



First Log Church
on the River Rouge
1818

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Clinton, oldest UMC
edifice in Conference
1837

Adrian, Mich.
Jan. 24, 1990.

Sarah Briggs, Editor
IO TRIUMPHE,
611 East Porter St.,
Albion, Michigan

Dear Sarah:

Its quite a time since I've had contact with you, but I haven't forgotten Io Triumphe, or my alma mater. For quite a time since reading Keith Fennimore's history of Albion College, and realizing that the College apparently knows almost nothing about the lives of the Indians who attended in the early days, I've wanted to lift the curtain on Daniel Whedon. Now I've finally gotten at it, and finished it nearly to my satisfaction. I did clean the type for my typewriter, but still regret that the print is not as clear as it ought to be.

I thought of this as an article in Io Triumphe if you like it. Otherwise please place it in the College Archives for me.

I've lost tract of the copies I had of Io Triumphe, and am thinking that the footnotes would be an intellectual nuisance. I included them in case you want to use them. Also I thought they should be in the copy which would be placed in the College Archives.

I hope you will find this article interesting. It seemed necessary to include quite a little of the history of the mission, as that seemed necessary for a picture of Whedon's life. If you think another title would be better, please know that I am not quite wedded to the title which I finally chose.

Very Truly Yours,
Ronald A. Brunger
Rev. Ronald A. Brunger,
73 Water Wheel Estates,
Clinton, MI 49236.

THE STORY OF DANIEL WHEDON,
AN EARLY INDIAN STUDENT AT ALBION

by Ronald A. Brunger.

A crowning glory of the early years of the Methodist Seminary at Albion, was the establishment of an Indian Department. The motivation was a missionary spirit, a desire to help Indian youth learn the 'white man's culture, his ways, his language and his religion.' It was hoped to train Indian youth to become teachers, and exhorters, perhaps missionaries in the Church. Almost at once, in the second year of the seminary, 1844-45, there was an Indian Department and Joseph S. Sutton was the tutor of the Indians. There were six that year. A student in 1848 described the excitement that he felt at Albion from "seeing and mingling with a score or more of young full-blooded Indian students, gamboling on the college campus." In 1851 after the most successful year yet, Rev. Edward McClure, President of the Seminary trustees, felt forced to eliminate the Indian Department, for lack of financial support.

Historian Fennimore intimates that little is known of the lives and accomplishments of the Indians who attended the Seminary in that early period. I have felt that it would be of interest for us to lift the curtain and tell of one of these early Indian students.

Along the rivers of the Saginaw Valley, scattered villages of Indians continued their traditional mode of living until the mid-nineteenth century. A fur-trading post was established on the site of Saginaw in 1816. But as late as 1851 there were only 400 white settlers at Saginaw. The Saginaw Valley was flat and very swampy in its wilderness state. Missionary William H. Brockway in the fall of 1835 reported an eighteen mile stretch on the trail from Flint to Saginaw, "without a house or clearing, and no end of deerflies or the music of the mosquito." After fording the river at Saginaw he was greeted with the sight of a thousand Indians receiving their annuity payments from the government in payment for ceded lands, and proceeding to purchase "the accursed firewater at one dollar per gallon" and soon the scene was one of general debauchery.

One ancient village of Chippewa Indians was at Pewon-o-go-wink", on the west bank of the Flint River, 5 miles west of the present town of Birch Run, or 27 miles north of Flint. An Indian boy was born here possibly in 1826, the son of Chim-e-gas, and grandson of Be-bom-o-quay, a noted woman sachem often mentioned by fur traders and pioneers. Our young Indian's first name was Ash-a-tah-ne-qua-beh, meaning "Almost touches the clouds." In his active out-of-doors life he grew tall and strong; he mastered the use of the birch-bark canoe and bow and arrow. He could swim, he was inured to hardships, he had learned the secrets of hunting, fishing, and trapping.

On a fine spring day about 1840, Ash-a-tah-ne-qua-beh and an older brother whose name later became Nathan, were boiling down sap and making maple sugar, on the banks of the Flint River. As they worked there came the sounds of music on the air. It was strange music in a strange tongue. It seemed to pass from the east to the west, and finally to die away. Somehow it was strangely moving to these Indian lads. Perhaps it was a lone settler "following the trail.. to Saug-e-nah", or perchance a missionary giving utterance to his faith. Somehow the song had a strong effect on the religious nature of these Indian boys.

A year or two went by and one day a Methodist circuit rider appeared at Pewon-o-go-wink and induced a company of the Indians to listen to his message, among them the sons of Chim-e-gas. The historian calls him "one of that band of Christian soldiers, who ever accompanied the van of the movement west." The preacher prayed, exhorted and sang. The two Indian lads were startled and surprised to hear from his lips, the same strange tune and words that had wafted to them out in the forest on that spring day. Later they were to learn that the song was Charles Wesley's great

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hymn, "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing." The boys made a decision to become Christians that day! From that day a new light came into their lives and a new rule of life.⁴

Who was this Methodist circuit preacher who appeared in this Indian village that day, and whose preaching was so effective. The county historian did not identify him. But thinking about the situation there, we realize that the preaching must have been in the Chippewa tongue. Our Indian lads could not understand an English service. It seems clear that the preacher was none other than an Indian, Peter Marksman. The Conference had brought Marksman down from the Upper Peninsula in the fall of 1841, appointing him to the Lakeville Mission, centered in northeastern Oakland County.

