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# Creating Interracial Intimacies: British North America, Canada, and the Transatlantic World, 1830–1914

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### Résumé de l'article

Cet article explore les relations domestiques d'un groupe de couples interracialisés : Kahkewaquonaby/Peter Jones et Eliza Field; Nahnebahwequa/Catherine Sutton et William Sutton; Kahgegagahbowh/George Copway et Elizabeth Howell; et John Ojijatekah Brant-Sero, Mary McGrath et Frances Kirby. Ces alliances ont été nouées dans le contexte et, dans plusieurs cas, en raison des mouvements des peuples autochtones par-delà de nombreuses frontières en Amérique du Nord britannique, au Canada et en Grande-Bretagne. Faisant fond sur l'historiographie autochtone canadienne et l'histoire coloniale et impériale, notamment celle s'intéressant aux relations hommes-femmes, cet article explique que les réseaux internationaux du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, comme l'évangélisme, le mouvement missionnaire et les circuits des représentations autochtones, ont façonné ces unions et joué un rôle central dans le rapprochement de ces personnes. Cependant, l'article insiste aussi sur l'importance d'explorer ces processus d'envergure à l'échelle de la biographie et de l'individu. Il révèle le dénouement et les dynamiques qui sous-tendent ces relations et fait valoir qu'aucune catégorie et aucun mode d'étude érudite à elle seule ne peut expliquer l'issue de ces relations. Cet article souligne aussi la variété et le nombre, au sein de ces couples, des rapports hommes-femmes, des classes sociales et des races. Il présente donc une nouvelle dimension à l'historiographie des relations intimes entre Autochtones et Blancs en Amérique du Nord qui, jusqu'à présent, a surtout porté sur les relations entre hommes blancs et femmes autochtones ou métisses. L'article conclut par un questionnement sur la façon dont ces relations compliquent notre compréhension de concepts utilisés couramment en histoire impériale, à savoir la domesticité et le foyer.

# Creating Interracial Intimacies: British North America, Canada, and the Transatlantic World, 1830–1914

CECILIA MORGAN

## *Abstract*

*This article explores the domestic relationships of a number of interracial couples: Kahkewaquonaby/Peter Jones and Eliza Field; Nahnebahwequa/Catherine Sutton and William Sutton; Kahgegagahbowh/George Copway and Elizabeth Howell; and John Ojijatekah Brant-Sero, Mary McGrath, and Frances Kirby. These unions took place within the context of and, in a number of instances, because of Native peoples' movements across a multiple boundaries and borders within British North America, Canada, and Britain. Based in both Canadian Native historiography and work in colonial and imperial history, particularly that which focuses on gender, this article argues that international networks, such as nineteenth-century evangelicalism, the missionary movement, and circuits of performance, shaped such unions and played a central, constitutive role in bringing these individuals together. However, the article also points to the importance of exploring such large-scale processes at the biographic and individual level. It points to the different outcomes and dynamics of these relationships and argues that no one category or mode of scholarly explanation can account for these couples' fates. The article also points to multiple and varied combinations of gender, class, and race in these relationships. It thus offers another dimension to the historiography on Native-white intimate relationships in North America which, to date, has focused mostly on relationships between white men and Native or mixed-race/Métis women. The article concludes by considering how these relationships complicate our understanding of commonly used concepts in imperial history, specifically those of domesticity and home.*

## *Résumé*

*Cet article explore les relations domestiques d'un groupe de couples interraciaux : Kahkewaquonaby/Peter Jones et Eliza Field; Nahnebahwequa/Catherine Sutton et William Sutton; Kahgegagahbowh/George Copway et Elizabeth Howell; et John Ojijatekah Brant-Sero, Mary McGrath et Frances Kirby. Ces alliances ont été nouées dans le contexte et, dans plusieurs cas, en*

*raison des mouvements des peuples autochtones par-delà de nombreuses frontières en Amérique du Nord britannique, au Canada et en Grande-Bretagne. Faisant fond sur l'historiographie autochtone canadienne et l'histoire coloniale et impériale, notamment celle s'intéressant aux relations hommes-femmes, cet article explique que les réseaux internationaux du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, comme l'évangélisme, le mouvement missionnaire et les circuits des représentations autochtones, ont façonné ces unions et joué un rôle central dans le rapprochement de ces personnes. Cependant, l'article insiste aussi sur l'importance d'explorer ces processus d'envergure à l'échelle de la biographie et de l'individu. Il révèle le dénouement et les dynamiques qui sous-tendent ces relations et fait valoir qu'aucune catégorie et aucun mode d'étude érudite à elle seule ne peut expliquer l'issue de ces relations. Cet article souligne aussi la variété et le nombre, au sein de ces couples, des rapports hommes-femmes, des classes sociales et des races. Il présente donc une nouvelle dimension à l'historiographie des relations intimes entre Autochtones et Blancs en Amérique du Nord qui, jusqu'à présent, a surtout porté sur les relations entre hommes blancs et femmes autochtones ou métisses. L'article conclut par un questionnement sur la façon dont ces relations compliquent notre compréhension de concepts utilisés couramment en histoire impériale, à savoir la domesticité et le foyer.*

Stories of individuals and their experiences lived under colonial rule have taken on a new importance as historians struggle to understand the contours and lineaments of the histories of colonialism and imperialism. A number of historians of empire have shown that adopting a biographical approach can help us to understand the interplay between individuals, with their own specific circumstances and trajectories, and the large, macro-level of historical processes and institutions and of imperial networks and colonial formations. While historians must be mindful of the power relations that shape our ability to write such narratives — some lives have been deemed more worthy of documentation than others, some individuals' life stories can be told only through the lenses of others — nevertheless work on a range of imperial projects has demonstrated the very rich possibilities that arise when individual and collective biographies take centre stage in our research and writing.<sup>1</sup> The ways in which we grapple with questions of negotiation, cooperation, collaboration, and resistance can become more nuanced — albeit no less complicated — when historians try to determine the meanings of colonial and imperial rule for those individual men and women, colonizer and colonized, involved. As David Lambert and Alan Lester

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1 For such approaches, for example, see Antoinette Burton, *At the Heart of the Empire: Indians and the Colonial Encounter in Late-Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

write, “each colonial life provides insight not only . . . into the heterogeneity of the empire and the multiple subject positions that arose from the ‘variegated terrain.’”<sup>2</sup>

Such a terrain involves the multiple forms of connection and circulation that existed not only between both colonies themselves, but also between colonies and metropolitan locations, ones that intensified over the course of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> To be sure, historians have cautioned that, in our zeal to explore empire’s range and reach, we must not forget that imperial encounters were staged and enacted in specific times and places, that connection and circulation took place within the context of the local and the embodied.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, for indigenous peoples, imperial connections could be far more than just interesting social and cultural ties: connections or networks could be maintained through the linkages of a shared history of defeat, loss, and grief.<sup>5</sup>

Keeping in mind, then, the political dimensions that surround these issues of connection and circulation, a focus on individuals can throw into relief questions of place and space in a number of ways, allowing us to explore both the opportunities and dislocations of imperial movement, the dismantling of certain places and their remaking and reconstituting. As Antoinette Burton and Tony Ballantyne have argued, the spaces of empire were “animated . . . by the collisions and collisions of imperial bodies with colonial power and colonial bodies with imperial regimes,” encounters that “sponsored historically specific, and often politically unsettling, forms of intimacy across a variety of interconnected worlds.”<sup>6</sup> For those Native men and women who travelled from British North

2 David Lambert and Alan Lester, “Imperial spaces, imperial subjects,” in *Colonial Lives Across the British Empire: Imperial Careering in the Long Nineteenth Century*, eds. David Lambert and Alan Lester (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1–31.

3 For an overall discussion of these developments, see Christopher Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World 1780–1914* (Malden, MA: Oxford University Press, 2004).

4 This question is addressed succinctly in Adele Perry’s introduction in *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849–1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

5 For example, see Philip J. Deloria, “Places Like Houses, Banks, and Continents: An Appreciative Reply to the Presidential Address,” *American Quarterly* 58, no. 1 (March 2006): 23–9; Katherine Ellinghaus, “Strategies of Elimination: ‘Exempted’ Aborigines, ‘Competent’ Indians and Twentieth Century Assimilation Policies in Australia and the United States,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 18, no. 2 (2007): 202–25, <<http://id.erudit.org/iderudit/018229ar>>, (viewed 12 August 2008). But also see John Maynard, “Transcultural/transnational interaction and influences on Aboriginal Australia,” in *Connected Worlds: History in Transnational Perspective*, eds. Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake (Canberra: ANU E-Press, 2005), 195–208.

6 Antoinette Burton and Tony Ballantyne, “Introduction: the Politics of Intimacy in an Age of Empire,” in *Moving Subjects: Gender, Mobility, and Intimacy in an Age of Global Empire*, eds., Antoinette Burton and Tony Ballantyne, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 4.

America and the Dominion of Canada to Britain from the 1830s until the early twentieth-century, movement and circulation meant crossing a number of boundaries: oceans, national borders, class divides, educational institutions, and frameworks of knowledge, all shaped and inflected by racially-inflected constructs and practices. But they also circulated through the thresholds of households and family relations; in doing so they both encountered and created significant spaces of intimacy and new networks of family and kin.<sup>7</sup>

Some relationships were long lasting and brought, it seems, comfort and sustenance to both partners. Such was the case for the Ojibwa Methodist minister Kahkewaquonaby (Peter Jones, 1802–1856) and his English wife Eliza Field (1804–1890), as well as for his niece, Nahnebahwequa (Catherine Sutton, 1824–1865) and her husband William, an English shoemaker, farmer, and Methodist lay preacher (1811–1894).<sup>8</sup> Other relationships, though, were marked by considerable tensions and stress, ones in which individual personalities meshed with the exigencies of colonial relationships and history. The marriage of Ojibwa Methodist minister, author, and Native advocate Kahgegagahbowh (George Copway, 1818–1869) and English-born Elizabeth Howell (1816–1904), and the unions of the Mohawk performer John Ojijatekha Brant-Sero (1867–1914) in England with, first, Mary McGrath (1871–?) and then Frances Kirby (1848–19?) exemplify how fraught such intimate ties might be.

