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429 N. PARK STREET
MADISON

MILWAUKEE, WIS.

April 23, 1934

Mr. O. E. Heller
Route #3
Chilton, Wisconsin

My dear Mr. Heller:

I have just discovered that you have had a letter from the Historical Society. I did not give them your name, but did write Rev. Coe Hayne of our Home Mission Society and told him he might get additional facts from you. In his correspondence with the Historical Society he evidently gave them your name.

As to whether you turn that material over is not for me to say. I know that you cherish it very much. It would be in very good hands in the Historical Society, but if you prefer to keep it yourself for the time being why not write them and say they can come to your home and make copies, or offer to send it to them with the understanding that after they have made the copies they return it to you?

Now here are some facts I think will interest you. The following ten episodes in the religious history of the Brothertown Indians has been furnished our Wisconsin Baptist headquarters as Baptists in Wisconsin next August have in mind to make some note of the fact that just one hundred years ago the first Baptist of which we have any record, entered Wisconsin. These were Baptists under the leadership of Elder Thomas Dick, who arrived at Green Bay on the schooner "The Navigator" in 1834:

1. The coming of Samuel Occom to the parish of Eleazar Wheelock of Lebanon, Connecticut. Into his home this rural pastor was receiving young men to train them for the ministry. This was away back in 1743. This Mohegan Indian boy, Samuel Occom, asked to be allowed to stay a few weeks in order that he might gain the rudiments of an education. He proved to be so apt a pupil that his sojourn with this Congregational minister was extended to four years.

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2. Samuel Occom goes to the Montauk Indians of Long Island and establishes there a school for Indians. One of his most promising pupils was David Fowler whose parents had given Occom a home with them. Samuel Occom falls in love with Mary, the sister of David, whom he marries.
3. Samuel Occom is ordained by the Suffolk Presbytery and is sent as a missionary to the Oneida Indians of New York in company with his brother-in-law, David.
4. Eleazar Wheelock's school has become the celebrated Indian Charity School and Samuel Occom is sent to England and Scotland to raise funds for its maintenance and to make possible a wider ministry. Occom is received into the first pulpits of the various denominations in England and Scotland. His itinerary is sponsored by George Whitefield, the evangelist, and Lord Dartmouth becomes the president of the Board of Trustees, formed in England to receive funds for the Indian school. With this assistance the school is removed from Lebanon, Conn., to Hanover, N.H. This assistance also makes possible the founding of Dartmouth College. The two schools had separate corporate existences until 1840 when they merged.
5. Samuel Occom, the friend of all Indians and a preacher and missionary among them, encouraged to believe that the Oneida Indians of New York will receive the destitute Indians of New England, promotes the migration of Indians from the following Indian settlements: Charleston, R. I., Mohegan, Stonington, Farmington, Groton and Niantic of Connecticut, and Montauk of Long Island. Another influential Indian in this movement is David Fowler who had become a pupil under Wheelock and a teacher among the New York Indians, also Joseph Johnson.
6. During the council of Oneida and Brothertown Indians, the Brothertown Indians are told by the Oneidas that they will be given a home in New York as the adopted brothers of the Oneidas; from 1773 to 1795 take place the population movements from seven Indian towns of the Atlantic Coast to New York. They name their new settlement in New York, Brothertown because it is their desire to live at peace with one another and with neighboring tribes and white settlements.
7. In 1821 the Brothertown Indians join the Stockbridge Indians, who have also been given a home by the Oneidas, in securing land in Wisconsin because life in New York has been made intolerable because of the aggressions of the whites upon their land. Under the direction of the government two townships east of Winnebago Lake in Wisconsin, a part of the territory occupied by the Winnebago and Menominee Indians, are set aside for the Brothertown and Stockbridge Indians. The settlement, which the Brothertown Indians established in Wisconsin is named Brothertown.

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8. In 1834 Thomas Dick, a Baptist preacher among the Brothertown Indians in New York migrated with members of his flock to Wisconsin. They traveled by the Erie Canal from Utica to Buffalo where they took passage on the schooner, The Navigator; and arrived in Green Bay that year where they joined the settlement at Brothertown. In 1841 the Baptists of Brothertown sent a fraternal communication to the Central Baptist Association in annual meeting at Delevan. In 1846 Elder Benjamin Garret Fowler, a Free Will Baptist, arrived with others at Brothertown to join the settlement there.

9. In 1849 a convention was held with the Free Will Baptist Church at Brothertown at which the Fond du Lac quarterly meeting was formed.

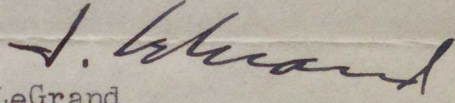
10. Today very few Brothertown Indians are to be found at Brothertown. A few of them still worship in a little Methodist church that was organized in 1840. A visit to this church will impress one with the devotion of these descendents of the powerful Indian tribes of New England. It is one of the few beacon lights that give evidence of the remarkable Christian movement among Indians in New England before the Revolutionary War.

Elder Thomas Dick was eighty years old when he moved to Wisconsin. It appears that his church soon after 1840 went out of existence. No record has been found of his death or whether a successor carried on his work. The Free Will Baptist Encyclopaedia records the fact that before the publication of the Encyclopaedia in 1869 the Brothertown Free Will Baptist Church had gone out of existence.

These facts were gathered by Rev. Coe Hayne.

I am looking forward to a splendid time at that celebration and hope to see you in the meantime. The Mr. Marsh that you asked me about was a Presbyterian.

Respectfully


A. LeGrand

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