Peter Marksman is one of the most interesting figures in early Michigan Methodism. He was born in Minnesota near the west end of Lake Superior in 1815. His father was an Indian medicine man, who married a French-Indian woman. Peter's grandfather and great-grandfather had been Indian chiefs at Mackinac. His father gave him lessons in the conjuror's art. As a boy he became an expert marksman; his Indian name was Ma-dive-givun-a-yaush ("Shooting at the mark"). He was taught the Indian religion by six medicine men. In his youth the family moved to the Soo.⁵

Peter first heard "the glad tidings of the blessed and glorious Christianity in the year of our Lord 1830." He heard Rev. Abel Bingham, the Baptist missionary, preach a sermon in a wigwam. In the summer of 1831, five Methodist Indian missionaries, led by John Sunday, came to the Soo from Upper Canada (Ontario). These Indian Christians were very effective in reaching the Soo Indians. Peter Marksman was intrigued. Later he testified: "I never had an idea that any of our people could preach Jesus Christ.. I was very much delighted when I saw these preachers. They appeared good. Their dress was like a white man's clean and neat. The people delighted in their singing, and the manner of their preaching, and they were well received on both sides of the Sault."⁶

Peter Marksman was converted in June 1833, and baptized. Now he had an irresistible missionary desire to tell of his new joy and faith. Later he wrote, "I could not help thinking that it was my duty to go and tell my fellowmen to come to Christ.. I felt willing to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.. The missionary spirit burns in my heart." For a few years Marksman exhorted, taught, and preached, under the tutelage of white missionary leaders. In 1837 he was one of three Chippewa lads chosen to undergo training at the new Ebenezer Seminary on the Mississippi River in Illinois, near the present Jacksonville. In 1839, Peter Marksman began his career in the Michigan Conference.

Coming to Lakeville in the fall of 1841, Marksman was amazingly effective. He preached with Indian eloquence and visited from lodge to lodge. The formerly demoralized natives, responded to the leadership of one of their own race. The Indians turned en masse to the Christian life. The Indian preacher was to write, "The Lord blessed the poor Indians who once lay along the streets of white men.. And now the Indians are praising God in the streets and roads of white men." The "fire-water" traders were confounded, for the Indians joined a temperance society, and kept their pledge to drink no more "fire-water." Marksman had a school with 36 scholars in Lakeville. A large Methodist society developed, and in August 1842, Marksman reported 96 Indian members.⁷

In the spring of 1842 Marksman visited a village of the Nebeseeng Indians in Genesee County, 34 miles northwest. He preached three times from Luke 15:18, with dramatic result. "And they all, men, women, children, rose up saying, 'We will arise and embrace Christianity.' And Monday morning, they all brought their images and bad medicine to me. I took them all, and.. did burn and destroy them." He baptized 69 Indians in this place.⁷ Perhaps in the wake of this visit, Marksman went on down the Flint River and preached at Fewon-o-go-wink.

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The preacher in charge of the Lakeville Indian Mission 1842-45 was Daniel C. Jacokes, a white man, a man of remarkable strength and energy who needed little sleep, a man with a remarkable mind. He had an Indian associate to interpret and help him, but he probably learned the Indian language. In the fall of 1843 he went down to visit the Indians on the site of Saginaw. He reported happily: "They are all converted, except one. I baptized fifty-nine, mostly adults. They sung, prayed, and shouted, as though they would pierce the very heavens, and enter into the presence of their redeemer." Jacokes preached to the Indians on Black River far to the east, near Port Huron. He covered a large area, and stated, "My labours are very great; I travel, on an average, three hundred miles in three weeks, and sleep out of doors about half the time." When Jacokes went to Saginaw to preach in 1843, he probably descended the Flint River by canoe and preached at Pewon-o-go-wink, and the other Indian villages on the way. In 1843 Jacokes reported 2 white members and 119 Indian members; in 1844 he reported 225 Indian members, in 1845 the count was 3 white and 266 Indian members!

In 1845 the name of the Indian Mission was changed from Lakeville to Flint River Mission, reflecting the fact that there were many converts and much interest along the Flint River, and it afforded water transportation to the Indian villages northward on the Saginaw and Tittabawassee Rivers, and on Saginaw Bay.

In 1846, George Bradley, the missionary in charge, was living on Lake Nebissing, 7 miles west of Lapeer. Pe-wono-go-wink was now spelled Pe-wah-ne-going by the missionaries. John Kahbeige, (the spelling of his name varies) Canadian Indian assistant, was living here. A frame school house had been erected at Pe-wah-ne-going at a cost of \$150; Mrs. Kahbeige was the teacher. Their daughter, Rebecca Kahbeeje, was attending the Methodist Seminary at Albion 1846-48. Under the tutelage of this Canadian Indian couple, who had risen to the positions of preacher and teacher, the sons of Chim-e-gas were strengthened in the faith, and began their formal education. Kahbeige and his wife served as valuable role models to the Indian youth and boys and girls. The mission circuit extended east to St. Clair County, and north to villages along Saginaw Bay.