The trajectories of these relationships did not fall into any one pattern or category: their varied histories suggest the complexities of intimate relations, forged both within and against colonial power. At times the creation of these ‘intimate zones’ within the colonial context might necessitate an individual’s movements across national and colonial boundaries: for example, Nahnebahwequa, her land taken from her partly because of her marriage to

7 This article is part of a larger project that explores the movement of Native and country-born people from British North America and Canada to Britain and a number of British colonies, Europe, and the United States from 1800 to 1920.

8 For example, see Donald B. Smith, *Sacred Feathers: The Reverend Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby) and the Mississauga Indians* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) and Donald B. Smith, “Nahnebahwequa,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Vol. IX* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 590–1. Also see Celia Haig-Brown, “Struggling for Justice in a Land of Strangers: Nahnebahwequa’s Struggle for Land,” *Journal of Canadian Studies / Revue d’études canadiennes* 35, no. 4 (Winter 2001–2002): 143–70; Celia Haig-Brown and David Nock, eds., *With Good Intentions: Euro-Canadians and aboriginal relations in colonial Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006). Peter Jones’ appearances in Birmingham in 1846 are discussed in Catherine Hall, *Civilizing Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination 1830–1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 276–7. For Native peoples’ political petitioning in London, see J.R. Miller, “Petitioning the Great White Mother: First Nations’ Organizations and Lobbying in London,” in *Canada and the End of Empire*, ed. Phillip Buckner (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005).

Sutton, travelled to Britain in 1860 to gain an audience with the Crown. Others developed relationships because of their transatlantic travels, ones embarked upon for fund-raising, political lobbying, and opportunities for heightened visibility and exposure.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, for these men and women, the boundary-lines of empire — particularly those fundamental markers of belonging aligned with notions of ‘home’ and ‘away’ — were far from precise, fixed, or unambiguous. For one, they were created and re-created within the context of transatlantic movements, their meanings subject to ongoing revision and recalibration. As well, while these concepts might resonate across gendered and racialized boundaries, they also could hold very different meanings for precisely those very reasons. Finally, the span of time in which these relationships unfolded, the 1830s to the outbreak of World War I, saw critically important shifts in both the colonial government and Dominion of Canada’s policies towards Native people, as well as related changes at the global and imperial levels of the meanings of indigeneity, race, and civilization. However, despite such large-scale transformations in national and imperial policies and practices, other historical developments provided some space in which racial intermingling could take place, and ties of intimacy might be forged.

As a number of scholars of empire have pointed out, colonial encounters at times quite literally “got under the skin,” often to the dismay of colonial authorities, whose attention to classifying, managing, and segregating bodies from both sides of the colonial divide intensified over the course of the nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup> But as we also know, such attempts were never entirely successful and do not constitute the entire story of lives lived within imperial projects. Furthermore, there were moments when racial intermingling was seen as a worthy, at the very least tolerable, practice, one to be encouraged in discrete places and times by fur traders, missionaries, and

9 For Brant-Sero’s public performances in England, see Cecilia Morgan, “‘A Wigwam to Westminster’: Performing Mohawk Identity in Imperial Britain, 1890s–1900s,” *Gender and History* 25, 2 (August 2003): 319–41.

10 The literature here is extensive, but see Ann-Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002); Patricia Grimshaw, “Interracial Marriages and Colonial Regimes in Victoria and Aotearoa/New Zealand,” *Frontiers: a Journal of Women’s Studies* 23, no. 3 (2002): 12–28; Ann McGrath, “Consent, Marriage, and Colonialism: Indigenous Australian Women and Colonizer Marriages,” *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 6, no. 3 (2005): 1–24, <[www.muse.jhu.edu/journal/journal\\_of\\_colonialism\\_and\\_colonialhistory/v0006/6.3mcgrath.htm](http://www.muse.jhu.edu/journal/journal_of_colonialism_and_colonialhistory/v0006/6.3mcgrath.htm)> (viewed 25 April 2006); Peggy Pascoe, “Miscegenation Law, Court Cases, and Ideologies of ‘Race’ in Twentieth-Century America,” *The Journal of American History* 83, no. 1 (June 1996): 44–69; Sarah Carter, *The Importance of Being Monogamous: Marriage and Nation Building in Western Canada to 1915* (Edmonton and Athabasca: University of Alberta and Athabasca University Press, 2008); and Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*.

educators.<sup>11</sup> The tenor of these relationships has been studied by scholars of imperialism, slavery, and race in the United States, and of the fur trade; their work has told us much about the (at times brutal) racially-charged dynamics at work in relationships between Native or indigenous women and white men.<sup>12</sup> Other historians, such as Martha Hodes, Katherine Ellinghaus, Victoria Haskins, and John Maynard, have pointed to the related but different dynamics at work when gender and race fell into other combinations and patterns.<sup>13</sup> In a similar manner, the gendered and racialized configurations of the relationships explored in my research also encompassed a range of varied combinations: a mixed-race man and a white woman; a Native woman and a white man; and Native men and white women.

Perhaps the best-known and most-studied couple in my research is Eliza Field and Kahkewaquonaby (Peter Jones), who met in London during Jones' tour of Britain in 1831–1832, married in New York City in 1833, and travelled back to Britain for his 1837–1838 and 1845 tours, undertaken for both political lobbying of the Crown and fund-raising for Ojibwa education in the colony of Upper Canada, his home. A number of themes characterized this union: their mutual religious convictions and evangelical fervour for missionary work amongst the “poor Indians” of the colony; the intensity of their feelings for each other and the longevity of their marriage; their highly public status and profile;

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- 11 Little has been written on such marriages in Upper Canadian history. See, though, Sylvia Van Kirk, “From ‘marrying-in’ to ‘marrying-out’: Changing Patterns of Aboriginal/non-aboriginal marriage in colonial Canada,” *Frontiers: a Journal of Women’s Studies* 23, no. 3 (2002): 1–8, <[www.proquest.uni.com](http://www.proquest.uni.com)>, (viewed 28 April 2008); also W. Brian Stewart, *The Ermantingers: a 19th-Century Ojibwa-Canadian History* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007). Also see Sylvia Van Kirk, “Many Tender Ties”: *Women in Fur Trade Society, 1670–1870* (Winnipeg: Watson and Dwyer, 1980); Jennifer S. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980); Katherine Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart: Marriages of White Women and Indigenous Men in United States and Australia, 1887–1937* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), chaps. 2 and 3.
- 12 Durba Ghosh, *Sex and the Family in Colonial India: the Making of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Hilary M. Beckles, “Taking liberties: enslaved women and anti-slavery in the Caribbean,” in *Gender and Imperialism*, ed. Clare Midgley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 137–57; Martha Hodes, *White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the Nineteenth-Century South* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997); Alison Blunt, *Domicile and Diaspora: Anglo-Indian Women and the Spatial Politics of Home* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005). For discussions of comparisons of intimate relations across transnational networks and empires, see Ann-Laura Stoler, “Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies,” *Journal of American History* 88, no. 3 (December 2001): 829–65.
- 13 Martha Hodes, *The Sea Captain’s Wife: a True Story of Love, Race, and War in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2006); Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart*; Victoria Haskins and John Maynard, “Sex, Race, and Power: Aboriginal Men and White Women in Australian History,” *Australian Historical Studies* 126 (2003): 191–216.



and the wealth of documentation in which they recorded their feelings for each other. While, as Donald Smith has pointed out, we are not fortunate enough to have a record of Eliza's first impressions of Jones, her diary records the growth of her very strong attraction to Jones and her desire to spend the rest of her life with her "beloved friend." But this growing feeling was not straightforward: Eliza's diary entries for 1832 and 1833 map a trajectory of emotional upheaval which alternated between great joy to deep depression, as she anticipated both the pleasures and challenges that her hoped-for future "in the wilds of Upper Canada" might bring. At times his presence in her life in London was a source of pleasure and delight. On 19 March 1832, "my dearest friend came about one o'clock and stayed the rest of the day. How sweet the society of a Christian friend, we do indeed love another and we feel that it would be our mutual comfort and delight to promote each other's happiness, oh that the Lord would in his own good time give us the desires of our hearts and unite us in the dearest ties of affection and love."<sup>14</sup>

But even the happiness of that day was underpinned by her fear of "how hard the separation will be, and the time drawing nigh soon ... the ocean will roll between us but there is one sacred spot where we can always meet. May that be our solace and happy place of meetings."<sup>15</sup> It was by no means the only time when thoughts of the "rolling ocean" that awaited "my dear K," and other obstacles, tormented Eliza during Jones' stay in Britain. Once she admitted her attraction to Jones, Eliza was initially wracked with apprehension as she considered breaking the news to her intimate circle. "My spirits were much depressed in the evening," she wrote on 17 February, "the delicacy of my situation not allowing me to make any feelings known to any of my friends, a word touching the subject so near my heart was enough. I found relief in a flood of tears, and sweet consolation in being able to pray to my God in this time of need."<sup>16</sup>

Her family, though, regarded her care for her "dear friend" and her desire to join him in Upper Canada with varying degrees of ambivalence. Talks with both her mother and father that reassured Eliza of their blessing, or letters from "hermy dear K" "in which I have the happiness to hear that his mind is much relieved by his last interview with my dear Parents,"<sup>17</sup> were followed by other, more wrenching scenes. In late June a family encounter in which "the conver-

14 Victoria University Library (University of Toronto), Special Collections (hereafter VULVU-SC), Peter Jones Fonds (hereafter PJF) 17-Series 2 File list, Box 4, File 4, Eliza Field Jones Diary, 19 March 1832.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid., 17 February 1832.

