

mplain about. For the sake
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friends and good friends,

-1830) means roughly "he
iderable abilities as an ora-
et, after the coat that the
r during the Revolutionary

War. Following the War of 1812,
he negotiated with the United
States government to protect
Seneca lands in western New
York. Among many noteworthy
orations, his most famous speech
was the reply he gave to the mis-
sionary Jacob Cram in 1805 out-
lining what has been called a
"separatist" position—the notion
that while the ways of white
Christians may be fine for them,
they are not necessarily equally
fine for nonwhite indigenous
peoples, who have their own reli-
gious beliefs.

Present at Red Jacket's speech
was Erastus Granger, who had
been appointed the postmaster
and Indian agent at Buffalo Creek
by President Thomas Jefferson.
Granger's immediate subordinate
was Joseph Parrish, who probably
served as translator, as he had
done on other occasions. Who-
ever transcribed the translation of
Red Jacket's speech—perhaps
Granger or Parrish—it appeared
in the April 1809 issue of the *Monthly Anthology and Boston Review*, a miscellaneous
magazine, and was reprinted many times throughout the nineteenth century.



Portrait of Sagoyewatha. Sagoyewatha dealt with
American presidents from Washington (1789–97)
to Jackson (1829–37), delivering major addresses
to Washington, Adams, and Monroe in an effort to
protect his people's lands.

Reply to the Missionary Jacob Cram¹

FRIEND AND BROTHER: It was the will of the Great Spirit that we should
meet together this day. HE orders all things, and has given us a fine day
for our Council. HE has taken his garment from before the sun, and caused
it to shine with brightness upon us. Our eyes are opened, that we see clearly;
our ears are unstopped, that we have been able to hear distinctly the words
you have spoken. For all these favors we thank the Great Spirit; and HIM
only.

BROTHER: This council fire was kindled by you. It was at your request that
we came together at this time. We have listened with attention to what you
have said. You requested us to speak our minds freely. This gives us great
joy; for we now consider that we stand upright before you, and can speak
what we think. All have heard your voice, and all speak to you now as one
man. Our minds are agreed.

1. The text is from William Leete Stone, *The Life and Times of Red-Jacket, or Sa-go-ye-wat-ha: Being the Sequel to the History of the Six Nations* (1841).

BROTHER: You say you want an answer to your talk before you leave this place. It is right you should have one, as you are a great distance from home, and we do not wish to detain you. But we will first look back a little, and tell you what our fathers have told us, and what we have heard from the white people.

BROTHER: Listen to what we say. There was a time when our forefathers owned this great island. Their seats extended from the rising to the setting sun. The Great Spirit had made it for the use of Indians. HE had created the buffalo, the deer, and other animals for food. HE had made the bear and the beaver. Their skins served us for clothing. HE had scattered them over the country, and taught us how to take them. HE had caused the earth to produce corn for bread. All this HE had done for his red children, because HE loved them. If we had some disputes about our hunting ground, they were generally settled without the shedding of much blood. But an evil day came upon us. Your forefathers crossed the great water and landed on this island. Their numbers were small. They found friends and not enemies. They told us they had fled from their own country for fear of wicked men, and had come here to enjoy their religion. They asked for a small seat. We took pity on them, granted their request; and they sat down amongst us. We gave them corn and meat; they gave us poison² in return.

The white people, BROTHER, had now found our country. Tidings were carried back, and more came amongst us. Yet we did not fear them. We took them to be friends. They called us brothers. We believed them and gave them a larger seat. At length their numbers had greatly increased. They wanted more land; they wanted our country. Our eyes were opened, and our minds became uneasy. Wars took place. Indians were hired to fight against Indians, and many of our people were destroyed. They also brought strong liquor amongst us. It was strong and powerful, and has slain thousands.

BROTHER: Our seats were once large and yours were small. You have now become a great people, and we have scarcely a place left to spread our blankets. You have got our country, but are not satisfied; you want to force your religion upon us.

