Hopkins’s Historical Memoirs relating to the Stockbridge Indians

Levels:

- Abridgement
- Unabridged edition
- Journal (not available) & letters
• Inscription:
Here rests the body of Rev. Mr. Samuel Hopkins in whom judgment, piety, sincerity, and universal benevolence combined to form an parent and friend who died Oct A D 1755 in the 67th year of his age and 36 yr of ministry.
Purpose\sterotype\JS ministry

PURPOSE => to be informed & to be encouraged to do similar missions

STEREOTYPE => Indians differ from common opinion
  • Not unteachable
  • Not ungrateful

• JS ministry
  • Not small
  • Not inconsiderable
Other tribes\methods

Other tribes did inquires => Much more could be done
  • Proper measures been pursued

TITLE PAGE => METHODS
1720 & 1734

1720
- 2 townships of English
  - Sheffield
  - Stockbridge
  - Discovered Indian leader

1734 Stockbridge mission
- neighboring English settlement
- mission
- added English families to Stockbridge after mission started
KUNKAPOT (Indian leader)

• Inclined to embrace Christianity
• Two difficulties
  • If he became a Christian his own people would discard him
    • One tribe could be discarded by the larger group
  • Ill conversation of Christians
    • Living evil lives
    • Selling rum
      • Drunkenness a big problem
      • Illegal in MA, but not in NY
        • Sold at the border
  • Gain $
  • Tell lies about missionaries
    • Loss of freedom
      • Indians loved freedom
Samuel Hopkins met with John Stoddard in Northampton 1734

- A missionary in Stockbridge much more likely to do service than the current 3 missionaries in the forts
  - Indians just traded at forts & left
  - The whole idea of a fort vs a settlement of families
    - Indians were a jealous people
      - They were concerned about the motives of the missionaries
  - French had no influence on Stockbridge Indians
John Sergeant – character #1

Accident with his left hand
  • Forced into studies

In his tender years, he was of a very innocent turn of mind, and of a blameless behavior; free from those vanities & vices which young people too often indulge to
  Constant and frequent in closet devotions

Devout worshiper of God in his family
  • Read NT out of original Greek

Loved the house of God & public worship
preferred the satisfaction which proceeds from the calm, rational exercise of practical piety & devotion to those emotions of the mind
Most tender conscience
John Sergeant – character #2

Love & highest veneration for Bible
“catholic” temper
JS theology
  • His own from the Bible
  • Open to all
  • Drew suspicion
Strict & exact justice he made his rule in his dealings with all persons
  • Yet rather than cause contention, by insisting upon his own right, he chose to forego it
Compassionate and tender hearted to the afflicted
Liberal and bountiful to the poor
carefully and industriously improved his time
John Sergeant – missionary want to be

He had an inclination to server the souls of the Natives reached their ears

• He freely said in private conversations that he would rather be employed as a missionary to the Natives than accept a call to any English parish
  • “I should be ashamed to own myself a Christian, or even a Man, and yet utterly refuse doing what lay in my power, to cultivate Humanity among a People naturally ingenious enough, but for want of instruction, living so much below the dignity of human nature; and to promote the salvation of Souls perishing in the dark, when the Light of Life is so near them.”

Before there was any prospect of his being employed among the Natives, his tender mind was so affected with the thoughts of their perishing state, that it had been his practice, for a long time, to make it daily an article in his secret address to God, that He would send him to the Heathen, and make him an instrument in turning them from darkness to Light, &.
John Sergeant – missionary start

Dealing with Indians
• At first had interpreter
• Found out the Indians basic beliefs
  • One Supreme Being
  • The Maker & Governor of all things
  • Acknowledged the difference between moral good and evil
  • God regards the actions of mankind, in order to reward or punish them in some future state of existence
• Convince Indians of the need for supernatural revelation
  • Bible
• Brief account of Bible truths with practical reflections
John Sergeant – missionary learner

soon became sensible that the method he was first obliged to sue of instructing the Indians by an interpreter, would not answer his end.

• Was very slow
• Was a very uncertain way of communicating to them things of the greatest importance
• Unable to know what was delivered to them by the interpreter
  • Had reason to fear that the truths, which he endeavored to communicate were not well conveyed to their minds
    • For the best interpreters that could be had, did not well understand the principles of religion or the English terms

He thought it absolutely necessary that he should learn the Indian language

• He might be more certain what was delivered to them
• Make better progress in teaching them

In 5 yrs., the Indians would say “Our minister speaks our language better than we ourselves can do”
Found the language a dry, barren and imperfect dialect

- By no means sufficient to convey to his hearers the knowledge of divine things
- Their language wanted terms expressive of divers things
- Obliged to supply that defect by introducing English words, like Jesus, Christ, & which in time by frequent use, the Indians well understood
- He perfected their defective language
John Sergeant – missionary hard worker

Ministerial labors were extremely hard
- 4 sermons every week (3 in winter)
  - 2 for English
  - 2 for Indians
- Indian language abounded in gutturals
  - Renders the pronunciation of it a most laborious exercise to the lungs
- The translation for the Indians cost him a vast deal of labor
- To English, he went through all the epistles with a labored and learned paraphrase, critical notes, and careful observations by careful examination of the Greek
  - Timothy Woodbridge => there are a number of sermons very worthy of the press
- Guarding the Indians on every side
- Responsible to gather 12 boys for the Hollis support
- Boarding school took much time & labor
- Private life
The address (part of the Historical Memories)

• To show it is of vast importance to be in good terms with the Indians
• Show by what means this may be effected; or what are the most likely methods to bring it to pass
Vast importance

Indians simply considered => English can subsist without them
Their trade => can yield great profit

Peace & war

• Last importance to us
• They certainly have the balance of power in their hand
• Canada would be more than a match for us in case they join with them against us
  • Our frontiers are of vast extent & border on wilderness
    • The very element they live in
• Friendly Indians settled on our frontier would prevent the Indians from
  Canada to molest us
  • Proof in the last war
    • Safety in Stockbridge
    • Enemy turned east to the CT river & west to Dutch
Methods

Our conduct to them

• Make them sensible that we are indeed their hearty friends & convince them that it is their interest and advantage to be in friendship with us
  • if we often treat with them, etc. or as they phrase it “smoke together”
    • yet leave room for them to suppose that this proceeds not from true friendship but from fear of them
      • this will never be sufficient to engage them
  • As all other people are governed by interest, so are they
    • It is in their interest to be our friends
  • To convince them we are friends
    • Accord treat them according to the rules of equity & justice
      • Honest
      • Not defrauding them
      • truck house
        • Strong drink
      • trade must not be in private hands
      • Trade must be of a public nature & committed to the care & management of faithful men
    • Trust them and they will trust us
      • What would the Stockbridge Indians not have done for JS?
Conduct continued

• exercise kindness & generosity towards them
  • Bible says be kind to your enemies
• send missionaries and school masters
  • cost of missionary vs cost of war
Difficulties

those who maintain a private trade from which they reap great gain

false insinuations of Romish Emissaries
  • Deny Indians the use of the bible

Esteem themselves Christians already
  • JE in Stockbridge 1 Mohawk highly affronted because JE did not baptize child
    • JE went to them & gave them the reasons of his conduct
    • Nature and end of baptism
OTHER TOPICS

• The school which teaches labor and book knowledge
• Anglican
  • Missionaries to Boston, Straford, etc..
  • Yet Barclay needed support and did not get the support he needed
• Support Isaac Hollis vs gifts from colonies
• Indian Customs
  • Show & tell