17 Ibid., 15 March 1832. "Mama" was Eliza's stepmother, as her biological mother had died in childbirth in 1820. For a discussion of Eliza Field's background as the daughter of a devout Christian and well-off factory owner, Charles Field, see Smith, *Sacred Feathers*, 130–5.



sation I so dreaded was introduced, it was a very great trial to me as my brother J.D. looks on the affair with horror, I am sure prejudice and ignorance are causes of many of his objections.” Eliza was gravely disappointed in herself for not “better bearing his remarks and because I was so much dispirited the rest of the day.”<sup>18</sup> Four months later she recorded a tear-filled exchange with her father, who begged her not to go to Canada, telling her that she would break his heart if she left because they would never see each other again.<sup>19</sup>

Fears for the future of her “beloved K’s” health while they were separated by the Atlantic (not to mention fears for his safety during the crossing itself); concerns that, despite her deep desire to take up God’s work and join him in the Upper Canadian mission, she would not be up to the hardships of being a frontier missionary’s wife; and anxiety that her family and friends would oppose her marriage to “an Indian chief” in a far-away land: even one of these problems might have been difficult to bear but, combined, they appeared insurmountable. Eliza repeatedly attempted to calm herself with the thoughts that “God’s will” would be done, the arbiter of whether or not she married “my dear K,” but at times her entreaties to the divine will had the ring of abject desperation.<sup>20</sup> While her family and friends’ fears seem to have been partially motivated by the distances involved and the imagined rigours of her future life, Jones’ race influenced their notions of the match’s suitability, despite their approval of his work, his character, and his own mixed-race status. Although it was not a secret that Jones was the son of Augustus Jones, a Welsh surveyor, and Tuhbenahnee-quay, an Ojibwa woman, he was customarily presented — and presented himself — in Britain as an “Indian Chief” or a “red Indian.”<sup>21</sup>

Transatlantic networks of communication maintained their relationship once Jones returned in April 1832, to his work in Upper Canada. “Oh what a privilege it is that can convey our words, feelings, and desires to each other by the means of *writing* and the *post*!!,” he told her in January 1833. But Jones could not help but be keenly aware of the problems they faced, as he negotiated with Eliza’s parents, particularly her father, for their blessing. While news of his work at the mission took up part of this letter, her parents’ attitude towards him was the most important question. “And now, my beloved Eliza, a few

18 Ibid., 28 June 1832.

19 Ibid., 31 October 1832.

20 For example, see her entries for 1832: 1, 17, 23 February; 12, 20 March; 25 April; 24 June; 10 August; 4 September; 31 October.

21 For a discussion of the way in which the trope of authenticity shaped Jones’ appearances in Britain, see Cecilia Morgan, “Creating Transatlantic Worlds: Upper Canadian Aboriginal Peoples in Britain and the United States, 1830s–1870s,” paper presented to the British World Conference, University of Auckland, July 13–17, 2005. Augustus Jones’ work as a surveyor has been mentioned but not analyzed by historians as part of the extension of colonial knowledge and relations of ruling, particularly as it pertained to the possession of land.

words with respect to our very important affairs. The anxiety your dear Papa feels on the subject is no more than what I expected, surely he is perfectly right in gaining all the information he can as to my character, connections, and reputation, and I highly approve of the plan of his writing to Mr. — on the subject.” Mr. —, it seems, had a good knowledge of Upper Canada “and is as good a judge to give an opinion as to the trials and difficulties that are to be met with as any one I know.” While Jones waited “anxiously” to hear “the result of his remarks,” like Eliza “it is far from me ... to desire to do anything contrary to the will of the Divine Mind. Should the desire of our hearts ever be realized, I shall endeavour to do all in my power to make you happy and comfortable as far as human efforts may contribute.” And, while Jones knew that “real happiness does not consist in the things of this world but in the service and worship of God,” he considered Eliza’s “greatest sacrifice ... would be the want of such society, as you have been accustomed to enjoy, there are however a few pious, sensible friends with whom you could take such counsel.” Moreover, he had started to make plans “to build a suitable house for your accommodation, and am now making preparations to accomplish this.” In the meantime, he assured her that he was “very comfortably situated, I sleep, write, read, and pray in my study, and board at my brothers.”<sup>22</sup>

Yet even as Jones continued in his work of creating a welcoming domestic space for his future wife, he also confronted the fact that their relationship was far from “private” or a matter that should be determined by themselves and Eliza’s family circle. His discussion of her parents’ concerns were not couched only in terms of race; the Fields also were worried about the distance, the harshness of conditions in Upper Canada, and the loss of friends and religious community that Eliza would endure. Yet Jones was well aware that for some of his contemporaries race was the central — and only — ground on which the marriage could be understood. Four months after he began to imagine their home, Jones wrote Eliza with regrets that

... some of my white friends in this country, who have heard of my attachment to an English lady, have expressed their fear as to the results of such a union. My heart has been much grieved at some of their insinuations in supposing that I had not been candid in telling you my actual state .... But the fact is my beloved Eliza, it is that feeling of prejudice which is so prevalent among the old American settlers (not Indians) in this country. They think it is not right for the whites to intermarry with Indians. Now if this doctrine be true, what must we poor fellows do who in the order of God’s providence are brought to be united in heart to those of a white hue? However, I am happy to state there are those who take a right view of the origin of nations, and their relationship to

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22 UVLVU-SC, PJF, 17 Series 1, Box 3, File 4, Peter Jones Letterbook (hereafter PJL), Peter Jones to Eliza Field, 9 April 1833.

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one another. In my opinion *character* alone ought to be the distinguishing mark, in all countries, and among all people.<sup>23</sup>

Jones attempted to soften the brutality of his contemporaries' racism by reminding Eliza that God "was no respecter of persons" and "If . . . if God be for us who can be against us?"<sup>24</sup>

Nevertheless, Jones was not able to entirely escape public interest in his domestic affairs. As well as enduring the controversy stirred up by the press when he married Eliza in New York City, one that evoked the spectre of white womanhood meeting a sorry fate at the hands of brutal savagery, Jones directly encountered the prurient curiosity of strangers.<sup>25</sup> In a discussion with an anonymous "Yankee" who he had met in Oswego in 1837, he told Eliza that the question of "Indians in Canada" came up, particularly Peter Jones. Upon assuring the stranger that he was "well acquainted" with Jones, he was asked about the "English lady" he married: "how does she stand it 'out there in the woods. Does she seem happy amongst your people?'" Upon assuring the Yankee that she indeed seem contented and, on being asked "what do the Indians think of her do they like her," Jones replied "very much, they think the world of her." His interrogator "seemed disappointed when I gave him such a good account of Peter Jones and his English wife. I had a good laugh."<sup>26</sup>

Tricking the curious and ill informed was a mild form of reprisal for the taunts and attempted humiliations that Jones, in particular, endured. But if his relationship with Eliza brought a degree of public approbation opprobrium or, at least, voyeurism, it is equally clear that their relationship also was a profound source of emotional and spiritual strength to him. When they were both in Britain but separated by his tours, Eliza remaining in her family's Lambeth home while Peter visited cities and towns across England, Scotland, and Wales, he wrote constantly and at great length to her, telling her of his reception by British audiences (including that all-important information: the amount of money raised), the state of his health, the details of his travels, and, most frequently and consistently, how much he missed her and hoped to receive more of her letters. Posted from cities such as Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Manchester, and smaller towns in England and Wales, the letters also are marked by his frequent use of Ojibwa: Eliza often was "my dearest Newish," Jones sometimes wrote passages to her in Ojibwa (telling her that his niece Catherine, who was with

23 Ibid., 1 May 1833.

24 Ibid.

25 The New York *Commercial Advertiser* ran an article that noted the marriage, comparing the couple to Desdemona and Othello, and predicting that, like Hindu widows forced to commit *sati*, Eliza needed to be rescued from her fate. This article was reprinted in a number of Upper Canadian newspapers. Smith, *Sacred Feathers*, 141–3.

26 UVLVU-SC, PJF, 17 Series 1, Box 3, File 4, PJL PJL, Peter Jones to Eliza Jones, 7 June 1837.

her in England, would have to translate), and he often signed himself “your dear hubby Kahkewaquonaby” (or Kahke).<sup>27</sup> As Smith has argued, Jones’ incorporation of some aspects of British social and cultural norms and practices — his great fluency in English, Christianity, European dress, and an acceptance of many aspects of British gender roles — did not prevent him from maintaining strong ties of emotional devotion and political commitment to the Ojibwa.<sup>28</sup> His letters to Eliza also suggest his ability to embody and incorporate seemingly disparate worlds and to do so with confidence, humour, and affection.

