



Artist - Frank H. Halbedel

“The First Methodist Mission In America”

The Wyandot Indian Mission in Upper Sandusky was founded in 1816 by John Stewart, a black lay preacher from Marietta, Ohio. Eight years later, in 1824, a stone meeting house was built by Methodist circuit rider, James B. Finley, and was used as a house of worship by the Wyandots until their removal from Ohio in 1843.

After the Indians departure; neglect, souvenir hunters, and forces of nature brought this gray stone church to almost complete ruin. In 1889, behind the leadership of Rev. Nathaniel B.C. Love, pastor of the local Methodist Church, the structure was completely rebuilt using the original stones.

The Methodist General Conference in 1960 designated the Wyandot Mission Church as an Historical National Shrine.

“In 1816 our tribe was converted by a Methodist Minister named Stewart and we believed the good Indians would be rewarded in a future life, and the bad ones would be punished. I am now ready to go to my happy hunting grounds.”

Bill Moose, 1931



c. 1880



2003



Artist Hal Sherman

July 1843 - over 600 Wyandot Indians left their mission church in Upper Sandusky en route to a new home in Kansas. Hal Sherman's painting depicts the principle chiefs stopping at the State House in Columbus, Ohio, to say farewell to Governor Wilson Shannon. Among the visitors are Elias Lewis from Worthington, William Sells of Dublin, along with Joseph Thompson and his young sons, Samuel and James, also from Dublin.

Shown with Governor Shannon is Chief Jacquis. In a touching speech on the steps of the State House, he said, in part:

"If, at any future day any of our people should visit this State, we hope that your people will see that they do not suffer for food or any of the necessaries of life; when hungry, you will give him food; or naked, you will give him clothes; or sick, you will heal him. And we, on our part, promise the same kindness to any of your people should they visit us in our far western future home....Be so good as to tell your people what we say on this final parting occasion, and say to them to believe us to be always hereafter....what we have always been....the friends of the people of Ohio."

Note....Entering the stage coach is Chief Warpole. He was approximately 100 years of age and died before the tribe reached Cincinnati, the departing town to Kansas.