

# *the* GRANGE



VOLUME  
FOURTEEN



LEGEND  
OF NAHNEE

2/15



VOLUME FOURTEEN

# LEGEND OF NAHNEE

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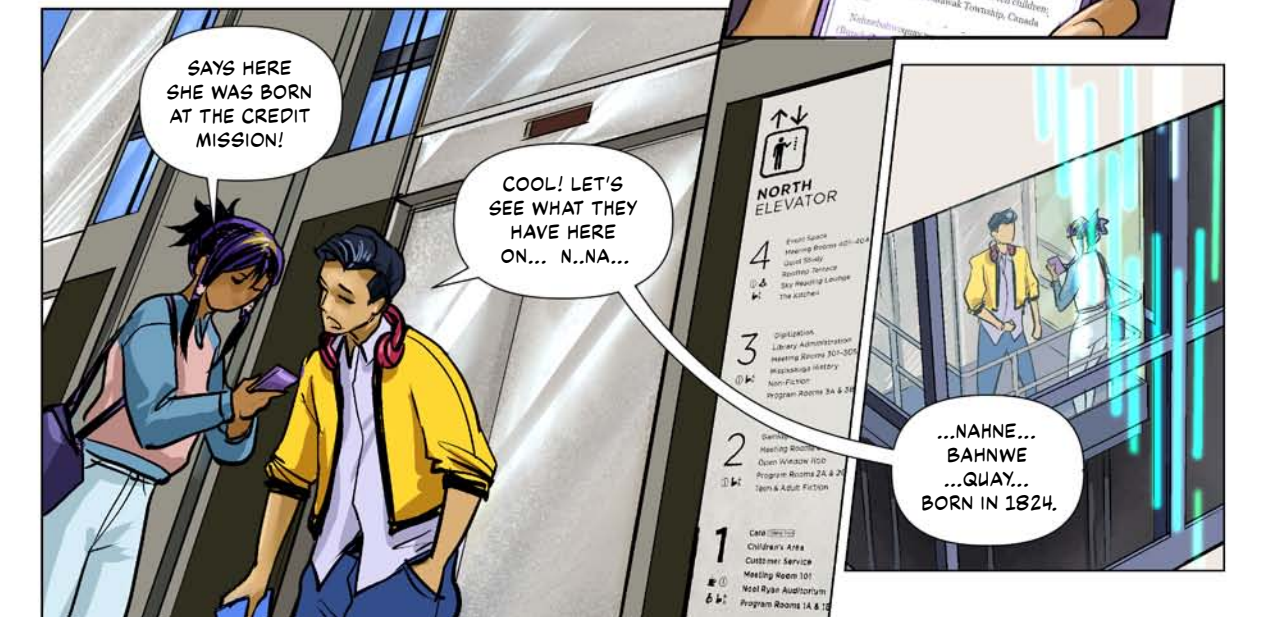
MATTHEW WILKINSON, JOHN DUNLOP, AMELIA FERNANDES,  
JAYME GASPAR, CAROLYN KING, JUSTINE LYN, KARIN NOBLE,  
SUSAN ROBERTSON, PROFESSOR DONALD B. SMITH,  
DARIN WYBENGA, FAITH RIVERS, MARGARET SAULT, NINA MATIAS,  
GREY ROOTS MUSEUM & ARCHIVES, MISSISSAUGAS OF THE  
CREDIT FIRST NATION, AND THE MOCCASIN IDENTIFIER INITIATIVE,



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THE BUS DRIVER??



WELCOME TO THE "MISSISSAUGA HISTORY" ROOM.

I KNOW A FEW PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU.



WAIT, WHAT THE... ?!



1834

THE CREDIT MISSION



I RECOGNIZE YOU...

YOU'RE PETER JONES!



YES. AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE?



WE ARE ADIT AND SAVANNA.

WE ARE HERE TO LEARN ABOUT NAHNE...BAH...



UNCLE PETER!!



OH, YOU MEAN NAHNEE? HERE SHE COMES NOW.



UNCLE PETER, ARE YOU HERE PRAYING AGAIN?

DO YOU WISH TO JOIN ME?

..UHH, CATHERINE SUTTON.