Although Jones frequently reminded Eliza that she was — in his words — married to a “Red Indian,” it would be a distortion of their histories to reduce their mutual attraction and shared lives to racial differences alone. As Katherine Ellinghaus and other historians have observed of interracial marriages in the late-nineteenth century United States, such unions “can disguise the real similarities a couple may share.”<sup>29</sup> Despite their different backgrounds, Eliza and Peter also resembled each other in many ways: in their shared religious convictions, their beliefs in the power of humanitarian sympathy, and their desire to serve in the Upper Canadian missions. Moreover, their children were a powerful link: his letters to Eliza from Glasgow, for example, in 1845 are full of longing to see “my darling boys” and entreat her to kiss them and embrace them.<sup>30</sup>

The creation of family did not end with their own offspring. As a number of historians have pointed out, evangelicals and missionaries saw their spiritual and personal connections with one another in a familial light and used the metaphors of family, such as “dear brother” or “beloved sister,” to construct their networks and advance their work.<sup>31</sup> Jones was linked both to a non-Native evangelical family both in Britain and Upper Canada and, equally importantly, to his Christian Ojibwa kin, such as his niece, Nahnebahwequa (Catherine Sunegoo Sutton). Nahnebahwequa accompanied Eliza overseas in 1837 and continued to think of her as a dear and cherished family member. Writing to Eliza in 1847 from Saugeen, her community near Lake Huron, Nahnebahwequa reassured her that, despite a long silence “owing to my bad spelling,” “dear sister my love to you is as great as ever.” She remembered Eliza’s great kindness, material and spiritual, to her as a child, even though she was not fully aware of it at the time. “Some times I feel quite foolish I feel as I could not be happy nowhere, only at the feet of that little woman by the name of Mrs. Jones and

27 For example, see *Ibid.*, 10 July 1834; 5 July 1837, 17 April 1838; 19, 25 November 1845.

28 Smith. *Sacred Feathers*.

29 Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart*, 78.

30 UVLVU-SC, PJF, 17 Series 1, Box 3, File 4, PJL PJL, Peter Jones to Eliza Jones, 1845: 6, 12, July; 4, 9 November.

31 For example, see Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850* (London: Routledge, 1987, rev. ed. 2002).

ask her to forgive me what I have done wrong to her.” Exactly what wrongs she had committed Nahnebawequa did not say; at any rate, she wanted to reassure Eliza that now “Jesus keeps me from harm’s way.” She also asked for Eliza’s spiritual advice, since the missionary at Saugeen “is doing very little at present,” lacked an interpreter, and had troubled her with his declaration that those who could not cry “had not soul as big as nut shell and therefore were not worth so much as a brute.” Nahneebahwequa closed her letter with family news, telling Eliza of the death of her brother-in-law in England (a sad event made more bearable by the fact that he died “happy in the Lord”) and of her husband’s absence in Owen Sound and impending return; she also appealed to Eliza to “never get tired to [*sic*] writing to me for it always does me good to hear from you if you get tired of mine I never get tired of yours do write it is a long time since you wrote last to us.”<sup>32</sup>

Little has been written about relationships between Native and white women in British North America (or in Canadian history more generally) that would allow for a greater contextualization of the “sisterhood” between these women.<sup>33</sup> To be sure, the larger context of missionary discourse, replete with examples of white women’s benevolence to Native women, their conduct a model for the latter, cannot be discounted as having framed or underpinned the interactions between Eliza and her niece.<sup>34</sup> Yet missionary discourse alone does not explain the ongoing exchanges between the two women, ones that deal with both spiritual and secular matters. In all likelihood a complex mixture of

32 VU-SC, PJF Eliza Field Jones Papers 17 Series 2, File 7, Box 5, Catherine Sutton to Eliza Jones, 25 March 1847.

33 Smith discusses their relationship and that of Eliza with the Ojibwa, particularly girls and women, at the Credit River Mission. He argues that those who supported her husband came to accept Eliza, to the extent that her friend, Mrs. John Keshegoo, offered her own child to Eliza to raise after the death of the latter’s first two infants. Smith, *Sacred Feathers*, 148–9.

34 For example, see Cecilia Morgan, “Turning Strangers into Sisters? Gender and the Work of Missionary Colonization in Upper Canada,” in *Sisters or Strangers?: Immigrant Women, Minority Women and the Racialized ‘Other’ in Canadian History*, eds. Marlene Epp, Franca Iacovetta, and Frances Swyripa (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 23–48; Sarah A. Carter, “The ‘Cordial Advocate’: Amelia McLean Paget and *The People of the Plains*” in Haig-Brown and Nock, 199–228; Jan Hare and Jean Barman, “Good Intentions Gone Awry: From Protection to Confinement in Emma Crosby’s Home for Aboriginal Girls,” in Haig-Brown and Nock, eds., *With Good Intentions*, 179–188; Patricia A. Roome, “‘From One Whose Home is Among the Indians’: Henrietta Muir Edwards and Aboriginal Peoples,” in *Unsettled Pasts: Reconceiving the West Through Women’s History*, ed. Sarah Carter (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 47–78; Graham A. Macdonald, “Clare Sheridan’s Western Interlude: The Importance of Being Well-Connected,” in Carter, 79–91. For international work that examines such interactions, see Fiona Paisley, *Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women’s Rights 1919–1939* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2000); Anna Cole, Victoria Haskins, and Fiona Paisley, eds., *Uncommon Ground: White Women in Aboriginal History* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2005).

motives underpinned Nahnebahwequa's letters: respect for the older woman's religious knowledge and experience that Nahnebahwequa, whose evangelical piety emerges in many of her letters and public pronouncements, would have valued; Eliza's long-standing link to Nahnebahwequa's uncle and her memory of their kindness to her as a child; and the importance of family ties within the Christian and Ojibwa communities.

Far fewer sources have survived that would allow us to understand more fully the texture and timbre of Nahnebahwequa's relationship with her husband, the English-born Methodist lay preacher and missionary William Sutton, whom she married in 1839. Unlike her aunt Eliza and uncle Peter, Nahnebahwequa's meeting with Sutton took place not in a London drawing room or missionary meeting, but at the Credit River mission village. Furthermore, Eliza married as a young woman; Nahnebahwequa was only fourteen at the time of her marriage to a 28-year-old Sutton. We can only guess at Nahnebahwequa's motives for marrying Sutton; there is no wealth of correspondence or diary entries to suggest if he, too, was her "dearest friend." Probably her own family ties to one of the most prominent mixed-race families within the Christian Ojibwa community and her own position in this group as a respected Methodist class leader made marriage to Sutton both logical and desirable. Her uncle's marriage may well have suggested to "Nahne" that a union with a non-Ojibwa who shared her religious values and, unlike other British immigrants, desired her community's well-being might bring her both domestic and spiritual happiness.

The Suttons' marriage also was marked by geographic mobility, both within the colony and across the Canada-United States border. Some of these moves, such as their first relocation to the Owen Sound area in 1846, were shaped by settler society's increasing pressures on the Mississaugas to relinquish their land at the Credit River. In Owen Sound the Ojibwa Nawash Band allocated her 200 acres and, on the basis of her Anishnabe ancestry, provided her with written title to the land and made her and her children band members. Other moves were made at the bequest of their religious community. In 1852, the Methodist Missionary Board asked William Sutton to serve as the superintendent of a model farm at Garden River near Sault Ste Marie and, in 1854, to help with a mission station in Michigan. In 1857, the family returned to Owen Sound to find that the land they had been allotted by the Nawash Band had been surrendered by some members and was being sold by the Indian Department; when Nahnebahwequa attempted to buy her farm, she was told that the property could not be sold to "Indians." Furthermore, she was told by the Superintendent of Indian Affairs Richard Pennefather that her marriage to a white man had made her ineligible to receive the department's annuity, offered in partial payment for the lands.<sup>35</sup>

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35 Smith, "Nahnebahwequa," 591; also Celia Haig-Brown, "The 'Friends' of Nahnebahwequa."

Yet while the colonial government thus used Nahnebahwequa's marriage to help rationalize its dispossession of her from her land and her Ojibwa community, her experience with multiple locations, intimate and geographic, appears to have assisted her in her struggle against such restrictions. Nahnebahwequa was chosen by a council of Ojibwa chiefs to travel to England and petition the Crown, a decision that Celia Haig-Brown argues was made based on her oratorical abilities, her familiarity with England, and, in all likelihood, her personal qualities of quiet, unassuming leadership, ones that accorded with Anishnabe concepts.<sup>36</sup> Her journey overseas first took her to New York, where she encountered (in her account, by chance) members of the Society of Friends, themselves part of transnational networks of humanitarianism. On both sides of the Atlantic sympathetic Quakers helped publicize her cause, giving her space in their meeting houses and in the pages of their press, providing her with lodgings in Liverpool and London, accompanying her on her travels, and assisting her with the necessary introductions that led to her audience with Victoria.<sup>37</sup> Nahnebahwequa developed particularly close ties with the Quaker couple Christine and Robert Alsop, with whom she stayed in London. One month after meeting Victoria, Nahnebahwequa gave birth to a son, whom she named Alsop Albert Edward.<sup>38</sup>

In many ways her travels across the ocean and through multiple social settings were the antithesis of those models of domesticity urged upon Ojibwa women by the Methodists, ones which emphasized the primacy of the home and immediate community setting for Christian Native women. However, the need to act as her people's representative and counter the colonial government's assimilationist programme was more significant for Nahnebahwequa and, it seems, her husband, who appears to have supported and encouraged his wife's journey to the metropole.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, unlike that of others, the Suttons' mar-

36 Haig-Brown, "The 'Friends' of Nahnebahwequa," in Haig-Brown and Nock, eds., *With Good Intentions*, 132-57, 138. I would add that the Methodists also valued a number of these characteristics.

37 Ibid., 138-45. For work on these international networks of benevolence, see Elizabeth Elbourne, "Indigenous Peoples and Imperial Networks in the Early Nineteenth Century: The Politics of Knowledge," in *Rediscovering the British World*, eds., Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005); Elizabeth Elbourne, "The Sin of the Settler: The 1835-36 Select Committee on Aborigines and Debates over Virtue and Conquest in the Early Nineteenth-Century British White Settler Empire," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 4, no. 3 (2004), <muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal\_of\_colonialism\_and\_colonial\_history/v004/4.3elbourne.html>, (viewed 23 May 2006). Also see Alan Lester, "British Settler Discourse and the Circuits of Empire," *History Workshop Journal* 54 (2002): 24-48.