BROTHER: Continue to listen. You say that you are sent to instruct us how to worship the Great Spirit agreeably to his mind, and, if we do not take hold of the religion which you white people teach, we shall be unhappy hereafter. You say that you are right and we are lost. How do we know this to be true? We understand that your religion is written in a book. If it was intended for us as well as you, why has not the Great Spirit given to us, and not only to us, but why did he not give to our forefathers, the knowledge of that book, with the means of understanding it rightly? We only know what you tell us about it. How shall we know when to believe, being so often deceived by the white people?

BROTHER: You say there is but one way to worship and serve the Great Spirit. If there is but one religion, why do you white people differ so much about it? Why not all agreed, as you can all read the book?

BROTHER: We do not understand these things. We are told that your religion was given to your forefathers, and has been handed down from father

2. Rum [Stone's note].

to son. We also been handed down to be thankful. We never united. We never

BROTHER: The difference between the Indians and the white people has opened our eyes. We have seen a great difference. He has given us the Great Spirit does right.

BROTHER: We only want to

BROTHER: We are in this place. We will wait for them. If we find cheat Indians,

BROTHER: You have to say at the hand, and return you safe

1805

To a remarkable morphosis (also helped in the Revolution. The *Richard's Alman* which presents fashioning. The Midlands, where senting Protest (1642–51). This civil liberties section produced the Union of the United Washington. Be

talk before you leave this great distance from home, look back a little, and tell me have heard from the white

time when our forefathers came from the rising to the setting of the Indians. HE had created the world. HE had made the bear and the deer. HE had scattered them all over the land. HE had caused the earth to be fruitful to his red children, because they were good hunting ground, they were good. But an evil day came and landed on this island. HE had not enemies. They told him of wicked men, and had taken a small seat. We took pity on them amongst us. We gave them

country. Tidings were carried to them. We took pity on them and gave them land. Their numbers increased. They wanted more land, and our minds were opened, and our minds were set to fight against Indians. HE had brought strong liquor among thousands.

They were small. You have now taken the land left to spread our blanket; you want to force your

He sent to instruct us how to live, and, if we do not take his advice, we shall be unhappy here. How do we know this to be true? HE has a book. If it was intended to be given to us, and not only to the Indians, knowledge of that book, you know what you tell us, so often deceived by the

He said to serve the Great Spirit, people differ so much. HE has a book?

He is told that your religion was handed down from father

to son. We also have a religion, which was given to our forefathers, and has been handed down to us their children. We worship in that way. It teaches us to be thankful for all the favors we receive; to love each other, and to be united. We never quarrel about religion.

BROTHER: The Great Spirit has made us all, but HE has made a great difference between his white and red children. HE has given us different complexions and different customs. To you HE has given the arts. To these HE has not opened our eyes. We know these things to be true. Since HE has made so great a difference between us in other things, why may we not conclude that he has given us a different religion according to our understanding? The Great Spirit does right. HE knows what is best for his children; we are satisfied.

BROTHER: We do not wish to destroy your religion, or take it from you. We only want to enjoy our own.

* * *

BROTHER: We are told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place. These people are our neighbors. We are acquainted with them. We will wait a little while, and see what effect your preaching has upon them. If we find it does them good, makes them honest and less disposed to cheat Indians, we will then consider again of what you have said.

BROTHER: You have now heard our answer to your talk, and this is all we have to say at present. As we are going to part, we will come and take you by the hand, and hope the Great Spirit will protect you on your journey, and return you safe to your friends.

1805

1809

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
1706-1790

To a remarkable extent, the writings of Benjamin Franklin represent the metamorphosis of New England literary culture from "Puritan" to "Yankee." They also helped inaugurate the new national sensibility that emerged after the American Revolution. These regional and national transformations can be traced in *Poor Richard's Almanac*, in his political writings, and above all in *The Autobiography*, which presents the personal history and philosophy behind Franklinian self-fashioning. *The Autobiography* begins by tracing the family's origins to the English Midlands, where they were "franklins"—nonaristocratic landowners—and dissenting Protestants in a region profoundly disrupted by the English Civil Wars (1642–51). This family history of property ownership and concern for religious and civil liberties sets the stage for the life story that unfolds in sections, which Franklin produced from the eve of the American Revolution to shortly after the ratification of the United States Constitution and the inauguration of President George Washington. Because he was writing during these tumultuous times, when he was