YES, I WANT TO REMEMBER ALL MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO ARE HERE.

WE HAVE LOST MANY TO SICKNESS,

NAHNEE'S SIBLINGS AMONG THEM.

BUT NAHNEE IS TOUGH!

OUR FAITH MAKES US STRONG.

"NAHNEE'S FATHER IS TYATIQUEOB 'BUNCH' SUNEGOO OF THE EAGLE CLAN."

"HER MOTHER IS MYAWEKESHIGOQUA 'POLLY' (NEE, CRANE) OF THE OTTER CLAN."

'THE ELDERS NAMED HER NAHNEBAHNWEQUAY.'

"IT MEANS UPRIGHT WOMAN."

MY CHRISTIAN NAME IS CATHERINE, BUT EVERYONE JUST CALLS ME NAHNEE.

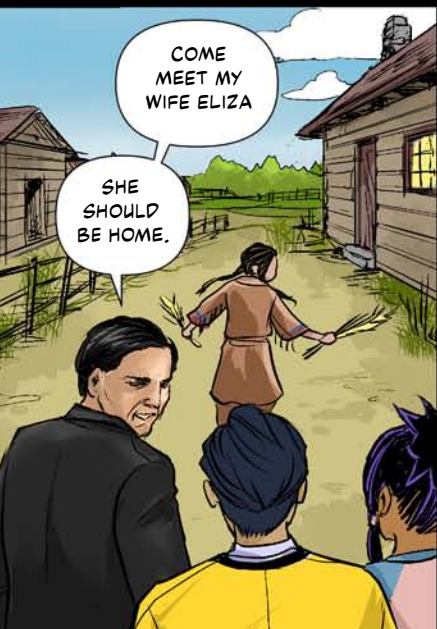
LIKE HER NAME SUGGESTS, SHE IS VERY UPRIGHT AND HELPFUL TO HER MOTHER.

RIGHT NAHNEE?

I HELP COOK AND DO LAUNDRY. I GARDEN AND PICK BERRIES TOO.

I'M NOW LEARNING ABOUT HERBAL REMEDIES AND HOW TO SEW MOCCASINS.

NO DOUBT, YOU ARE VERY BRIGHT.



COME MEET MY WIFE ELIZA

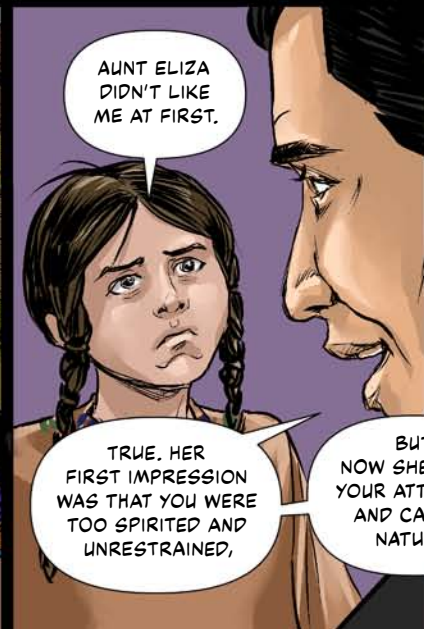
SHE SHOULD BE HOME.

AUNT ELIZA DIDN'T LIKE ME AT FIRST.

TRUE. HER FIRST IMPRESSION WAS THAT YOU WERE TOO SPIRITED AND UNRESTRAINED,

BUT NOW SHE SEES YOUR ATTENTIVE AND CARING NATURE.

EVERYONE, DO COME IN FOR TEA, WON'T YOU?







WELCOME,  
TO MY  
HOME.

WAIT...  
WHERE ARE  
WE NOW?!

LONDON.

PETER IS  
HERE RAISING  
FUNDS,

AND FIGHTING  
FOR OUR LAND  
RIGHTS AT THE  
CREDIT MISSION.

WE DECIDED  
TO SEIZE THE  
OPPORTUNITY TO  
MARK NAHNEE'S  
COMING OF AGE  
BY BRINGING HER  
WITH US.