38 Haig-Brown, "The 'Friends' of Nahnebahwequa," 143.

39 Sutton's support for her cause is discussed in *ibid.*, 146-7. Understandably, much attention has been paid to Nahnebahwequa's character and courage, less so to Sutton. Although the sources are not plentiful, my future research will explore more fully her husband's willingness to see her travel overseas, particularly in an advanced stage of pregnancy.



riage did not result in desertion or breakdown: it lasted for 26 years, produced eight children, and ended with her death in 1865, at which time Sutton provided a public testimonial to his wife. His tribute spoke warmly of her many qualities and abilities, describing a life dedicated to the service of her people and to God. She loved Jesus and was “capable of describing her feelings and enjoyments with a fluency and clearness that but few were capable of doing.” A “warm friend and a good mother,” she also had often wrestled for her children’s souls.

While lauding her deep piety and domestic devotion, Sutton also celebrated Nahnebabwequa’s ability to move between multiple locations, pointing out that his wife was very much of the world and able to circulate easily in a variety of social settings. Catherine, as he called her, had travelled to England to lay before Queen Victoria “the wrongs of her deeply injured race,” but she was also

A general favorite among both Indian and White people there was something in her natural appearance and behaviour which at once introduced her to the notice and attention of all with whom she came in contact without any effort of her own. I have known her to go on board of a Large Steamboat where the Large Salon was full of Ladies and Gentlemen and all entire strangers and in an almost incredible short time Personally introduced to the whole and become the Belle of the Salon, she was equally at home among all classes of the People whether in the Mansions of the Rich, the Poor Man’s cottage, the back woods shanty, or the Bark of rush wigwam of the Indian, and she was capable of enjoying any and travel under almost all circumstances whether by the noble steamer, the swift canoe, or the slow coasting of small row boats, or bivouacking for the night on the wild uncultivated shore of our Northern Lake, her disposition uncommonly buoyant and no difficulty in finding a subject for conversation she was kind to all and a special friend to the Poor and suffering.<sup>40</sup>

The Joneses and Suttons shared Christian beliefs and their desire to help “the poor and suffering” were, in all likelihood, mutual sympathies that both attracted them and helped provide a foundation for their relationships. To be sure, class relations, as they intertwined with those of gender and race, had different meanings for these couples. William was a lay preacher, not an ordained minister; while sought after by the Methodist Church as an instructor, he lacked Jones’ prominence and social capital in both the colony and abroad. Furthermore, his background was not as prosperous or as privileged as Eliza’s. His obituary states that at the age of 11 he left his parents’ Lincolnshire home to learn a trade as a shoemaker and then left England for British North America eight years later in order “to get away from parental restraint.”<sup>41</sup> Although the

40 Grey County Museum, Owen Sound (hereafter GCM), William Sutton journals (hereafter WSJ), William Sutton, “Memo,” ca. 1865.

41 “William Sutton Obituary,” *Christian Guardian* (13 June 1894).

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Suttons' home at the Credit River was, as Smith argues, "the second most valuable" on the reserve, in 1847 the Joneses' home was worth £124, four times more than that of Nahnebahwequa and William.<sup>42</sup> By the early 1850s, the Suttons were deemed to have made a success of their Owen Sound farm, a not inconsiderable feat considering the area's poor soil; they had cultivated around 50 acres and built a house, barn, and stables.<sup>43</sup> In contrast, though, by 1851 the Joneses had built a large brick home, Echo Villa, near Brantford, which sat on a 30-acre lot and featured a neoclassical design, eight fireplaces, and was surrounded by carefully tended lawns and gardens.<sup>44</sup> As Smith argues, it is likely that Eliza's father helped finance the home's construction, thus providing a very comfortable home for the couple that was beyond the means of the Suttons.<sup>45</sup>

Moreover, by mid-century the different racial locations of Eliza and Nahnebahwequa resulted in different articulations of gender and class for each woman. While her husband's race meant that at times she experienced degrees of social opprobrium, Eliza Jones gained a home in Upper Canada at the Credit while simultaneously maintaining her links to her English family. In contrast, the colonial state's realignment of racial and gendered categories resulted in grave threats to Nahnebahwequa's home and livelihood. In 1847, the Suttons received their Owen Sound property because of Nahnebahwequa's Ojibwa heritage; the couple's economic position thus was shaped to no small extent by her racial identity and not solely by William's abilities as a breadwinner. Ten years later the government attempted to supersede that history by denying her membership in the Nawash Band on the basis of her marriage, thus placing her in a position of economic dependency on her husband. And, although her subsequent activism demonstrates the government's lack of success in its efforts to strip of her identity as an Ojibwa woman, such actions foreshadowed more widespread changes that would occur nine years later, with the passage of the Dominion government's Enfranchisement Act, legislation that revoked the status of Native women who married non-Native men.<sup>46</sup>

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42 Smith, *Sacred Feathers*, 213.

43 Haig-Brown, "The 'Friends' of Nahnebahwequa," 135.

44 Smith, *Sacred Feathers*, 215.

45 Ibid.

46 For a discussion of the Enfranchisement and Indian Acts, particularly as they pertain to Native women, see Jo-Anne Fiske, "Political Status of Native Indian Women: Contradictory Implications of Canadian State Policy," in *In the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Aboriginal Women's History in Canada*, eds. Mary-Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 336–66. In 1899, Catherine Sutton, Nahnebahwequa and William's daughter, petitioned for her reinstatement to the Nawash Band list, arguing that her mother and her children had been unfairly removed from it. She also used examples of Jones family members who had been reinstated at the New Credit reserve. GCM, Catherine Sutton papers (hereafter CSP), Sutton Family History Binder, "Petition, Catherine Sutton to Superintendent, Indian Affairs," 6 June 1899.

The Field-Jones and Sunego-Sutton marriages have left records that suggest relationships that, despite being negotiated within the parameters of colonial power structures, were nevertheless marked by mutual affection, stability, and respect. Moreover, they also were shaped, facilitated, and produced by the evangelicalism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, a movement that posited reformed and reshaped gender relations and the heightened importance of domesticity as the central foundation of society.<sup>47</sup> These ideals and practices were disseminated and refined through those missionary and humanitarian networks in which these couples were embedded. While historians should not overlook the colonizing implications of missionary discourses on domesticity, particularly as they advocated Native women's submission as Christian wives and mothers, in these cases the companionate aspects of marriage advocated by evangelicals (and others) may have mediated the tensions and stresses of these intimate colonial encounters. Jones' public persona was that of an example of reformed masculinity that respected women, Native and white, both as wives and mothers and as participants in transatlantic benevolence and charity.<sup>48</sup>

The evangelical movement's efforts to reshape categories of masculinity and femininity could not guarantee that a relationship would withstand the strains brought on by movement within transatlantic and transnational borders or the shifting forms of identifications that such circulation might bring about. In 1840, the Ojibwa minister, lecturer, historian, and travel writer George Copway married Elizabeth Howell, a friend of Eliza Jones and an English immigrant to Upper Canada. The couple had known each other for five months, having met at the Jones' Credit Mission home shortly after Copway returned from mission work in the United States; he also attended the Ebenezer Manual Labor School in Illinois. Jones, who acted as a spiritual father to the younger man, performed the marriage ceremony and with Eliza advised the Copways about settler society's likely opposition to their marriage. Elizabeth Copway

47 For example, see Davidoff and Hall. For a discussion of these discourses in the Upper Canadian context, see Cecilia Morgan, *Public Men and Virtuous Women: the Gendered Languages of Religion and Politics in Upper Canada, 1791–1850* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); also Morgan, "Turning Strangers into Sisters?"

48 In another aspect of this project, I examine Jones and his fellow Ojibwa Methodist ministers as celebrities within British evangelical networks. For example, see Cecilia Morgan, "Celebrity Within the Transatlantic World: the Anishnabe of Upper Canada, 1830–1860," in *Celebrity Colonialism: Fame, Power and Representation in (Post) Colonial Cultures*, ed. Robert Clarke, Cambridge, Cambridge Scholars' Press, In Press. In his publicity — newspaper articles, reprints of his sermons and lectures, and advertisements of his talks — Jones' marriage to a white woman does not seem to have been the subject of public attention, but at times it smoothed his way within elite social circles. For example, Eliza helped prepare him for his meeting with Queen Victoria. VU-SC, PJF 17 Series 2, Eliza Field Jones Diary, 18 July 1837.

may well have already encountered such attitudes since, despite living at Scarborough, eight miles east of Toronto and relatively close to the Credit Mission, her family did not act as witnesses at her wedding.<sup>49</sup> After their wedding the couple travelled to Minnesota, where Copway had been sent by the Methodists to establish a mission post among the upper Mississippi Ojibwa, work that involved multiple moves because of the ongoing war between the Dakota Mdewakonton Sioux and the Ojibwa.<sup>50</sup>

From then on the crossing of multiple boundaries marked the Copways' life. As literary scholar Cathy Rex notes, "fluidity" and a range of identifications marked Copway's life.<sup>51</sup> The Copways moved back to Upper Canada in 1842, where Copway served as a Methodist minister for Ojibwa communities at Saugeen (on Lake Huron) and Rice Lake, a position which ended in 1846 when he was imprisoned for embezzlement and expelled from the Canadian Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. He then quickly refashioned himself as an American-based advocate for Native rights; he published his autobiography in New York in 1846, gave well-attended lectures along the Atlantic seaboard (from South Carolina to Massachusetts), and befriended American writers and politicians such as James Fennimore Cooper, William Wadsworth Longfellow, and William Cullen Bryant. Copway also promoted his vision of Kahgega, a territory of over 18,000 square miles that he wished to see established in South Dakota. Kahgega was designed as an alternative to the United States' government removal program: it would be populated by over 100,000 Ojibwa and other Great Lakes Algonquin peoples and run by both non-Native and Native governors. Its occupants would hold permanent title to the land and would be encouraged to adopt Christianity and western forms of education.<sup>52</sup>

Although Kahgega did not come to fruition, Copway continued to speak for the "Christian Indians of North America." In 1850, he published a new edition of his autobiography and travelled to Britain and Germany, where he attended the Frankfurt World Peace Conference. In 1851, Copway started a short-lived newspaper, *Copway's American Indian*, which he published in New York; by that time his financial difficulties were beginning to prove intractable and became more pressing over the decade.<sup>53</sup> Unlike the well-documented life of Peter Jones, Copway's movements in the late 1850s and early 1860s are

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49 Donald B. Smith, "Kahgegagahbowh: Canada's First Literary Celebrity in the United States," in *Life, Letters and Speeches George Copway (Kahgegagahbowh)*, eds. A. Lavonne Brown Ruoff and Donald B. Smith (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 29.