Missionary Bradley in January 1847 reported that each Indian society had bought some land, and that they were trying to learn the arts of agriculture. The Indians greatly desired to "live like the good white man," and were directing their "attention to agriculture and the arts of civilized life." The mission had some opposition from hostile Indians; their greatest problems came from traders who wanted to sell liquor to the Indians, and from hostile government officials. He wished that they had 500 of Peter Jones' hymnbooks, and thought they had no more than 25 on the whole mission.

In 1847 there were 150 Indians living at Pe-wah-ne-going, of whom 60 were members of the Church. The mission owned 28 acres of land, and had a school house 22 x 26 feet, and a frame house for a parsonage, 16 x 24 feet, evidently new. The Indians owned 100 acres of land, and now had 50 acres under cultivation. They had raised a good crop. The community was progressing. New log homes were being built. Evidently some white man by the name of Cazier had given strong support to the Mission, so that the missionaries began to call it Cazier Schoolhouse (or Kazier) in his honor.

Ash-a-tah-ne-quah-beh was now a young man, possibly 21 years of age. He had been an eager student in the mission school. The missionaries saw that he was especially gifted. They began to talk to him about going to the new Methodist school which had been started a few years before at Albion, on the Kalamazoo River, about 145 miles southwest. At first the school seemed impossibly far away; he wasn't sure that he wanted to leave his village and tackle the risks of a school like that. But the circuit preachers kept challenging him, telling him that he could learn and equip himself to serve his people. And the fact that Rebecca Kahbeige was attending Albion, helped to make this seem not so impossible or unfeasible.

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In 1848 a dearly beloved white missionary, Lovel F. Harris, was sent as the head of the Flint River Indian Mission, and he chose to live at Pe-wa-ne-going or Cazier Station. Harris was married and had at least one son, John Samuel, who was then 14. He had come from West Virginia, and had been in Michigan 7 years. He was a simple and humble man, with a genius for friendship. He had served along the St. Clair River with Riley Crawford; Crawford found his colleague "a very warm friend .. Our love for each other.. was quite equal to that of David and Jonathan." Seth Reed was the circuit preacher to the south, whose nearest appointment was Flushing, 13 miles south. Reed was very fond of Harris and called him a "noble soul." And Harris completely won the hearts of the Indians at Pe-wa-ne-going.

In January 1849, the missionary reported 28 families at Cazier Station, numbering 110 souls, of whom 62 were church members. The day-school had been kept in operation about 10 months, with attendance of 17 Indian boys and 16 Indian girls, plus five white children. There was an evening school for the adults. A Sunday School had been kept; there were 25 books in the Sunday School library. The Indians owned 115 acres of land; the mission owned 203½ acres. The village contained 8 or 10 log houses, and 18 or 20 wigwams. We catch a glimpse of our Indian village here in process of transition, with the Indians struggling to get the ability to read and write in English, to learn the ways and arts of white civilization, and to learn more of the Christian faith.

In the spring of 1849, Rev. Lovel Harris fell sick. Seth Reed and M. B. Camburn, the Methodist minister at Flint, rode their horses "down through the woods and spent the night with Harris, his family, and his band of anxious, faithful believers, and I shall never forget with what earnestness they prayed amid sobs and tears for the recovery of their beloved missionary." About a week after this, on May 4, Harris died. Seth Reed received this sad news and the summons to come and hold the funeral services.

He went up to Pe-wono-go-ing, to join the Indians' procession taking the body down to Flushing where the funeral was to be held. The first Methodist church had just been built in Flushing, and this was the first funeral to be held in it. It was indeed a sad funeral. Nearly all the Indians in the village, men, women, and children, marched in the funeral procession through 13 miles of woods to Flushing. "At the church and at the grave their grief was expressed in most pathetic weeping. They gathered around the grave when the casket was lowered into it, and falling on their faces, cried aloud to the Great Spirit to send them "another missionary just like brother Harris." Long afterward Seth Reed remembered the rare mind and lofty soul of Lovel Harris, and how he preached with great effectiveness, bring the scripture to life.¹²

The Methodist Indian preachers, Peter Marksman, John Kahbeige, and Joseph Bushay, had brought the life-changing gospel to our Indian lad, Ash-a-tah-ne-qua-beh. He had been further inspired by Daniel Jacokes, George Bradley, and Lovel Harris. He wanted to be like these preachers. He wanted to serve his people. I suspect that the death of Harris had a strong effect on him. He was ready to go to Albion now, as the preachers had wished. The steadfast tradition is that he attended Albion for two years,¹³ possibly from 1849 to 1851. The scanty Albion records only prove his attendance in 1850-51. The circuit preachers undoubtedly wrote letters and pulled strings to secure support for their Indian lad. Perhaps one of them journeyed with him to Albion the first time to introduce him and help him in his initial adjustment.