IN THE PAST,  
WHEN ANISHINAABE  
WOMEN CAME OF AGE,  
THEY PERFORMED RITUAL  
PRACTICES AND OFTEN  
SECLUDED THEMSELVES  
FOR A YEAR.

1837  
FIELDS FAMILY HOME  
LAMBETH, LONDON  
ENGLAND



YES,  
WE CALL IT  
"MAKWAVE"

QUITE  
LITERALLY,  
"BECOMING  
A BEAR".

IN REALITY,  
IT IS MAINLY  
FASTING AND  
LEARNING FROM THE  
WISDOM OF OUR  
WOMEN ELDERS.

I GUESS  
LONDON  
COULD BE  
CONSIDERED A  
SECLUSION.

A VERY  
DISTANT  
ONE!



AUNT ELIZA,  
YOU HAVE  
TAUGHT ME  
MUCH OF  
ENGLISH  
CULTURE.

AND JUST AS UNCLE PETER DESCRIBED,  
"LONDON IS A GREAT CITY AND FULL OF  
PEOPLE AS THICK AS MOSQUITOES, THAT  
THEY ALMOST RUN OVER ONE ANOTHER."



THIS PAST YEAR,  
YOU HAVE GROWN  
COMFORTABLE AND  
CONFIDENT WITH OUR  
BRITISH WAYS,  
HAVE YOU NOT?

I HAVE,  
BUT I AM  
NOT SURE I  
CAN FULLY  
EMBRACE IT.







HOW DO PEOPLE SEEK TO BENEFIT THEMSELVES WHILE IGNORING THE PLIGHT OF OTHERS?

IN UNCLE PETER'S WORDS:

"HERE YOU MAY SEE THE RICH MAN WHO HAS EVERY THING THAT HE WANTS,"

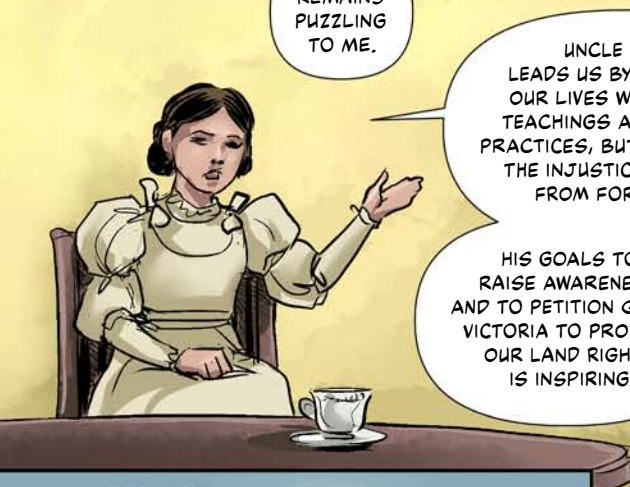
"AND HERE YOU MAY SEE THE POOR MAN WHO KNOWS NOT WHERE HE MAY GET HIS NEXT MEAL."

THIS REMAINS PUZZLING TO ME.

UNCLE PETER LEADS US BY IMPROVING OUR LIVES WITH BRITISH TEACHINGS AND FARMING PRACTICES, BUT ALSO FIGHTS THE INJUSTICES WE FACE FROM FOREIGNERS.

HIS GOALS TO RAISE AWARENESS AND TO PETITION QUEEN VICTORIA TO PROTECT OUR LAND RIGHTS IS INSPIRING.

YES. WE'VE ALREADY LEARNED A LOT ABOUT HIS EFFORTS.



IT SEEMS PETER HAS MADE QUITE AN IMPRESSION ON YOU, NAHNEE.

PERHAPS YOU WILL TAKE UP HIS MANTLE ONE DAY.



PERHAPS.

IF YOU WILL EXCUSE ME, I MUST PREPARE FOR MY JOURNEY HOME.

AFTER THIS YEAR IN LONDON, I LONG FOR THE COOL, CLEAR AIR AND THE LAND OF HOME.



WE BOTH KNOW HOW PETER'S MEETING WITH THE QUEEN TURNS OUT!

AND WHAT HAPPENS TO THE CREDIT MISSION AFTER THAT.

WHAT IS GOING TO BECOME OF NAHNEE?...



...NEEE  
OOWWW!!

