

SCAA Colonial Program at Blydenburgh

Our fourth grade students at Minnesauke had a wonderful learning experience at The Colonial Village. The presenters were very friendly, kind and child centered. We appreciate having such a wonderful hands on experience so close by.

Please extend our thanks to everyone involved in this wonderful program. Diane Fish was so kind and patient in helping us set up our visit.

Warm regards,

The fourth grade teachers at Minnesauke School

Kindred to Wyandanch
Tackapousha and the Sachems of Western Long Island
John Strong

Part 2

Crossing the Hartford Line, July 4, 1657

On July 4, 1657, Wyandanch came west across the Hartford Treaty line to Hempstead, where he played a role in the negotiations between Tackapousha and the town officials (RTNSH 1: 45-46; 312-313; Naylor 1994, 175; Smits 1994, 22; Marshall, 1962, 27-28; NYCD 14, 530, 728-29). Hempstead was one of four English settlements under Dutch jurisdiction on western Long Island. It must have been an interesting interaction: two chief sachems resolving a disagreement with the English officials of a town under Dutch jurisdiction. It was most certainly a challenge to the diplomatic skills of the two Algonquian leaders. In the years following the original purchase of the Hempstead tract in 1643 from Tackapousha's father Mechowodt, "the one-eyed sachem," the settlement had expanded northward into Matinecock territory and eventually all the way to the sound. Although their 1644 patent from the Dutch governor included the north shore, Tackapousha, made it clear that the 1643 purchase did not include the north shore. That tract, he said, had to be purchased with additional payments. (Smits 1994, 22; NYCD 14: 728-29).

The two sachems were accompanied by Mangoube, the Rockaway sachem, Checkenoe, one of Wyandanch's counsellors, and four other local headmen. It is noteworthy that there were no Matinecocks present. When Wyandanch asked who spoke for the Matinecock, Tackapousha said that they "had put themselves under him," apparently referring to the 1657 treaty. The text of the confirmation states that it included all the Indians who have an interest in the Hempstead purchase and affirms that "the Montaoke sachem" was among them. The sachems protested that the payment to the Indians was, "so little," and that there was not enough to satisfy all of the family members who held proprietary interests in the tract (RTNSH

1: 312-313; Marshall 1962, 27). According to one of the Hempstead officials, Wyandanch "desired the Hempstead men to give them more. In response the Hempstead men added items valued at twelve pounds, bringing the total cost of the goods to forty-two pounds. The goods in the agreement included, cattle, tools, wampum, cloth, powder and lead. In terms of Quashawam's testimony the presence of Wyandanch and Tackapousha together in these negotiations is significant, suggesting a possible kinship connection linking the two sachems. There were still some unresolved questions about the boundaries of the purchase that would not be settled until the following year.

Although Wyandanch's authority in the negotiations on eastern Long Island rested on English military and economic support, this was not the case here west of the Hartford line under Dutch jurisdiction. The account of the Hempstead officials has the Montaukett sachem taking a leading role in the negotiations with the silent agreement of Tackapousha. "...the Montaukett sachem desired [the] Hempstead men to give them some more. Then they gave then twelve pounds more which made the whole sum forty-two pounds" (RTNSH 1: 313) This assertive intervention suggests that Wyandanch may have had a proprietary claim to the tract under negotiation, perhaps through his grandmother as Quashawam and Pauquatoun claimed.

**Who owned Horse Neck? The Court of Assizes verdict,
September 1665**

A few days before Governor Nicolls declared the end of the "grand sachemdom" on Long Island on October 3, 1665, a decision by the Court of Assizes upheld the legitimacy of Wyandanch's endorsement of a purchase made for the Town of Oyster Bay in 1658 against a challenge by the Town of Huntington.