Around 1850, Joseph Chamberlin was the teacher of the Indian Department. Board president, Rev. A. M. Fitch reported that the Indian Department had done better the past year, "the Indians have been more settled, and have devoted themselves to study more than formerly, and the Teacher.. has been very faithful to his trust. We believe he was successful in a great degree in obtaining their confidence by his uniform

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kindness and attention to their wants." The Indians lived in the frame building back of the large brick seminary building, the Bell House. A student long after remembered the thrill he felt in 1848 from "seeing and mingling with a score or more of young full-blooded Indian students, gamboling on the college campus." Joseph Woodson, a student from 1849 to 1851, recalled "that at Albion lived the copper-colored sons of the Forest.. who sought with us instruction in the ways of modern English, and taught us how to fashion, stain and use the bow, and how to harden the arrow's tip in the flame of a tallor dip (candle)." The first reporter remembered an Indian textbook with some pages from the writings of Longfellow, spelling exercises, and a glossary of words in Ojibway, English, and Chippewa. Relations between the races at Albion seem to have been good, with the youth of both races interested and intrigued by the other.¹

Certainly the seminary was a broadening experience for our Indian lad from the Flint River. He learned much, and became proficient in English. Probably he returned home in 1851, when the Indian Department was officially closed because of financial stringency. Board President Edward McClure in the fall of 1851 announced that only five or six Indians could be allowed to attend in the coming year. A letter in the biography of Peter Jones, a Canadian Methodist Indian leader, shows that Joseph Rucky, alias O-she-nah-wa-ge-shiek, was a student at the Wesleyan Seminary in Albion on Jan. 4, 1852.¹⁴

It appears that Daniel D. Whedon, a Methodist professor at the University of Michigan, took an interest and gave money to support one Indian lad at Albion. This money was applied to the support of our lad. The college catalogue for 1850-51, had a list of the Indian students for that year--three females and eight males. The last named is "Daniel D. Wheden, (alias) A-she-dah-ne-quabey, Flint." The missionaries and teachers who worked with the Indians were always anxious to anglicize their names. Indian names were euphonius, but they were long and cumbersome to pronounce and spell.

So our Indian lad acquired not only an education, but also a new name at Albion. That name became the family name back home. The modern name 'Wheaton' is a corruption and change from the original name "Whedon". In those days the spelling of Indian names, and often English names, was uncertain and varying, subject to change from time to time. Whedon was a name to be born proudly. From 1845 to 1852, Daniel D. Whedon, a member of the Michigan Annual Conference, was a professor in the University of Michigan. He 1848 he was appointed one of a Board of three Visitors to the Wesleyan Seminary by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, to check and ascertain that the Seminary met state regulations. Thus Whedon was well acquainted with the Seminary, interested in it, and especially in this missionary experiment in educating Indian youth. After leaving the University, Whedon became a renowned scholar at the Ohio Wesleyan University, and the author of a several volume commentary on the New Testament, which can be found today in the Detroit Conference Archives.

So our Indian lad came back to his home village on the Flint River as Daniel Whedon. At the time the lumbering industry was beginning to rise along the Saginaw River, and Scottish settlers were taking up lands in Taymouth Township, east over the river from the Cazier Mission. The Indians knew they needed to adjust to the white civilization which was beginning to close around them. The new name was adopted by the whole family.

An old family record in Taymouth Township, shows that Daniel's father, brothers, and sisters had this surname, and most of them gained English names with the family name now spelled 'Wheden'. Chimegas became George Wheden. A list of children was given, under "Family Record Birds." "Nathan B. Wheden born 1830, Daniel Wheden born 1832, Oshe-noze-what born 1834, Samuel G. Wheden born 1836, Peter Wheden born 1838, Margaret Wheden born 1840, Susan Wheden born 1842, Na ba gonaby Wheden born 1846, Te Tah gwah son Wheden born 1848, Charlotte Wheden born 1852, Elizabeth Weden born 1853, Helen C. Wheden born Jan. 15th, 1858." The high mortality of the frontier and early times is illustrated by the list of deaths, "Ozhenoze Wheden died.., Nabagon-by died 1853, Peter died 1850, Tahtah gwah son died 1852."¹⁵ Twelve children, of whom four died young.

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We are not certain that all these dates are accurate. When Daniel died in 1911, he was reckoned to be 85 years old, hence born probably in 1826. There is a marriage certificate dated Feb. 26, 1859 for "Samuel G. Wheden of Taymouth aged 29", which would put his birth in 1829 or 1830. This would fit with a date of 1825 or 1826 for Daniel. His date of birth is certainly uncertain.

The gradual change in the spelling of the family name is probably quite accurately traced with the help of several documents. In a Quarterly Conference Minutes in 1885 Daniel's name is spelled "Whedon", which was the original spelling; it is also so spelled in his Exhorter's License in 1890. In a purchase for five acres of land from his brother Nathan on Sept. 20, 1880, Daniel's name is spelled "Wheadan" and Nathan's is "Wheadon". By June 8, 1909, when Andrew Doremus and Mary J. Doremus his wife, purchased the same five acres from Daniel, the latter's name was spelled close to the modern way as "Wheaten".

In the fall of 1849 the name of the Mission in Taymouth was changed to Kazier Mission. Erasmus D. Young was the senior missionary sent, accompanied by the familiar Indian, John Kahbeeje. Young had just been admitted to the Conference on trial, but he had been teaching in the Indian School at Nebissing. He could speak the Chipewewa language and must have been welcomed here. He served here in 1849-50, and again from 1851 to 1853.