1859

SUTTON HOMESTEAD  
SARAWAK TOWNSHIP  
NEAR OWEN SOUND

ARE YOU  
ALRIGHT?  
I HEARD  
A CRY.

WE ARE  
FINE.

WHAT  
WERE YOU  
SAYING ABOUT  
NAHNEE?

ARE YOU  
FRIENDS OF  
NAHNEE?

YOU JUST  
MISSED  
HER.

I JUST SAW  
HER OFF ON A  
COACH TO  
ROCHESTER.

PARDON  
MY MANNERS.  
I AM WILLIAM  
SUTTON,  
NAHNEE'S  
HUSBAND.

WE ARE  
SAVANNA AND  
ADIT. IT'S NICE  
TO MEET YOU.

YOU SAID  
NAHNEE IS  
HEADED TO  
ROCHESTER?  
WHY?

ROCHESTER IS  
JUST HER FIRST  
STOP TO GAIN AN  
AUDIENCE WITH  
THE QUEEN.

AS IN QUEEN  
VICTORIA?  
JUST LIKE HER  
UNCLE PETER  
DID?

INDEED!  
BUT IT IS  
A LONG  
STORY.

PLEASE,  
CAN YOU TELL  
US ABOUT IT?

I IMMIGRATED  
TO CANADA FROM  
LINCOLNSHIRE IN MY  
TEENS, WORKING AS  
A SHOEMAKER.

AFTER SOME  
TIME, I BEGAN  
TO FEEL A DEEP  
INTEREST IN THE  
WELFARE OF  
INDIGENOUS  
PEOPLES AND  
I ENDED UP  
AT THE CREDIT  
MISSION.

THAT IS  
WHERE I FIRST  
MET NAHNEE AND  
HER UNCLE,  
PETER JONES.





WITH THE PROMISE  
OF A LAND GRANT  
FROM THE NAWASH  
OJIBWA, WE MOVED  
HERE IN 1846, TO  
THE SAUGEEN  
PENINSULA, WITH  
NAHNEE'S MOTHER  
AND SISTER.



LIFE WAS HARD HERE,  
AND THE LAND EVEN  
HARDER. AS YOU CAN  
SEE, IT IS ROCKY WITH  
VERY LITTLE OF IT  
FARMABLE.

FOR THIS REASON,  
THE MAJORITY FROM  
CREDIT MISSION DID  
NOT FOLLOW.

HOWEVER, FOR NAHNEE AND  
ME, QUEEN VICTORIA'S 1847  
IMPERIAL PROCLAMATION  
MEANT HAVING THE SECURITY  
WE DID NOT HAVE ALONG  
THE CREDIT RIVER --

THE ANISHINAABE  
NOW OWNED THE  
ENTIRE SAUGEEN  
PENINSULA

BY THE SPRING  
OF 1849, WE HAD  
CLEARED 30 ACRES AND  
BUILT A HOME FOR US,  
AND ANOTHER FOR  
NAHNEE'S MOTHER.

UNFORTUNATELY  
THAT WINTER, WE  
LOST OUR FIFTH  
CHILD AND ALMOST  
NAHNEE HERSELF,  
TO ILLNESS.

I CAN NOT  
EVEN BEGIN TO  
IMAGINE THE  
HARDSHIP.

WE ARE  
FORTUNATE TO  
HAVE OUR COMMON  
FAITH AND VALUES  
TO KEEP US GOING.

WE MOVED  
AROUND FOR A FEW  
YEARS AFTER THAT. FIRST,  
TO BE CLOSER TO SCHOOL  
FOR OUR CHILDREN, AND  
LATER TO HELP ESTABLISH  
VARIOUS MISSIONS.

BY THE TIME WE  
RETURNED IN 1855,  
OUR SIXTH AND  
SEVENTH CHILDREN  
WERE BORN.

HOWEVER,  
TROUBLING  
NEWS AWAITED  
US.

WHAT  
HAPPENED?

I THINK  
NAHNEE CAN  
EXPLAIN IT BETTER,  
BUT ULTIMATELY, WE  
AND OTHERS LOST  
TITLE TO OUR LAND,  
DESPITE THE  
1847 IMPERIAL  
PROCLAMATION.

