

From the Research Department....

The Mohawk School

The Mohawk School could be the origins of what becomes the Eastern School. Let's start close to the beginning....

From our archival documents we know the following:

By 1845 there were 2 schools on the Territory. One is called the Mission School, the teacher was paid by The New England Company and the other was called the Mohawk School, the teacher was paid by the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte.

From a letter of 1845 from T. G. Anderson, Visiting Superintendent of Indian Affairs, the schools were described as the Eastern, (presumably the Mohawk School) and the Western School, (presumably the Mission School), the following is an extract:

"Under the circumstance of my visit I could not meet the children in the schools, of which there are two, the Eastern and the Western.... I am told the general attendance is 27 Boys and Girls.... The School Teachers are apparently highly respectable men." [LAC RG10, Vol. 268, pp.163, 810-164, 338 Reel C-12653]

Joseph Claus, the Great Grandfather of Les Claus, was the teacher at the Mohawk School. From a letter of January 1853, from T. G. Anderson, V. S. I. A. , we discover that Joseph Claus was paid £25 for ½ year's salary. [LAC RG10, Vol. 201, pt. 1, no. 6501-6600 Reel C-11519]

The 1861 Census provides the location of the Mohawk School, "A schoolhouse on Lot No. 38 Con. A 24x30 built of wood Value \$400." In 1861, this would have been on the edge of the Mohawk Village, now in the town of Deseronto.

By the late 19th century, the Mohawk School is located on the West half Lot 32 Concession A. This is where the Eastern School building is now.

From a School Report of the Mohawk School, by Oronhyatekha, of December 21, 1861 we know that there were 78 pupils; 31 boys and 47 girls. Average daily attendance was 37 students. [LAC RG10 Vol. 262 pt. 2 no, 1501-1589 ½ Reel C-12650]. This report is an amazing find as it lists the school children with their ages. Stay tuned for the next article as we dig deeper into the names on the report. Who knows they could be your ancestors?