50 Ibid., 30.

51 See Cathy Rex, "Survival and Fluidity: George Copway's *The life, history and travels of Kahge-gah-bowh*," *Studies in American Indian Literature* 18, no. 2 (Summer 2006): 1-33. 13.

52 Smith, "Kahgegagahbowh," 32-8.

53 Ibid., 44-6.

difficult to trace. In 1864, he and his brother David worked as recruiters for the Union Army in New York and Upper Canada; in 1867, he advertised himself as a healer in Detroit; and in 1868, Copway returned to Canada, where he moved to the Algonquin-Iroquois mission of Lake of Two Mountains in Quebec. Here Copway converted to Catholicism but died in 1869 just before he made his first communion.<sup>54</sup>

Like the case of the Suttons, little private correspondence has survived that attests to the couples' feelings for one another; there are no letters or diaries that parallel the rich archive left by Peter and Eliza Jones. It is not difficult to understand Copway's attraction to Elizabeth, though, as she shared his religious perspective, assisted him with his religious and political work, and helped compose some of his correspondence and, possibly, a number of his publications.<sup>55</sup> Copway's 1850 *Reflections on a Forest Life* was one of the rare occasions in which he discussed his marriage and paid public tribute to Elizabeth. His wife, he told his readers, had arrived with her family in Toronto from England; six months after they met they were married.

My wife has been a helpmeet indeed; she has shared my woes, my trials, my privations, and has faithfully laboured to instruct and assist the poor Indians, whenever an opportunity occurred. I often feel astonished, when I reflect upon what she has endured, considering that she does not possess much physical strength. I can truly say that she has willingly partaken of the same cup that I have, although that cup has often contained *gall*. I trust that I have not transgressed the bounds of delicacy, in speaking of one who has sacrificed so much in becoming the partner of an Indian missionary.<sup>56</sup>

In his autobiography, *The Life, History, and Travels of Kah-ge-gah-ga-bowh*, Copway did publicly what Jones had done privately, when he castigated white Americans for their rude, inquisitive, and racist prying into his marriage.<sup>57</sup> Yet, while Elizabeth and their child accompanied him on his 1850 trip to Britain and Europe, Copway had little to say about her in his account of that journey. He pointed out to his readers, though, that their trip to Scotland included a visit to Knaresborough, his wife's birthplace, where he found many "curiosities in that romantic wilderness" (although the Town Hall, where he lectured to a group of "warm hearts," was a "wretched" building).<sup>58</sup>

54 Ibid., 46–8.

55 For a discussion of Copway's literary abilities, see Rex, n. 2, 26–7.

56 George Copway, *Reflections on a Forest Life, or, The life, history and travels of Kah-ge-gah-bowh, or George Copway, chief of the Ojibway nation* (London: C. Gilpin, 1850), 116–17.

57 See Rex, 13.

58 George Copway, *Running Sketches of Men and Places, in England, France, Germany, Belgium, and Scotland* (New York: J. Riker, 1852), 282–3.

If he said little about his wife publicly, Copway may well have provided an apt assessment of her character. Elizabeth's forbearance, tolerance, and patience were all qualities, it would seem, much needed over the course of their years together. Leaving the Methodist Church, struggling to support his family, and constantly negotiating his public voice and presence appear to have led Copway to abjure the evangelical model of gender relations. At the very least, maintaining a commitment to domesticity was a considerable effort for him. His biographer suggests that Copway crafted a public persona that was more aggressive and self-promoting than that of Jones;<sup>59</sup> it may have been that over time he also became unable — or unwilling — to emulate Jones' domestic and familial devotion. To be sure, the Copways' marriage survived the death of three children in quite a short period of time, between August 1849 and January 1850; six years later, however, Copway abandoned Elizabeth. Their reconciliation in 1858 resulted in the birth of their daughter Frances (also called Minnehaha) in 1860 or 1861;<sup>60</sup> but, when Copway returned to Canada and moved to the Lake of Two Mountains he did so alone. By that time Elizabeth had left him and taken their daughter to live near family members in Port Dover, on the Canadian shore of Lake Erie.<sup>61</sup>

In a reversal of the customary scenario faced by historians of imperial and Native relations — although one all too familiar to women's and gender historians — we know more about Copway than we do of Elizabeth.<sup>62</sup> Like her friend Eliza, Elizabeth may well have been attracted to Copway because he represented opportunities for meaningful work and experiences outside the more confined realm of domesticity offered by her life in Upper Canada. Moreover, Copway's personality and charm may well have had a strong romantic appeal to the young Englishwoman. As Smith points out, Elizabeth also stood by her husband during their most difficult times, such as composing his 1851 appeal to Fenimore Cooper when Copway was searching for financial support for his paper.<sup>63</sup> Their 1858 reconciliation came at Elizabeth's instigation, after she made a heart-felt plea to her husband: "Oh George reflect for one moment for heaven's sake have mercy upon me let your heart relent and breath the word *forgiveness*, have you never needed it."<sup>64</sup> Yet she was not oblivious to his shortcomings as a husband. In July 1856, she contemplated a final separation, telling

59 Smith, "Kahgegagabowh," 38.

60 Ibid., 45.

61 Ibid., 47.

62 There are a number of references to Howell in the scholarship on Copway, including the fact that she was a published writer and poet. However, to date I have not been able to locate her work. For example, see Rex, n. 2, 26; and also Smith, "Kahgegagabowh."

63 Smith, "Kahgegagabowh," 43–4.

64 As cited in *ibid.*, 57 n.75. It is not clear why Elizabeth needed to beg his forgiveness.

her sister Sarah, "it is very desirable to be loved but to be a slave to an unworthy object is revolting to our pride."<sup>65</sup>

The Copways' marriage was not the only union that began with romantic promise and ended in disappointment and collapse. Near the close of the nineteenth century the 24-year-old Mohawk performer, lecturer, and would-be imperial soldier John Ojijatekha Brant-Sero met 21-year-old Mary McGrath in Blackburn, Lancashire. In 1891, Brant-Sero was appearing in a touring production of the play *On the Frontier* and McGrath, a "good-looking" 20-year-old "tailoress," "fell in love with the chief." Over the next two years they courted and then, according to McGrath's testimony in a Blackburn courtroom, "went through a form of marriage" in Liverpool, after which they lived together "in a house furnished" by Brant-Sero in Blackburn, where McGrath gave birth to a son, John Edward, in 1894. It appears that at the time of the birth McGrath considered herself Brant-Sero's wife, as she described him as her husband on John Edward's birth certificate.<sup>66</sup> However, in 1896, Brant-Sero apparently told McGrath that "a lady had taken a great fancy to him and would educate him for the ministry if she would release him for two years." Not disposed to lose her partner, McGrath refused, whereupon Brant-Sero vanished "and the next thing she heard of him was that he had been married at Preston to Mrs. Kirby, widow of a Church of England clergyman, and reputed very wealthy." Brant-Sero did not appear too fazed by the court proceedings, as he admitted to being John Edward's father and declared his pride in his son. His admission did not save him, though, from being ordered to pay the full amount of child support requested by McGrath and from being served with a writ of breach of promise.<sup>67</sup>

One month after the case Brant-Sero took his new bride Frances to Canada, where they settled at Pinder Lodge, a house on a large estate outside of Hamilton. Here the Brant-Seros conducted a busy social life and hosted large parties, including a lavish, well-reported celebration of the 1897 Golden Jubilee, which included the visit of a large group from Six Nations.<sup>68</sup> In 1901, both were back in England "living on [their] own means" in the parish of Liscard in Cheshire in a house that they shared with five others, including a fine art dealer.<sup>69</sup> Brant-Sero

65 Ibid., 45.

66 General Register Office, England, Application No. 136065-1, Birth Certificate no. 333, issued 9 April 1894, John Edward Brant b. 20 February 1894.

67 "A Mohawk Chief's Romance," *The Derby Mercury* (29 July 1896).

68 "The Six Nations Celebrate the Jubilee," *The Globe* (16 October 1897).