BECAUSE OF THIS,  
THE COUNCIL AT RAMA  
REQUESTED NAHNEE  
TO REPRESENT THEIR  
LAND CLAIMS TO  
QUEEN VICTORIA.

PLEASE  
COME INSIDE  
FOR SOME  
TEA.



HERE  
WE GO  
AGAIN!

WHY DO  
YOU WANT  
TO PETITION  
THE QUEEN?  
FROM THE REPORTS  
I HAVE SEEN, YOUR  
COMMUNITY WAS  
FLOURISHING AT  
THE CREDIT  
RIVER.

PERHAPS  
THOSE REPORTS  
SHOULD ALSO SAY  
THAT LAND TITLES  
WERE ULTIMATELY  
GRANTED TO NEW  
SETTLERS AND  
WE WERE FORCED  
FROM OUR LAND.

NOW IT IS  
HAPPENING AGAIN.  
DESPITE  
AN IMPERIAL  
PROCLAMATION  
CONFIRMING MY  
PEOPLE'S  
OWNERSHIP OF  
THE SAUGEEN  
PENINSULA, WE  
ARE AGAIN  
WITHOUT TITLE  
ON THE LAND  
WE TOILED TO  
BUILD OUR  
HOMES.

HMM.  
PLEASE  
EXPLAIN.

**1860**  
OFFICE OF THE  
DUKE OF NEWCASTLE  
LONDON, ENGLAND

IN 1854,  
WHILE MY HUSBAND  
AND I WERE AWAY  
HELPING TO ESTABLISH  
METHODIST MISSIONS,  
THE NAWASH OJIBWA  
SOLD 10,000 ACRES  
OF THE RESERVE  
UNDER PRESSURE  
FROM THE  
GOVERNMENT.

OUR HOME IS  
ON THOSE 10,000  
ACRES.

THEN, IT WAS  
AN OFFICIAL SALE.  
SHOULDN'T YOUR  
DISPUTE BE WITH  
THOSE WHO SOLD  
YOUR LAND?

BUT  
SHOULDN'T  
AN IMPERIAL  
PROCLAMATION  
HOLD HIGHER  
AUTHORITY?

SHOULDN'T THE  
INDIAN DEPARTMENT  
HAVE HONoured  
THAT PROCLAMATION  
INSTEAD OF FORCING  
THE SALE?

FURTHERMORE,  
NO COUNCIL WAS  
HELD TO DECIDE  
ON THE SALE.  
THE MEN AGREEING  
TO THE SALE SHOULD  
NOT HAVE BEEN  
RECOGNIZED TO  
HAVE AUTHORITY  
TO DO SO.


DID YOU  
PROTEST  
THIS?

I DID,  
TO THE  
GOVERNMENT,  
AND DO YOU  
KNOW THEIR  
RESPONSE?

THEY SAID THAT I  
COULD BUY BACK  
OUR FARM AT  
AUCTION, BUT  
MUST RENOUNCE  
BOTH MY RIGHT  
TO ANNUITIES  
AND MY ORIGINAL  
LAND GRANT  
FROM THE  
NAWASH  
OJIBWA.

HOW CAN I  
ACCEPT SUCH  
TERMS, TO DENY  
MY HERITAGE?





THEY SAID  
BECAUSE I WAS  
MARRIED TO A WHITE  
MAN, I WAS NO LONGER  
NATIVE IN THE EYES OF THE  
LAW AND THAT THE LAND OF  
MY PEOPLE, MY OWN LAND,  
MUST BE PROTECTED  
FROM ME.

ALTHOUGH I  
HAVE BEEN MARRIED 21  
YEARS, IT WAS NOT UNTIL  
THE LAST FOUR YEARS THAT  
THE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE  
THIS EXCUSE FOR ROBBING  
ME AND MY CHILDREN OF OUR  
BIRTHRIGHT WHICH I INHERITED  
FROM MY FOREFATHERS  
BEFORE THE WHITE MAN  
EVER SET HIS FOOT ON  
OUR SHORES.

THE  
GOVERNMENT  
APPEARS TO HAVE  
NO HARD AND  
FAST RULES.