When Daniel Whedon returned home from Albion, he was surely welcomed by the home preachers. They gave him responsibilities in the Mission, and probably encouraged him to keep on with his studies. Kazier Indian Mission in 1851 reported 270 members, 12 probationers, and two local preachers. Quite likely the local preachers were Daniel and Nathan Whedon, the two young men who were so moved that spring day in the forest when they first heard the Wesleyan hymn, "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing."

We get a good picture of "Pe-wah-ne-go-ing, Kazier Station" in January 1852. The Indian population here was 156; the total number of Indians embraced in the circuit was 685, of which 282 were members of the Church. "This station is in Saginaw County ..situated on Flint River. This is an excellent location, with very good land, and a pretty river running through the settlement, well stocked some parts of the year with fish. The lands owned by the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church are two hundred and eight acres; the Indians own at this station one hundred and fifty-five acres.. This extends along the river, on each side, nearly two miles."

"We need a small church or chapel here very much; it would advance the missionary cause very considerably, as it would tend to concentrate the Indians, or draw them to the settlement. We have twelve acres cleared off and fenced for a mission garden, and when we get our new parsonage done next summer, this will be a fine place."

"The Indian brethren have about fifteen good log-houses, and about seventy-five acres under cultivation, and raise excellent corn, and all other summer or garden produce. They get from government a small annuity; and they have one yoke of oxen from the government; and a little assistance also, from the government blacksmith, in chains, iron wedges, axes, and traps. They have quite a number of ponies, and the chief has a cow. They are more settled in their habits than formerly; but still it is quite necessary for them, at some seasons of the year, to hunt for a sustenance, and probably will be for the present adult race. The rising generation may be able to live by agriculture. Most of the women remain at home, however; so the children regularly attend school."

"The chief at this place, whose name is Sah-quh-che-wa-o-sa, and whose Christian name is Thomas Dutton, is a very enterprising man. Generally they are temperate, upright and industrious.. A strict observance of the Sabbath is remarked by all who know them--it is considered a sacred duty. Religious service is held every sabbath, and on Wednesday and Saturday evenings; consisting on the Sabbath, of preaching in the morning and afternoon, and prayer-meeting in the evening, and on Thursday evening also. We have class-meeting every Saturday evening. The class-leaders are strict

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in marking their class-books, and reporting delinquent members to the preacher. Many can give a deep religious experience--so much so, that it has been remarked that these Indians show more of real conversion than any in our State."¹⁶

In 1851 the school was kept for 9 months; the teacher was a native with the name of Jacob Jackson. The attendance had average 30 pupils, excellent attendance and the pupils had made good progress. On Dec. 25, 1851, the teacher reported that the school had been kept for ten weeks during the quarter; sickness had closed the school for a time. "We open in the morning with reading the Scriptures, singing, and prayer, in the morning reading, spelling, writing, and geography; afternoon the same. All the boys and girls in the first class are learning to write, and some can write a middling good hand.. Sabbath School is kept by the teacher as well as he can, assisted by the missionary when present at the station."¹⁶

It was to this now church-centered community, that Daniel Wheden returned to live. The Indians were making progress; the children were learning reading, spelling, writing(in English) and geography, and were being grounded in the faith. The Church was very active with five services a week. In the Saturday evening class meetings, the members would relate their religious experience, testify to their temptations and triumphs and attempt to build each other up in the faith. The class meetings promoted the spirit of brotherhood and religious fervor. Surely in these services, Daniel Wheden found a place of leadership. The historian wrote that from the time Daniel left Albion "until old age removed him from active work, he preached to and taught his people in the better way of living."⁴ His brothers Nathan and Samuel were active, and later were remembered as being local preachers as well.

In 1853 Joseph Chamberlain was stationed at Kazier as the exhorter and resident teacher. He had been the Indian Department teacher at the Seminary in Albion, a short time before. How Daniel Wheden must have rejoiced to have his old teacher come to live and serve at Kazier for a short time. The report was that Chamberlain "is devoted to his work.. We have here a comfortable frame dwelling house, and a schoolhouse that answers also the purposes of meeting-house. The school is in a flourishing condition. The Sabbath school is doing well, and pays for ten copies of the Sunday School Advocate. The Church is prospering. The chief is a local preacher."¹⁷

By the 1850s, the Indians at Kazier had established the cemetery that remains today. Evidently they had had another one, nearer the river. Here are stones with dates of death as early as 1855 and 1857. About 1854 the Indian Churches began to have a great problem with liquor. In earlier times selling liquor to the Indians had often been frowned upon. An early state prohibition law had been declared void by the supreme court. This left the Saginaw valley without laws in this regard. Predatory traders poured out a flood of iniquity, in the form of intoxicating drinks.. upon our Indians." The mission leaders worked hard to return the Indians to temperate living.¹⁸

