

Reverend Samuel M. Irvin and family

This is a photograph showing Reverend Samuel M., Eliza, his wife, and their family. In November 1837, Rev. Irvin and his wife established a Presbyterian mission for the Iowa Indians located two miles west of the mouth of Wolf River on the southern edge of the Iowa Reservation in present-day Doniphan County, Kansas. Buildings were constructed on the mission grounds, and children were taught in English and the Iowa language. This was made possible by the arrival in 1843 of a printing press on which Irvin published a hymnal and several grammar books in the Iowa language. Studies included spelling, arithmetic, and geography, but emphasis was placed on the industrial and domestic arts and farming. With the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, a new treaty was negotiated causing a reduction of Indian lands. The treaty took effect that same year, and white settlement began in earnest. As a result of the loss of land, the mission became too far removed from the two reservations to make attendance at the school convenient for Indian children. The mission closed in 1863 with Reverend Irvin working there until it closed.

Date: Between 1854 and 1859

Callnumber: B Irvin, Samuel M. *1

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