



SIX NATIONS OF THE GRAND RIVER: HALDIMAND TRACT TRIAL WEEKLY SUMMARY

Week of October 19, 2026

Oral History Evidence

On October 19, Canada and Ontario objected to the admission of Six Nations' oral history evidence, resulting in a *voir dire*, a hearing in which the judge hears the proposed evidence before determining whether it will be admitted. Any evidence not admitted will not be considered in the Court's final decision.

Allan Jamieson – October 19

Allan Jamieson, a Six Nations member, Wolf Clan Cayuga, and Faith Keeper at Sour Springs Longhouse, testified about his family's history at Five Oaks, located within the Haldimand Tract and approximately 30 kilometers from the Six Nations Reserve. He explained that his great-great-grandmother owned a house at the site, which was later occupied by squatters and subsequently destroyed by fire. Jamieson testified that his family continues to hold annual reunions there. He also stated that his father identified burial grounds at the location and described the area as sacred.

William Fox – October 20–21

William Fox, a professor of archaeology at Trent University, testified as an archaeologist rather than as an oral history witness. His evidence focused on the relationship between Six Nations and the Neutral people during the 1500s and 1600s.

Fox described the Neutrals as a large confederacy in Southern Ontario whose language was closely related to other Haudenosaunee languages. He testified that between 1647 and 1652, the Seneca attacked the Neutrals, capturing and adopting many refugees. He further explained that the Cayuga and Onondaga also adopted former Neutral people. According to Fox, instruction in Seneca language and culture enabled Neutral adoptees to become full members of their new communities.

During cross-examination, Fox acknowledged that there is no archaeological evidence of Neutral villages at the headwaters of the Grand River. He also agreed that he had not presented evidence showing that Neutral

knowledge of the geography of the Haldimand Tract was transferred to Six Nations.

Darren Thomas – October 21–23

Darren Thomas, a Six Nations member of the Seneca Bear Clan, testified as an oral history witness. Drawing on his family's involvement in longhouse governance and his upbringing attending Cayuga, Seneca, and Onondaga longhouses, Thomas described the Haudenosaunee clan system, the responsibilities of titleholders, consensus-based governance, and the roles of the Six Nations.

Thomas also provided evidence regarding the Great Law of Peace, its origins, the condolence ceremony, and the significance of wampum and several wampum belts. He testified that the Haudenosaunee understood the Great Law as establishing a framework for newcomers to share lands and resources peacefully and that the Covenant Chain relationship required ongoing renewal, particularly during periods of strained relations.

Thomas connected the Covenant Chain to the Haldimand Tract, testifying that the grant of refuge following the American Revolutionary War fulfilled the Crown's obligation to protect Six Nations. He further stated that the Crown failed to uphold those obligations by permitting land transactions and surrenders that resulted in the loss of land from the Haldimand Tract.

During cross-examination, Thomas was questioned primarily about the sources of his knowledge. As both a traditional knowledge keeper and an academic, he testified about the origins of the information he presented and the ways in which that knowledge had been passed on and preserved.

*Adapted from a document by JFK Law for Six Nations of the Grand River.
For information only — not legal advice. Current as of Oct. 27, 2026.*

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