IT ALLOWED  
MARGARET JOHNSON,  
A DAUGHTER OF THE  
PROMINENT CHIEF JOHN  
SMOKE JOHNSON, TO  
MARRY A NON-ABORIGINAL,  
WITHOUT THE LOSS  
OF STATUS.

SQUIRE DAVIS,  
OF THE SIX NATIONS  
OF THE GRAND RIVER,  
MARRIED A NON-ABORIGINAL  
WOMAN IN 1846; HIS WIFE,  
JANET FERGUSON, THEN  
HAD STATUS.

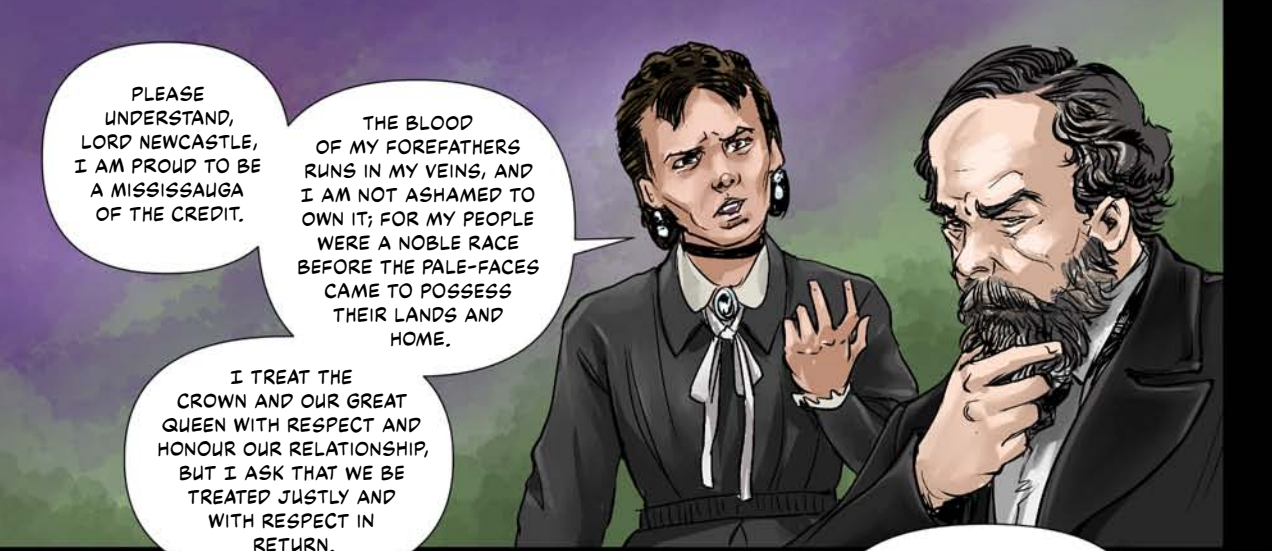
PETER JONES'  
HALF-SISTER,  
CATHARINE JONES,  
MARRIED ARCHIBALD  
RUSSELL, AN AMERICAN  
VETERAN OF THE WAR  
OF 1812. THE CHILDREN  
OF ALL THREE COUPLES  
OBTAINED STATUS  
AT BIRTH AND  
KEPT IT.

IT DOES  
APPEAR AS THOUGH THE  
GOVERNMENT HAD CHOSEN  
ME TO EXPERIMENT UPON,  
AND WELL THEY HAVE DONE  
THEIR WORK. IT IS EVIDENT  
THE GOVERNMENT MAKES  
RULES TO SUITE  
THEMSELVES.

THE 1857 ACT  
CLAIMED TO ENCOURAGE  
THE GRADUAL CIVILIZATION OF  
FIRST PEOPLES, BUT IN EFFECT,  
IT DEPRIVED US OF THE POWER  
OF HOLDING ANY LAND.  
IT ALSO PREVENTED US FROM  
REMAINING MEMBERS OF  
OUR OWN FIRST NATIONS  
COMMUNITIES.

BUT HOW CAN  
WE BE CIVILISED? AS  
SOON AS WE MAKE OUR  
LAND VALUABLE THEN  
WE ARE DRIVEN FROM IT.  
WE KNOW THAT THE WORK  
WE PUT ON OUR LAND, THAT  
OUR CHILDREN WONT GET  
THE BENEFIT OF IT.