69 British Columbia Archival Union List (hereafter BCAUL), John Edward Brant entry, <[www.aabc.bc.ca/access/aabc/archbc/display/UVICArch-325](http://www.aabc.bc.ca/access/aabc/archbc/display/UVICArch-325)>, (viewed 27 November 2007); Online Census of England (hereafter OCE), 1901, RG13/391, Parish of Blackburn, 14 Larkhill Road, 22; United States Department of Justice, Immigration, and Naturalization, Record of Border Crossings, List E, 20 December 1925. John Edward Brant-Sero is listed as a "commercial salesman" born in England. My thanks to Marian Press, Education Commons, OISE/UT, for her help in locating Brant-Sero and other individuals through the online British census.



had not, however, seen the last of his courtroom appearances. In 1902, he was charged in Liverpool for failure to pay child support (presumably for John Edward).<sup>70</sup> After this point, it is difficult — in all likelihood impossible — to know whether or not Brant-Sero maintained a relationship with his son. Although his mother listed him in the 1901 English census as John Edward McGrath, later in his life John Edward went by the surname Brant and kept genealogical records attesting to his descent from Joseph Brant. At the very least, then, he was aware and proud of his Mohawk ancestry: what he thought of his absent father, though, is another question.<sup>71</sup>

Although not quite as clearly-expressed as those of her fellow countrywoman Eliza Field, Frances Kirby's motivations can be pieced together from a range of sources and contexts. Kirby, it seems, linked both the publicly expressed and sanctioned late-Victorian metropolitan fascination with indigenous "others" with more illicit private fantasies and desires. Motivated, it seems, by William Cody's Wild West Show, in 1890 Kirby travelled to Alberta, where she amassed a collection of artifacts from the Kainai (Bloods), a division of the Blackfoot.<sup>72</sup> Prompted by her existing interest in Native people and culture, back home in England she may well have made a point of seeing Brant-Sero perform in the Wild West Show (perhaps she was in the Leeds audience which, in February 1896, gathered to hear him lecture on "Marriage: Ancient and Modern").<sup>73</sup> Although her later letters to a mutual acquaintance suggest that she found her husband unpredictable, possibly untrustworthy,<sup>74</sup> initially Kirby seems to have been fascinated by this articulate, attractive man who presented himself as both Mohawk and British and did so seemingly without contradiction and with great confidence. The prospects of a life in Canada, albeit in a region with a longer history of non-Native settlement and prosperity, but still close to her husband's Mohawk community, may also have appeared far more exciting than life as a clergyman's widow in Preston. At this point it is not known how long Frances remained with Brant-Sero after their return to England; his estate records suggest that, by his death in 1914, they had been estranged for a number of years.<sup>75</sup>

70 See Morgan, "'A Wigwam to Westminster'," 323.

71 See BCAUL, John Edward Brant entry.

72 For a discussion of Kirby's collection, see Arni Brownstone, "Treasures of the Bloods," *Rotunda* 38, no. 2 (Winter 2005–2006): 22–30. Thanks to Sarah Carter for telling me about Kirby's trip and pointing me to Brownstone's article.

73 *The Era* (22 February 1895), Issue 2996.

74 See Brownstone, 27.

75 While I initially believed that he had left Frances Kirby in Canada, they are listed as living together in the 1901 Census in Liscard, Cheshire (OCE, RG13/3401). See Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Estate of John Brant-Sero, RG-10, M-2635, J. Obed Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Emigration, Department of the Interior, London, to the Secretary, Department of Indian Affairs, 20 November 1914. Penny Petrone, Brant-Sero's biographer,

In contrast, what of Mary McGrath's role in his life and her desires? There are only fragments out of which the outline of McGrath's life may be constructed. The little we know of her comes not from coverage of her social life, but rather from the census and the newspaper account of her court case against her child's father. McGrath came from a rather different echelon of British society than Kirby: born in India to an Irish mother, she was young, single, and worked as a "machinist" or "tailoress."<sup>76</sup> Was she won over by Brant-Sero's charm as a "Mohawk prince," an enactment of masculinity that combined elements of those captivity tales and Wild West narratives that circulated within British popular culture at the turn of the century with that of the worldly traveller who played a white man in *On the Frontier* in her hometown of Blackburn? Just as Eliza Field may have seen Peter Jones as the personification of the early nineteenth-century missionary movement's achievements and, simultaneously, her "beloved K" — an "Indian chief" who was also her "dear hubby Kahke" — so, too, might McGrath have seen Brant-Sero as the embodiment of late nineteenth-century wider, racially-inflected desires and fantasies: a figure that might then have been overwritten by that of an unreliable partner who deserted her and their child in order to better himself economically and socially.<sup>77</sup>

While the sources tell us little directly about Brant-Sero's motives and feeling towards his partners, the ethnic and, in particular, class differences between McGrath and Kirby surely shaped the type of relationship he forged with these women. His union with McGrath appears — at least on the surface — to have been shaped by romantic and sexual feelings; certainly McGrath could not offer him the chance to move into the English middle class and finesse the imperial connections that Brant-Sero prized in his professional life.<sup>78</sup> Frances' respectability as a clergyman's widow, her interest in Native cultures, and the financial stability that she apparently offered may well have been attractive to

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also believed that the couple separated before his departure for England. Penny Petrone, "John Ojijatekah Brant-Sero," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Vol. XIV* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 137–9.

76 For McGrath, see "A Mohawk Chief's Romance"; also OEC, 1891, RG12/3395, Blackburn, 24.

77 My sources are not forthcoming on the question of sexuality in any of these relationships. The "longing" that the Joneses speak of in their diaries and letters may well have included both emotional and sexual desire; however, it is difficult — and probably ahistorical — to separate these elements out neatly, particularly as they were bound up with religious beliefs and values. Ellinghaus also points to the difficulty of discussing sexual desire and attraction in these relationships, but suggests that, late in the nineteenth century, some white women expressed a frank desire for a relationship with a Native man based on sexualized fantasies. Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart*, 103–4.

78 As well as acting as an advisor to the Ontario Provincial Archaeologist, David Boyle, Brant-Sero gave a number of papers to learned societies in Chicago and Britain. Morgan, "'A Wigwam to Westminster,'" 322–3).

him; all would have advanced his career as a lecturer and authority on the Mohawk. His baptism into the Anglican church, for example, was probably part of the bargain struck between the two as a precondition for the marriage: Brant-Sero was not a notably religious man, at least not so far as Christianity was concerned, and changing denominations may have seemed to him a matter of convenience and expediency.

When put alongside his public performances in both Canada and Britain, his unions with these two British women also suggest that the intimate might be used to reinforce publicly performed personas. As I have argued elsewhere, Brant-Sero performed a highly physical, often flamboyant type of masculinity that merged Mohawk and Western dress and sensibility. Far from being content to be confined to categories of either Native or British, he enjoyed displaying his abilities to move across racial and imperial boundaries, claiming multiple spaces and identities in the process.<sup>79</sup> Unlike Jones or, in the early stages of his marriage, Copway, for whom domestic life was fundamental and underpinned public work and achievement, Brant-Sero seems to have reversed these relationships. Creating intimate relationships and, in the case of McGrath, new kin networks with white women may well have been yet another marker of his desire to counter imperial discourses: those who frowned upon such liaisons and, in particular, those who saw his people as a dying race, incapable of contending with the stresses and strains of modernity. Although the trajectory of his intimate relationships was not, as we have seen, under Brant-Sero's control, nevertheless his conception of gender relations and domesticity merged both personal longings and political desires.

There is no single narrative or argument that serves to explore or explain the range of these individual experiences, no one category into which these relationships can be neatly assigned. These stories encompass a range of outcomes and endings and suggest that, within these networks of empire and transatlantic movements, encountering an intimate "other" might end in any manner of ways, none of them predictable. Colonial circuits of religious benevolence of the early nineteenth century brought Eliza Field and Peter Jones together; they also underpinned the union of George Copway and Elizabeth Howell. While the structures of nineteenth-century empire and movements across and outside formal imperial boundaries shaped these peoples' subjectivities and experiences, where possible we also need to consider the specific trajectories of these individuals' lives, their own personal predilections and traits. These were ideas, practices, and identities that, as Lambert and Lester point out, developed *trans-imperially* as they moved from one imperial site to another.<sup>80</sup> To these practices

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79 Ibid.

80 Lambert and Lester, "Imperial spaces, imperial subjects," 2.

and identities, which in their study are primarily those of the public realm, I would add those of husband, wife, father, and mother. It may well be that the domestic happiness Peter Jones experienced, for example, strengthened his resolve that the Christian Ojibwa of Rice Lake and the Credit River mission villages would benefit from the same model of domesticity and piety that shaped the Jones' household.

As Lambert and Lester point out, while imperial networks were both "constructed and maintained by colonial interests," we also should not "overlook the fact that colonized subjects themselves could and did forge new networks which similarly spanned imperial space, some of which were assimilationist and others more deeply anti-colonial in their effects."<sup>81</sup> The new networks of family ties engendered by these travellers' movements fall in between these polarities, occupying a complicated, shifting, and sometimes ambivalent relationship to them. Peter Jones preached of the Ojibwas' need to take up models of European Christian family life, while at the same time fighting for his peoples' right to their land, addressing his English wife as "Newish," teaching her Ojibwa, and signing himself "your dear hubby, Kahke." His niece, Nahnebahwequa, wrote to her aunt Eliza for spiritual guidance; twelve years later, self-styled as a "Christian Indian," she vociferously rejected the colonial government's seizure of her land, making use of those same kinds of humanitarian networks that brought her husband into her life to mount a political protest. Copway pointed to the voyeurism that surrounded his marriage to critique American society and to claim, as Rex points out, a stance that merged both Ojibwa and British subjectivities.<sup>82</sup> Finally, the fact that Brant-Sero lived with and married British women whom he met on his travels within the metropole also must be placed alongside his denunciation of the imperial government's racist exclusion of non-whites from fighting in the Boer War and his condemnation of German dime novels' depictions of Natives as bloodthirsty savages.<sup>83</sup>

These familial networks and intimate spaces might help bind metropole and colony together even more tightly. In the case of a couple such as Eliza and Peter Jones, they could provide justification for and proof of the superiority of the missionary movement's efforts. However, while some read the creation of the family relations and households that emerged from these meetings within imperial circuits approvingly, as evidence of much-desired assimilation, others viewed them with an ambivalence that at times erupted into the deep hostility encountered by Eliza Field, Peter Jones, Elizabeth Howell, and George Copway.

