

forth into a beehive of activity—some land was broken and planted, buildings begun, Peter Jones arrived from Credit and the Indians of the Kingston area came to hear the Gospel preached.

Peter Jones arrived May 13 for his only visit to the Grape Island Mission in 1827. He stayed for 12 days and participated fully in the various on-going activities. He led in several services of worship and showed concern for the Indians from back of Kingston who were then on the island. The Mission House was under construction and Peter assisted Mr. Ross (possibly Wm. Ross of Belleville who had participated in the leasing of the two islands). The Belleville minister, Rev. W. Atwood, was over to the island and he and Peter Jones found time to go fishing, catching about 50 catfish.

On Sunday, May 20, in addition to the regular services, Peter conducted worship on Big Island at 5 p.m. for the whites. In his descriptive way, he wrote in his diary that "the congregation listened with attention, and a few tears were shed, but most of them appeared gospel-hardened"<sup>14</sup>

According to G.F. Playter, the tribe numbered 130 and all the 90 adults were members of the Methodist Society. Indeed, on Wednesday, May 23, Elder Case conducted Holy Communion for about 90.

In addition, he baptized 20 newly converted Indians. Probably these were from the Kingston group. Peter Jones worked all the next day and then left with Elder Case for a Quarterly Meeting at Cobourg. He wrote that he was "thankful to witness the progress these poor people have made, both in christianity and civilization".<sup>15</sup>

In July the first death occurred on the island. John Moses had been an exhorter who had worked among his people very effectively. Nearby Grave Island was an Indian burying ground, but it was probably used in the pre-Christian era. It is likely that Christians were buried right on the island, as skeletal remains have been found there.<sup>16</sup>

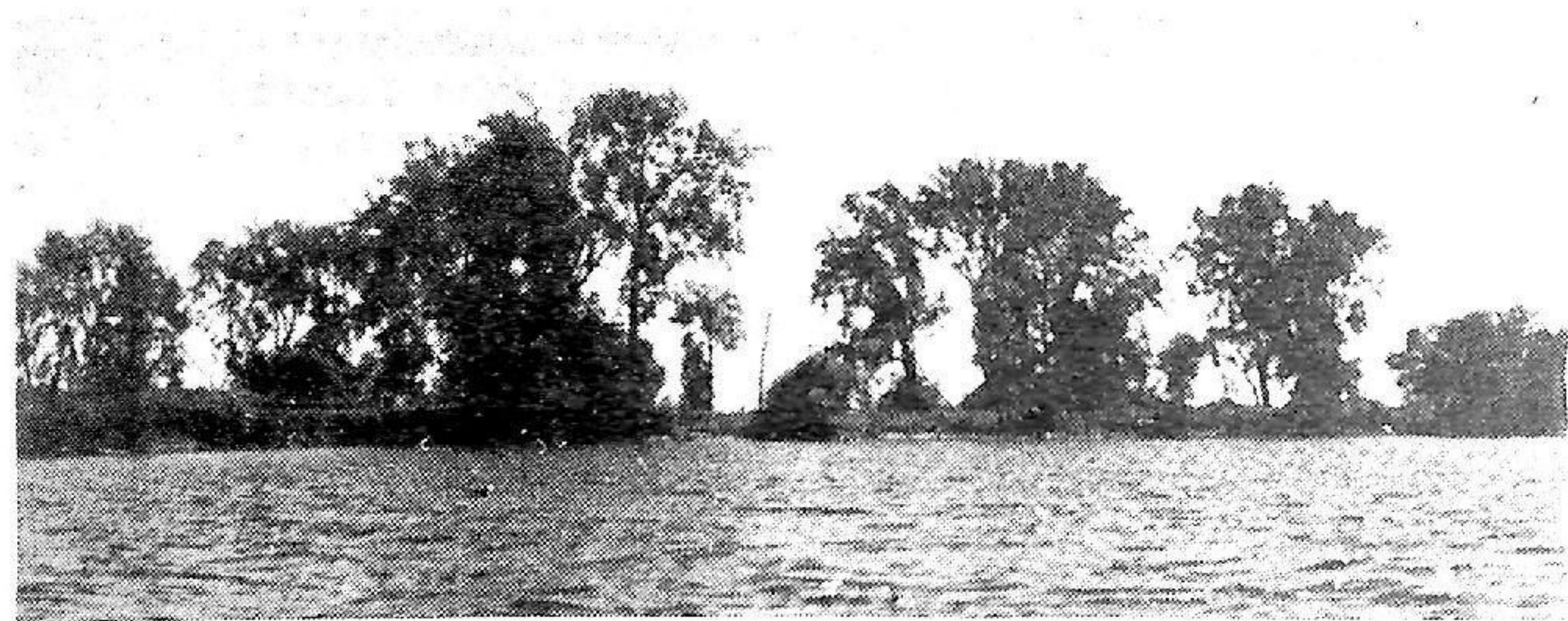
By July a building to be used as a school and meeting place had been erected. In a letter that Elder Case wrote to Zachariah Paddock of Rochester, N.Y. on October 15, 1827, he described it as "a house there for schools and meetings 25x30, with a room finished in the chamber for a bed and a study for the teacher."<sup>17</sup> Besides this building, there was a small parsonage completed and a number of homes for the Indians were under construction. "The Indians have

<sup>14</sup> Jones, *Journal*, p84.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, p85.

<sup>16</sup> Interview with Frank Belnap, RR7 Belleville, by Richard Boehme.

<sup>17</sup> Carroll, *Case & Contemporaries*, p155.



Grape Island

ten houses 15x20 on the foundation, 7 of which are about to be completed."<sup>18</sup> These were log houses, and before winter eight of them were shingled and enclosed.

Richard Phelps was living on the island now and he instructed the Indians in farming and other useful skills. Indians who a few short months earlier had been destitute now owned a team of oxen, three cows and farming tools besides lumber, nails, etc. for their homes. The amazing thing is that all this improvement was accomplished without drawing on the general funds of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The entire cost was met by private gifts from interested individuals in the United States and Upper Canada.

## 1828

Grape Island Mission grew and prospered in 1828. Very early in January Peter Jones arrived at the island. He must have been a particularly welcome guest at that time of the year. He reported that conditions were much improved since his last visit. "They now have 8 log houses, 18x20 which have been built principally by their own labour. Some benevolent white people kindly subscribed to purchase brick for chimneys, glass, nails, etc."<sup>19</sup>

Elder Case joined his good friend, Peter Jones, at Grape Island. One evening after a day of chopping firewood on Sawguin Island, they examined the workmanship of the Indians. In a two-week period they had manufactured 172 axe handles, 6 shovels, 57 ladles, 4 trays, 44 broom handles, and 415 brooms. Mr. and Mrs. Waldron, Elder Case and Peter Jones were very pleased with this display and a

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, p155

<sup>19</sup> Jones, *Journal*, p100