PLEASE UNDERSTAND, LORD NEWCASTLE, I AM PROUD TO BE A MISSISSAUGA OF THE CREDIT.

THE BLOOD OF MY FOREFATHERS RUNS IN MY VEINS, AND I AM NOT ASHAMED TO OWN IT; FOR MY PEOPLE WERE A NOBLE RACE BEFORE THE PALE-FACES CAME TO POSSESS THEIR LANDS AND HOME.

I TREAT THE CROWN AND OUR GREAT QUEEN WITH RESPECT AND HONOUR OUR RELATIONSHIP, BUT I ASK THAT WE BE TREATED JUSTLY AND WITH RESPECT IN RETURN.



YOU MAKE A COMPELLING ARGUMENT AND THE WEIGHT OF YOUR CONVICTION IS PALPABLE. I WILL GRANT YOU AN AUDIENCE WITH HER MAJESTY.

THANK YOU, LORD NEWCASTLE.




YOUR SPEECH WAS INCREDIBLE. EVEN NEWCASTLE COULDN'T DENY YOUR REQUEST TO SEE THE QUEEN.

SURELY, THE QUEEN WILL BE EQUALLY MOVED BY THE PLIGHT OF INDIGENEOUS PEOPLE.

I AM HOPEFUL MY ENDEAVOURS HERE WILL YIELD CHANGE.



YET I AM AWARE THAT EVEN MY UNCLE'S EFFORTS, OVER 20 YEARS PAST, FELL UPON DEAF EARS.



IT IS NOW UP TO YOU TO TELL MY STORY.





## PRESENT DAY

CENTRAL LIBRARY, 3RD FLOOR  
MISSISSAUGA HISTORY ROOM





# NAHNEBAHWEQUAY

## Legend of Nahnee

by Savanna and Adit

Nahnebahwequay, known to her friends and family as “Nahnee” was born into the Eagle Clan of the Mississaugas of the Credit River in 1824. Having grown up surrounded by prominent Indigenous leaders, such as her uncle Peter Jones, Nahnee, whose Christian name was Catherine, developed a strong sense of self, rooted in her connections with her Indigenous culture and Methodist faith. When she was 13, Nahnee travelled with her uncle Peter Jones and his wife Eliza to England, where she witnessed her uncle defend the Indigenous rights and land claims to Colonial administrators and to Queen Victoria.

In 1839, Nahnee married English-born shoemaker and Methodist lay preacher William Sutton. Together they took on leadership positions within their community, while raising their growing family with both Anishinaabe and Methodist Christian values. Nahnee and William, along with several of their children and Nahnee’s mother, moved to the Saugeen Peninsula (now called the Bruce Peninsula), near what is Owen Sound today, and established a farm on a land grant from the Nawash Ojibwa. After briefly spending time in Michigan and northern Ontario where they helped to establish Methodist missions, they returned to the Saugeen to find that their farm had been sold.

Hardships continued as Nahnee learned that her marriage to William, a white man, resulted in loss of her First Nations status in the eyes of the Government. With the loss of her land and identity, Nahnee petitioned the Colonial government in Canada for her land title and status, without success.

With the support of her community Nahnee was eventually called on by the Rama First Nation band council to petition Queen Victoria



*Nahnebahwequay (Catherine Sutton), image courtesy of the Grey Roots Museum & Archives*

in England and to advocate for the rights of First Nations peoples. After amassing a generous donation from the Quakers in Rochester, New York, Nahnee made her way to England to plead her case. Although laws related to First Nations status through marriage did not change, her meeting brought awareness to the struggles of the Indigenous people, which demonstrated that they could not be ignored. Nahnee’s husband was eventually permitted to repurchase their land on the Saugeen. Nahnee passed away in September of 1865 at the age of 41.