By the 1850s annual Indian camp-meetings had been organized, in this area. A camp meeting consisted of evangelistic services held in an outdoor setting, for a week or more. In early Methodism it was often substituted for the summer quarterly meeting. In July 1856, Peter Marksman left Janesville(Kawkawlin, the mission to the north of Kazier) and went back to the Upper Peninsula to visit families and beloved scenes, as well as old friends. He attended a large Indian camp-meeting at Point Iroquois, near the Soo. He then went on to attend the Kewawenon camp-meeting. In the late summer he returned by steamer to Detroit. Then he traveled the Detroit and Milwaukee Railroad to Fentonville, the end of the line. He next went by stage to Flint, thence out to the camp-meeting. This evidently was the one held in Taymouth Township. The crowd was large, about 1,000 Indians and a considerable number of white people. His colleague Peter Johnson rejoiced that he was safely back and able to help with the meeting. And Marksman rejoiced to meet here an Indian who had been converted under his preaching 15 years before at Lakeville, who was "still faithful in the service of our Heavenly Father."¹⁹

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At this time the Indians were in a restless mood and their morale was low. Afflicted by the white man's diseases, their population was declining. They felt the conflict of cultures, the pressure from the increasing white population, many of whom had the traditional white hatred of the Indian. In the southern part of Michigan, nearly all the Indians had been forced to go west some years before. Now the government was floating rumors that all the Indians might be collected together in a reservation in Isabella County, or that something else might happen.

Some government and mission leaders felt that it would be better to collect the Indians together in a small reservation in Isabella County, somewhat away from the white settlements. They did not anticipate how rapidly white settlement would move toward the interior. The mission leaders felt that the Indians must become farmers in settled communities, if they were to be civilized and Christianized. Since 1848 with the advice and help of Bishop Janes, the Missionary Society and the Indians themselves had been buying land around the mission stations. White settlers had moved in fast, and it was soon found that the Indians and mission stations could not get sufficient lands. The plan was devised 1856 that the Indians along the Saginaw valley rivers and on Lake Wipissing in Lapeer County, would move to a reservation in Isabella County.

Presiding Elder William Brockway preached at Kazier Mission on Jan. 15, 1856, "to a good congregation of attentive listeners." On Jan. 19-20, he held quarterly meeting at Nipissing and received 30 members on trial. The Indians were to move that summer. In September, Brockway reported: "The most of the people of the Kazier Mission left their old for their new homes in Isabella County within a short time past, about the 10th of August, in company with Brother Johnson and the interpreters. I went with these people to that county to examine and select their lands for their new homes. There were about one hundred men in our party. We selected lots for ninety-eight persons while I remained, and many others have done so since. The country is a vast unbroken wilderness, without even roads that are better than deer paths."

"I have just now received from Brother Johnson the minutes of twenty-six additional lots that have been selected since I left there, and the Kazier Quarterly Conference resolved to have their next quarterly meeting there, though we have not a single habitation better than a cloth tent or a bark wigwam. How soon we shall be able, together with all these scattered sheep of the wilderness, to get fully established in their new location, without a mill or road for many miles, I cannot now tell. But we trust that the years shall be few till this wilderness, and solitary place also shall be glad, and this desert bud and blossom as the rose."²⁰

Not all the people of the Kazier Mission moved to Isabella County. Evidently the Whedon family resolved to stay on the Flint River. A number of people who went, later moved back, discouraged by the extreme difficulties encountered there. Now there was no missionary living here. The mission school was closed. But the Church lived. Daniel Whedon and his brothers furnished strong leadership. The faith was kept alive.

On Dec. 21, 1857, Daniel Whedon married Louise Fisher, with Peter O. Johnson officiating. Daniel and Louise in the next few years had four children: Peter (probably named for Indian preachers Peter Marksman and Peter Johnson), Thomas, Charlotte (adopted at the age of seven), and Susan.²¹ Peter lived the life of a small farmer, and did some hunting and trapping. He was active in the Church, and also in the mixed Indian-white community that was developing.

A fascinating document in the possession of Mrs. James Wheaton, local Indian historian, dated December 6, 1858, informs us that Daniel Whedon had accepted the position of Director of Schools in District No. (?) of Taymouth Township. The mission school was closed. White population was increasing. There was beginning a public recognition of the need for regular tax supported schools in the township. The education and ability of this young Indian was clearly recognized in this election.

The Story of Daniel Whedon

Daniel Whedon, his brothers, and their Christian chief, Thomas Dutton, were carrying on the program of the Church. The old mission schoolhouse had been the church, and possibly was used as a district school for a time. About this time the Indians built a small church northeast of the cemetery, on the bluff of the river. Long afterward historian James Mills⁴ recorded that this was one of the earliest churches built in Saginaw County.

The Civil War had an impact on the Taymouth Indians. Several men were members of Berdan's Sharpshooters. "They had to individually qualify as expert marksmen with the rifle." They had a distinctive uniform. They were in many battles and were of great value to the Union Cause. But unfortunately their valor and ability made their losses high. Today small stones and tattered flags, with blue fields and silver stars, mark their sacrifice for the cause of Freedom, and their burial sites in the Indian cemetery. A small mound was raised in the cemetery²² as a memorial to the Civil War Indian veterans; this is no longer in evidence.

The Indians had a Reservation here in the early years, stretching from the present Nichols Road east to the river, and from the present Burt Road north to Verne Road. In 1864 a Treaty took up the Reservation. The government was to give each Indian family a bit of land which was to be tax free, as long as the family lived on it. The local authorities did not honor this commitment. Many Indian families were ousted in subsequent years, from their plots in Taymouth Township, for failure to pay taxes. The 1877 County Atlas shows that most of the land had owners. Across section 28 is written in large letters the name of the ancient settlement, "PEWONAGAWINK". A dotted line indicates that the Indian Reservation existed until a few years before, and had kept out white settlers before 1864.

