

A second individual who had a lasting association with the Grape Island Mission was Peter Jones, the son of Augustus Jones, a Welshman, and Thubenahneequay, daughter of an Ojibway chief. Converted at a Methodist camp meeting at Ancaster in June, 1823, he was befriended by William Case and became a missionary to his own people. The second session of the Canada Conference was held in Saltfleet Township, Niagara District in 1825. The Canada Auxiliary Missionary Society presented its first annual report to Conference. Thomas Davis, a Mohawk Chief, and Peter Jones addressed the assembly and "there was much joy among the brethren because a great and effectual door unto the heathen had been opened."¹

Impressed by the work at Grand River and concerned about the spiritual well-being of the Ojibways or Mississaugas in the Belleville and Kingston area, William Case enlisted Peter Jones' help. In a letter dated York, 4th December, 1825, he wrote to Peter Jones, "We are very desirous that you should make us a visit some time this winter or spring. There are a number of Ojibways at Belleville and the Bay Quinte, who would probably be profited as well as Mohawks."² Before the month was over, Peter Jones replied to this invitation.

Mission House, Grand River,
Dec. 28th 1825.

Dear Brother, -- Yesterday I received your letter of the 14th inst., and in answer, inform you that it gave me much satisfaction to hear from you, and of the opening prospect of doing the Indian tribes good in your District. I intend to visit you (if it be the will of Providence,) some time in February, that I may meet your wishes. I will endeavour to be down at one of your quarterly meetings...

I am your unworthy friend and brother
Peter Jones.

To the Rev. W. Case.³

Thus the stage was set for a fascinating decade of Methodist mission work in the Belleville area.

¹ A. Sutherland, *The Methodist Church & Missions*, Toronto, Dept. of Missionary Literature of the Methodist Church, Canada, 1906, p243.

² Peter Jones, *Life and Journals of Kah-ke-wa-quo-na-by*, Toronto, Wesleyan Printing Establishment, 1860, p48.

³ *Ibid*, p49.

True to his promise, Peter Jones, accompanied by Chief John Crane, left the Grand River January 31 or February 1, 1826 and headed toward the Bay of Quinte. They arrived in the village of Belleville on February 9 and had the good fortune to meet a young Indian, Peter Jacobs, who was being educated by some benevolent people. Quite likely it was Jacobs who let the other Indians of the area know about the arrival of the two Christian Indian Chiefs. Planning to return to Belleville later for an extensive period of work, Jones and Crane continued on the same day to the Tyendinaga settlement of Mohawks. Not confining themselves to work among the pagan Indians, the two travellers desired to preach their message to these Anglican Indians as well. Apparently Peter Jones did not have too high an opinion of the influence of the Church of England, for he remarked in his diary that "they (the Mohawks) appear ignorant of experimental religion, for they still drink and dance."⁴

Jones and Crane went on to Ernestown where they met Elder Case and attended the quarterly meeting in Switzer's Chapel on Saturday and Sunday. Peter Jones spoke to the white people at these meetings and also addressed a congregation in Kingston Sunday evening. The next two days were spent contacting some of the Indians back of Kingston. Then Jones and Crane retraced their steps, holding meetings in Ernestown and in the Mohawk Woods, arriving back in Belleville on Friday, February 17.

That same day they met about 12 young Indian men and boys who had come 30 miles to see them. These Ojibways were ready to hear about Jesus Christ. The following three days were spent instructing the Indians and attending the Quarterly Meeting in Belleville. The message they tried to impress on these inquiring Indians was interesting. Elder Case asked Peter to tell them:

That we are all brothers by creation, that God was our Father, that he made one man at the first, and that all nations sprung from him; that the difference in our colour arose from circumstances, such as the climate and our mode of living; that the Great Spirit who made our first parents, was no respecter of persons, and that whatever he promised to one person he said to all nations; that all had a right to share in his love, and the blessings of His Gospel.⁵

⁴ Jones, *Journal*, p53.

⁵ Jones, *Journal*, p58.