Nahnebahwequay was designated as a national historic person in Canada in 2021:

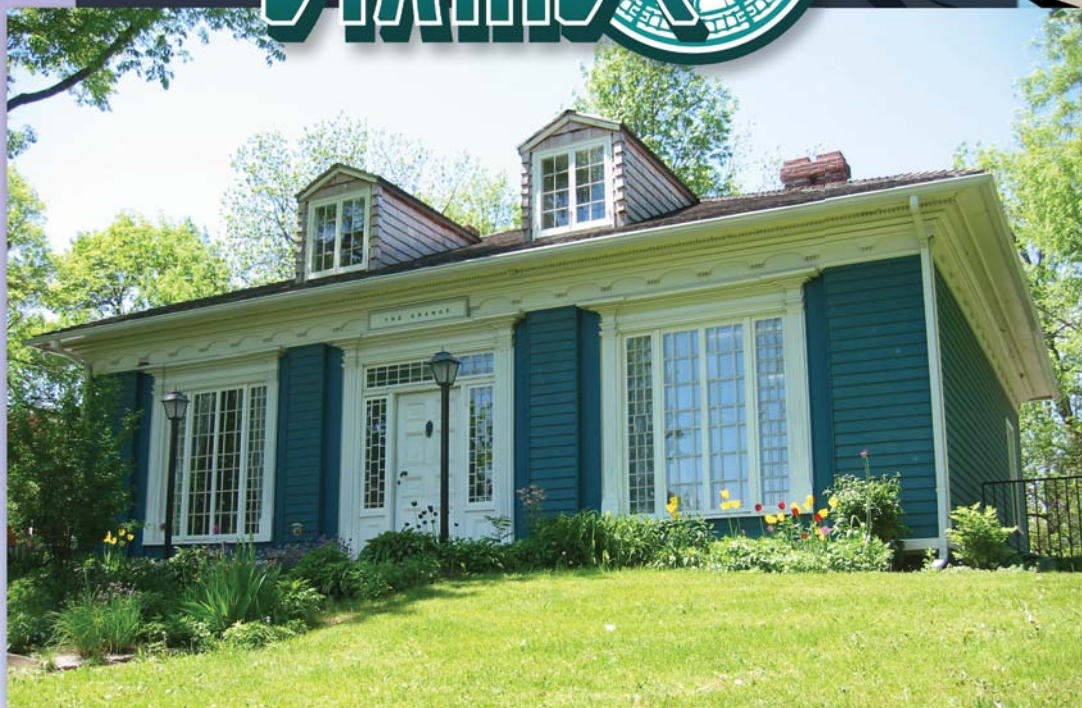
*Nahnebahwequay was a voice in the fight for Indigenous land rights in*

the mid-19th century, a time when colonial policies sought to forcibly remove and dispossess Indigenous peoples of their lands. Her lifelong leadership and activism was all the more remarkable as she had to contend with the additional legal restrictions colonial governments placed on Indigenous women. Her experience is representative of the efforts of First Nations to gain support and present their grievances to the Crown during the mid-Victorian era.

**INSPIRING!**  
**A+**



# *the* GRANGE



FOUNDED IN 1960, HERITAGE MISSISSAUGA IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT CHARITY WHOSE FOCUS IS CELEBRATING MISSISSAUGA'S VIBRANT AND DIVERSE HERITAGE THROUGH RESEARCH, PROMOTION AND LEARNING. HERITAGE MISSISSAUGA IS KNOWN FOR ITS PROGRAMS, PUBLICATIONS, OUTREACH PRESENTATIONS, COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND UNIQUE EVENTS.

LOCATED IN THE HISTORIC ROBINSON-ADAMSON HOUSE, KNOWN AS "THE GRANGE" (BUILT CIRCA 1828), HERITAGE MISSISSAUGA IS A PASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR HISTORY AND HERITAGE IN THE CITY OF MISSISSAUGA.

WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE CITY OF MISSISSAUGA, OUR PARTNERS, MEMBERS, DONORS, CORPORATE SPONSORS AND VOLUNTEERS, HERITAGE MISSISSAUGA CONTINUES TO ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE OF PROMOTING AWARENESS OF OUR HERITAGE, AND A SENSE OF PLACE AND TIME IN OUR CITY.



[WWW.HERITAGEMISSISSAUGA.COM](http://WWW.HERITAGEMISSISSAUGA.COM)