In 1867 the Detroit Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, again took interest and assumed responsibility for Indian work in this area. An appointment was made to "Pesahgening Indian Mission." It was soon to be called Saganning; it was located a few miles south of Standish on Saginaw Bay. The missionary here assumed some leadership for all the Indian societies. In 1869 the circuit was named "Kawkawlin and Saggening"; in 1875, "Saganning and Flint River Indian Mission." The missionary could not have spent too much time in Taymouth Township. Apparently for many years Daniel Wheden assumed the primary leadership.

By 1877, there was a schoolhouse at the corner of Burt and Seymour Roads, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of the Indian church. There was a hotel a little west of it, and a sawmill a short distance north. Southwest a half mile or more, past the Episcopal Church, was a store and post office. East from the corner over the river a half mile at Morseville was a grist mill. The country was being developed and settled.

In 1878 the Methodists again made the Indian Church an appointment; it was now named "Taymouth Indian Mission." A missionary appropriation of \$110 was made. In 1879 the Church reported 50 members, and 17 adults baptized. The Sunday School with 30 scholars had an average attendance of 25. The sum of \$127 was raised for salary.

In 1883, Joseph W. Holt, a retired minister living in St. Charles, was appointed to the Taymouth Indian Mission. He served here four years. Holt had entered the Conference on trial in 1846 and was sent far north to serve as junior preacher at the Kewawenon Indian Mission on Keweenaw Bay. After two years there, Joseph and his bride were appointed to the Fon du Lac Mission in northern Minnesota. This meant a long and arduous trip to get there. They took the schooner Chippewa from the Soo and were tossed about by storms on Lake Superior for 17 days! In Minnesota they traveled by canoe up the St. Louis River with its rapids and portages. Later they served the Sandy Lake Mission further into Minnesota. Thus Holt knew and understood the Chippewa Indians, and probably could speak the language to some extent.

The Story of Daniel Whedon

Holt's knowledge and appreciation of the Indian life and character, must have made him very welcome among the Taymouth Indians. We can imagine that Daniel Whedon must have enjoyed talking to him about his hardships and experiences with the Indians in the north, years before.

In 1884 Taymouth reported 52 members and 9 probationers, and their church was only valued at \$50. It must have been in terrible condition. In 1887, Thomas Daniels became the preacher at the Indian Church and served 7 years. He was English, and living on the site of Burt. In 1888 the primitive Indian church was torn down, and some of the lumber was used to build the new larger church. The new church was placed on a foundation of large stones, just south of the Indian cemetery. In 1889 it was reported that \$400 had been spent on the building. Daniels must have been able to tap some special mission funds to make this possible.

The new Taymouth Indian church was a plain frame building, painted white in early years, perhaps 26 x 40 feet in size. It had only two windows on each side. It had some pews and some straight chairs for seating, seating 75 or more people. The stove was in the back of the church to the left, the southeast corner. A long stove pipe ran under the ceiling to the front of the church, the west end. It was an old-fashioned country church with a platform in the front; the pulpit was in the middle, and chairs were on the platform for the choir. The hymnbooks had the Chipewewa words on one side and English on the other. Daniel Whedon, who was now probably past 60 years of age, must have greatly rejoiced in the new church building.

There was an acre of land in the southeast corner of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 28, reserved for the Indian cemetery, with the church placed in the southeast corner. Daniel Whedon in 1880 had purchased five acres of land to the west. "Sept. 20, 1880, between Nathan Wheedon and Mary his wife in Township of Taymouth, and Daniel Wheeden of the same place, That the said parties of the first part for and in consideration of the sum of Fifty Dollars to them in hand paid, do grant, bargain, sell.. the south six acres of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section No. 28, Twenty Eight, Township north Ten(10) Range(5) Five east, Except one acre for Burring Ground in the southeast corner of said lot this Deed conveys five acres of land... Nathan & Mary Wheadon. 21 Arthur Ross Notary Public."

An interesting document has survived from the year 1890, an exhorter's license for Daniel Whedon.

"RENEWAL OF EXHORTER'S LICENSE

To all whom it may concern,

This Certifies, That the License of Daniel Whedon as an Exhorter in the Methodist Episcopal Church is hereby renewed. Signed by order of the Taymouth Mission Conference of the Saginaw District, of the Detroit Annual Conference.

2 day of September, 1890.

S. Reed, President."

Rev. Seth Reed, who had conducted the funeral for Rev. Lovel Harris of the Kazier (Taymouth) Indian Church in 1849, was now the Presiding Elder of the Saginaw District, and 67 years old. In 1848 he had attended a large Indian camp-meeting on the Cass River with 1,000 people in attendance, and won their admiration with an eloquent sermon and an Indian name meaning, "Straight Up Through the Sky."¹² Now he was tall and straight and thin, with a long white pointed beard. He had dedicated the new church at nearby Burt on Dec. 30, 1888, and probably had dedicated the Indian church, although no record has been found of this.

