

The adjourned Conference reassembled on August 25 in Belleville. During the Missionary Society Meeting, the Grape Island School children again showed their improvements, this time demonstrating their knowledge of Geography and English grammar. Conference closed on August 30. No appointment had been made to Grape Island, but it was to be supplied from Belleville. Statistics for the year showed that there were now 125 members of the Methodist Episcopal Church on Grape Island.

On September 3, Rev. Peter Jones went on an inspection tour of all the homes on the island! He recorded a report of the condition of each home. He "took the Indian Sisters all by surprise" and claimed that his reason for going around and making remarks was to stir the Indian sisters in cleanliness and in industry."⁴³ He does not say whether any of the Indian women objected to his intrusion into their private matters! His report is interesting and helps to paint a picture of what life on the Island was really like. e.g.

JACOB SNOWSTORM's— Floor and cupboard poor -- bed tolerably good -- one table no chairs -- hearth poor -- one woman making baskets -- one sewing -- one idle.

POTTO SNAKE's— Table and floor dusty -- beds pretty good -- three old fashioned chairs -- cupboard poor -- no one at home.

JOHN PIGEON's— floors good -- good tables, but dusty -- chairs good -- 1 good painted cupboard -- 1 good curtain bed -- 3 painted chests -- a Bible, Hymn Book, etc., on a shelf -- everything looked like industry, and improvement in the house. The floor was occupied by an old woman, who sat in the middle of the floor making brooms.

MISSION HOUSE— Abounds with the good things of this world, and plenty of help to keep the things of the house in order. The Mission family now consists of William and Hetty Case, Daughter, Mary Cooley, Eunice Huff, Thomas Hale, the blacksmith, Mary Crawford, Sarah M. Ahzhahwonce, Allen Salt, and Benjamin Johns.⁴⁴

Not even the two school houses escaped Peter Jones' careful scrutiny!

The other visitor to the Island in 1830 who left a detailed account of life there was Rev. Philander Smith. Elder Smith had been seriously ill and was now doing some travelling for the improvement

⁴³ Jones, *Journal*, p287.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, pp285-6.



Grave Island

of his health. He was so impressed by the work at Grape Island that he wrote a lengthy letter describing its general appearance, the farming, carpentry, schools, Sabbath observances, homes and hospital. This letter was published in the *Christian Guardian* on November 27, 1830.⁴⁵ The letter is too long to reproduce here in its entirety, but one or two quotes from it seem in order.

On approaching the Island, the houses have an appearance of neatness, being whitewashed. This with the order of the buildings on each side of the street adds much to the beauty of the village. It consists of 23 dwellings— chapel, a schoolhouse, a hospital, a general store-house, a blacksmith shop and an excellent frame building 24x40 designed for different branches of mechanism; in all 29 buildings.⁴⁶

Regarding agriculture, Philander Smith wrote:

Their farming business appears to have been pretty well performed. We walked about the fields where their crops had been gathered. Their corn and potatoes were excellent and abundant. From 50 acres they had taken nearly sufficient of bread stuff for supporting their families for the year. Some of the men were securing fodder for their oxen and cows, others again were chopping wood for winter's use, and some were gone to the Salmon River for a raft of lumber.⁴⁷

Mr. Smith used a large part of his letter to describe the religious observances of the Christian Indians. Modern church attenders might well be amazed at the rigorous discipline these Grape Island Indians underwent joyously on the Sabbath. The timetable for the day was as follows:

6 a.m. Community Prayers

9 a.m. Sabbath School

⁴⁵ *Christian Guardian*, Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*.