from all persons whose religion has any connection with Christian origins that these early Christian missionaries be esteemed as unselfish, devout, Godly men, loyal to their faith and conscience.

Those zealots who assume that these early missionaries were enemies should obey the fundamental command of Christ to love their enemies. As Mr. Stewart says:

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