Daniel Whedon was called a Methodist preacher by all who knew him. Probably he had had a Local Preacher's License for years. Perhaps by this time he felt he would not be so active and only wanted an Exhorter's License. Yet it is possible that an Exhorter's License was all that Daniel had ever had. The duties and privileges of an Exhorter were to hold meetings for prayer and exhortation, and to attend all session of the Quarterly Conference. At campmeetings, the early quarterly meetings, or key evangelistic services, following a sermon, the Exhorter would get up to exhort, and often really preach a second sermon.

The Story of Daniel Whedon

One informant told of a minister preaching at the Indian Church, and of Dan Wheaton interpreting his message to the Indians. Wheaton lifted up his arm and said, "If you love the Saviour, meet Him in Ishpeming("In the sky, or heaven")." Saginaw historian Fred Dustin paid tribute to him. "Wheaton was a highly intelligent person and his native eloquence was such that he left one with a deep impression of having met an unusual personage. At the time I knew him he was in his eighties.. He had the respect of all, both Indian and White, who knew him. Mr. Wheaton gave the author much information.. It is the author's regret that circumstances prevented him.. from taking extensive notes from such a sound authority. Mr. Wheaton had an excellent English vocabulary."²³

Mr. Dustin obtained of Daniel Wheaton(as he was called by 1910), the meaning of many Indian names in the area. Here are a few.

Kawkawlin -- "Pickerel Place"

Pinconning -- "The place of the wild potato", a small tuber which grew in quantities along Pinconning Creek.

Misteguay Cree -- a corruption of Me-zhe-say,"Wild turkey."

Sebewaing -- "Little River"

Bad River -- Translation of "Maw-twhi-Sebe", named because of the difficulty of navigating it.

Shiawassee -- "Green River."

Chesaning -- "Big Rock Place." There was formerly a great limestone rock in the river, later blasted and used for lime.

By 1900 perhaps, Daniel Whedon ceased to perform ministerial functions, or be active in the Church. The county historian later wrote,"For a few years before his death.. Mr. Wheaton felt the infirmities of age, and it was with great reluctance that he relinquished what to him was a great privilege--the preaching of the simple gospel to his people."²⁴

Daniel now appeared to many perhaps as a simple old man who did a little farming and trapping. In his old age he used to trap along Pine Run Creek east of the river. One time he came in looking forlorn,"Did you see anybody trapping along here?" Daniel reported that his traps were gone, also one animal, whom he could tell had been caught. Then he made a remark, reflecting his own integrity and honesty, "Better I die, as steal."²⁵

An informant told us that around 1910, at the end of Daniel's life, the Indian Church was active. The District School No. 3, at East Burt and Seymour Roads, was over half Indian. As a boy and youth my friend often visited the Indian Church. The men sat on the left side, the women on the right side, according to the primitive Methodist custom. The singing always impressed him and other white visitors. "Boy, what singing! Never heard such singing, without music; their voices seemed to just float; you could almost see them, and hear them all over the area."²⁶

The Indians used to organize hunts in this period and invite the whites to participate. The hunters would line up, driving the game ahead of them and usually be successful. Afterwards the Indians and whites would cook, and hold a feast together at the church. For the Indian funerals, the people always walked, carrying their dead to the cemetery, with the church bell tolling. The Indian Church used to have revivals, with Indian preachers coming in, often from Walpole Island in Canada. In the pre-World War I days, the Indian Church still held its annual camp meeting, now in the park on the east side of the river, just north of the bridge. In earlier times the camp meetings were held on the fairgrounds site on the river a mile south on the township line. And then there were camp meetings held on the Mt. Pleasant Reservation, which attracted Indians from Taymouth. The Church was carrying on, and the world remained quite stable through Daniel Whedon's life.

The Story of Daniel Whedon,
An Early Indian Student at Albion

The Indian Church was carrying on, but no longer had the spiritual vitality of earlier days. Daniel Whedon's long years of leadership were ended; his life span was nearly at its end. Fred Dustin, Saginaw County historian, tells that he had visited Daniel in the winter of 1909 and spent several profitable hours visiting with him. "I was deeply impressed with his genuine piety, his remarkable depth of thought and the poetic imagery and eloquence that continually manifested itself in his conversation."

Mr. Dustin visited Daniel Wheaton (as he was now known) again on July 14, 1911. "He was extremely feeble; the day was hot and the old man was suffering.. Never have I seen a more touching display of loving solicitude than in the tender ministrations of the age wife who now survives him. By a little gentle persuasion I was able to secure a very good photograph of the worthy old couple as he sat in the shade near the little cabin with Mrs. Wheaton standing at his side. When I left them Father Wheaton said: "You will not see me again. Tell George, my son, to come."²⁷

Daniel Wheaton failed rapidly, and fell asleep so appropriately on Sunday morning, August 27, 1911, to cross over to his heavenly reward. He had reached probably the age of 85, and lived a most worthy life. The funeral was held on Monday afternoon in the Taymouth Methodist Indian Church he had served so long and well. He was buried in the Indian cemetery next door where so many of his friends and relatives had been laid to rest. It was hoped at the time that a fitting memorial would be raised there to the memory of Daniel Wheaton, but this was never accomplished.

We have wanted to record on these pages an account of a one-time Indian lad who studied two years at the early Methodist Seminary in Albion, and who was inspired and enabled to live a noble and good life of service amid a needy people.

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