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81 Ibid., 12.

82 Rex, 13–14.

83 Brant-Sero protested his rejection by the imperial government from active service in the Boer War with a letter to *The Times*, "A Canadian Indian and the War," (2 January 1901). His condemnation of German dime novels is mentioned in "Stands Up for Redskin," *The New York Times* (1 July 1910).

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Taking this hostility seriously entails, too, that we appreciate, as Haskins and Maynard have argued, the great sacrifices and courage these relationships required of these individuals.<sup>84</sup>

A number of interlocking networks facilitated these peoples' travels: religious and humanitarian movements; circuits of performance, spectacle, and display; and, for some, the rise of disciplines such as anthropology and archaeology. As important as these were to their mobility, the networks of marriage, family, and kin — ones that we know played a very important role in Native societies — also should be included in these circuits and forms of affiliation. Including these networks within the ambit of other, better-known ones might make us help to reflect on the meanings of commonly used concepts of space and place, particularly those that demarcate the boundaries of empire. To be sure, a wealth of historiography has pointed to the importance of intimate zones and the bodies that shaped them in the history of colonialism.<sup>85</sup> Nevertheless, as the editors of a recent collection of essays on the empire's influence at home have pointed out, the categories of imperial and domestic are often used to delineate 'away' and 'home' and are usually linked in oppositional forms. As Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose argue, "the metaphorical connections between domestic, home, and nation on the one hand, and their opposition to the Empire on the other, were especially evocative during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries as the Empire expanded and the ideology of domesticity in middle-class England held sway."<sup>86</sup>

There is no disputing the power of these connections, yet I would point out that, for the British women I study, they occupied a very complicated position in their lives. Those whose intimate connections took them back and forth across the ocean and, in particular, those for whom the ideology of domesticity was intricately linked to missionary work among Native people, experienced the imperial and domestic mingled at a number of levels: emotional, social, cultural, and material. To be sure, these experiences would not have merged seamlessly. Eliza Jones, for example, became accustomed to hearing her husband preach in Ojibwa, longed to speak to the Ojibwa women at the Credit River village in their own language, and was exceedingly proud of her husband's work as a representative of his people.<sup>87</sup> Simultaneously, she also

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84 Haskins and Maynard, "Race, Sex, and Power," 216.

85 See note 6; also Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, eds., *Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005).

86 Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, "Introduction: being at home with the Empire," in *At Home With the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, eds. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1–31, 24.

87 VU-SC, PJF 17 Series 2, Eliza Field Jones Diary, 1833: 21, 24 September; 28, 29 October; 20 May 1838; 29 July 1838.

wished fervently that she could teach Ojibwa children — particularly the girls — to wash their faces and hands and was very gratified when they did so; she also hoped to eradicate Native men's habit of spitting and improve the level of cleanliness in Ojibwa homes.<sup>88</sup> And, like many other white settlers, her notions of privacy did not accord with those of her Ojibwa neighbours at the Credit: a visit from an "Indian man" who entered her house unannounced one morning left Eliza somewhat disconcerted.<sup>89</sup> One month earlier, though, she had been awakened from a dream of her English family and friends by her "dear husband's voice."<sup>90</sup>

For Peter Jones, Nahnebahwequa, Copway, and Brant-Sero, home as a space within imperial networks and circuits held somewhat different, albeit no less complicated, implications and values than it might for their white partners. First and foremost, there was the home represented by ancestral lands and by networks of kin and community, both traditional and those reworked by the political, social, and religious upheavals of the mid-eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries, whether at the Credit or Grand Rivers. There were also the physical spaces of homes, whether created at the Credit River (Jones, Nahnebahwequa), mission posts in Michigan or in the Upper Mississippi Valley (Nahnebahwequa, Copway), or a boarding house in Blackburn or Liscard (Brant Sero). Furthermore, for Jones, Nahnebahwequa, and Copway, places that evoked home might well encompass the spiritual family of the church, physically manifested in chapels, revival meetings, and parlours in which prayer meetings were held and that might be found on both sides of the Atlantic. For Brant-Sero, national and international stages, both formal and informal, offered him spaces in which his notions of home might be expressed and proclaimed: home meaning both Mohawk territory, language, and culture, and the imperial histories and webs of alliances in which the Mohawk played a significant role. Brant-Sero's large country home near the Grand River was one such stage, being both his private residence with Frances and a place in which he staged performances of the affiliations of Native and imperial.

However, as we know from other colonial contexts, for Native and indigenous people home and domesticity, the intimate and familial, were concepts and places that, over the course of the nineteenth century, became increasingly subject to the intrusion and regulation of colonial governments and nation-states.<sup>91</sup> To be sure, couples such as Jones and Field or Copway and Howell, experienced the opprobrium of the popular press, the racist curiosity of individuals, and the disapproval of networks of family and friends; however, the state did

88 Ibid., 16, 17 October 1833.

89 Ibid., 15 October 1833.

90 Ibid., 24 September 1833.

91 For a discussion of these developments in Canada, see Carter, *The Importance of Being Monogamous*.

not intervene to prevent these marriages, nor did it seize their children.<sup>92</sup> It may well have been that their movement across national boundaries put them into a somewhat different relationship to the state than those who lived within the confines of reservations or mission villages. Others, though, occupied a different relationship to state power.

The movements of these individuals also occurred within temporal contexts that shifted in tone and timbre over the course of these decades. Unlike those of their seventeenth and eighteenth century predecessors, these travellers' journeys were not taken to underscore or strengthen military and political alliances, but, rather, to contend or engage with the ongoing spread of colonial power across British North America. (Such a historical difference was one which Brant-Sero was acutely aware of, as he reminded British audiences of the Mohawks' historic role as Britain's allies).<sup>93</sup> Peter Jones, Eliza Field, Nahnebahwequa, William Sutton, George Copway, and Elizabeth Howell met and married during and in the aftermath of a large influx of British settlers to Upper Canada, an influx that itself brought both Sutton and Howell to the colony. But their unions also took place in a framework of widespread transnational and imperial concern about the plight of Aboriginal and enslaved peoples, particularly within new settler societies within the British Empire, their encounters with one another framed by humanitarian concerns for those whose lot, it seemed, could be inestimably and infinitely improved by social and cultural changes. Nahnebahwequa and Sutton saw those sentiments start to wane (although they did not die out completely, as her relationship with the Society of Friends shows), to be replaced by an international hardening of attitudes around questions of race that reoriented the discourses about race and civilization towards questions of fixed biological traits.<sup>94</sup>

Moreover, and not coincidentally, the Suttons' lives also were shaped by more determined attempts on the part of the imperial and the nation-state to place Natives — and white settlers — into categories marked by notions of gender and race, ones that assumed Native and white women's dependency on husbands and fathers, whether Native or non-Native. Nahnebahwequa thus lived to see the beginning of an increase in the colonial and then Dominion

92 I do not wish to suggest that this was somehow a better situation for these couples and children or that Canada practiced a more benevolent form of colonial rule, particularly when we consider the large-scale establishment of residential schools later in the nineteenth century and, in 1960s, the "scoop" of Native children from their communities for adoption by white couples. I simply wish to call attention to the different conditions for the mixed-race couples in my study, ones shaped by their particular circumstances and relationships to colonial institutions and international networks.

93 For a study of Native Americans' travels to Britain, see Alden T. Vaughan, *Transatlantic Encounters: American Indians in Britain, 1500–1776* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

94 For a discussion of this shift, see Hall, *Civilizing Subjects*.



state's legal, political, and economic power over Native people, forms of control that became broader and deeper as the nineteenth century wore on.<sup>95</sup> It is telling and prescient that it was a Native woman, Nahnebahwequa, whose movement across both racial and national boundaries brought her into a confrontation with the state that revolved around matters of intimacy.

Yet to suggest that the last third of the century saw only a sclerotic consolidation of imperial power would be, of course, to overlook the uneven distribution of such power, as well as the opportunities afforded by a range of social and cultural discourses and structures. In particular, it would leave us unable to account for the various movements and performances, private and public, of Brant-Sero. His engagement with various facets of late-nineteenth-century modernity, including anthropology's and popular culture's fascination with indigenous peoples, facilitated the creation of yet another intimate space, of other networks of family and kin. In the twentieth century, these spaces and networks then extended back across the Atlantic, witness to the ongoing work of both colonial projects and Native peoples' negotiation with them. Later in his life, having emigrated to Canada, Brant-Sero's son John Edward Brant went on to marry Elsie Christie in Niagara Falls, Ontario, 12 May 1955. The marriage ended with his death three years later, at which point Elsie moved to Victoria, British Columbia, and joined the British Columbia Indian Arts and Welfare Society. Upon her death Brant's family history, "Some Descendants of Joseph Brant," was deposited in the University of Victoria's archives.<sup>96</sup> I would like to think that both voyages — that of his son and his family history — would have made Ojijatekah both pleased and proud.

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95 There is a very large literature on this subject. See Sarah Carter, "Categories and Terrains of Exclusion: Constructing the 'Indian Woman' in the Early Settlement Era in Western Canada," in Kelm and Townsend, 146–69; E. Brian Titley, *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986); and Cole Harris, *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2002).

96 BCAUL, John Edward Brant entry.

and other forms of performance, 1880-1940. Her article on Irish-Canadian actress Margaret Anglin will appear in the collection, *Transnational Lives: Biographies of Global Modernity, 1700-present*, Angela Woollacott, Desley Deacon, and Penny Russell, eds. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

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