Munsee territory on Ives Goddard's map

This ruling would seem to undermine the court's decision on the sachemdom a few days later which would hold that Wyandanch had no political authority to distribute tribal lands so far from his Montauk home. There is no discussion, however, of this contradiction in the records of either the Colonial Secretary or the Court of Assizes. A probable explanation here is that the court recognized Wyandanch's authority over the distribution of Matinecock lands based on kinship rather than the fictive political

power of a “superior sachem,” as had been the case when Wyandanch intervened in Hempstead. The court’s decision appears to have recognized, therefore, that the sachem’s authority to endorse land transactions had never been related solely to the military and economic support of the English. The governor and council, while voiding the arbitrary political basis of legitimacy for Wyandanch’s authority over the western Long Island lands, apparently recognized the continuing authenticity of his role in a kinship system. Wyandanch, himself, had never proclaimed himself to be a Grand Sachem. He had, however, testified on one occasion that he held a proprietary interest in Plum Island and hunting territories on the North Fork of Long Island through his ancestors (RTS 1:193-94,204-205) This brings us to another related question about the nature of these family hunting territories.

“Tribal” Territories or Family Hunting Territories?

The existence of such family hunting territories was poorly understood until Frank Speck documented them in his advocacy work for the Algonquian bands of the Ottawa valley early in the twentieth century (Pulla 2006). In his PhD dissertation (1915) Speck, addressed the role of family territories in the Ottawa valley, he defended aboriginal peoples against the assertion that hunting groups had no “sense of land possession” and therefore had no basis for their claims (Pulla 2006, 25ff). He noted that these territories could be passed down from one generation to the next through either the maternal or paternal lines of descent (2006, 22-24). Speck’s conclusions about family territory are supported in the testimony cited above made by Quashawam, the daughter of Wyandanch, the Montaukett sachem.

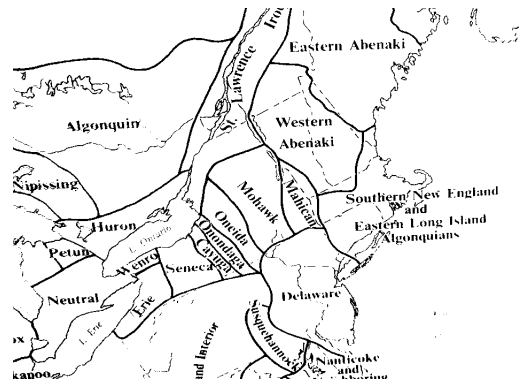


Figure 3 - Frank Speck interviewing Josiah Montour, one of the last speakers of the Delaware Language(at 6 Nations Reserve, Ontario, Canada, 1945)

Western Long Island Algonquian Communities: Munsee or Not?

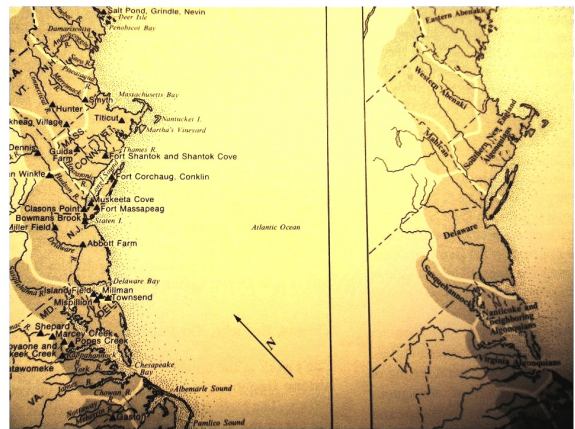
Quashawam’s testimony and the related incidents provide a window into two areas of interest. The first concerns the cultural boundary between the Quiripi-Unkechaug and the Mohegan-Pequot speakers on eastern Long Island and the Munsee-Lenapi speakers on the western end. Quashawam’s assertion that her great-grandmother had territorial claims based on kinship to the Massapeguas and Matinecocks raises questions about the designations in the *Handbook of North American Indians* Vol. 15, Northeast. The handbook has five maps all showing a line running north and south across Long Island east of Oyster Bay approximately where the Hartford Treaty line agreed to by the Dutch and the English. The “Key

to Tribal Areas” map in the front of the volume shows a line separating the *Delaware tribal range* from the *Southern New England and Eastern Long Island Algonquians*. The caption notes that this is a diagrammatic guide and not intended to be “an authoritative depiction of tribal ranges (Trigger, Bruce ed 1978, ix).



Munsee Territories ‘Handbook of North American Indians’, vol. 15, p. ix. (Ed. Note: not intended to be an authoritative description of tribal ranges.)

The same boundary line, however appears on Dean Snow’s map showing archaeological sites in the northeast on Bert Salwen’s map and twice more in Ives Goddard’s article on the Delaware,



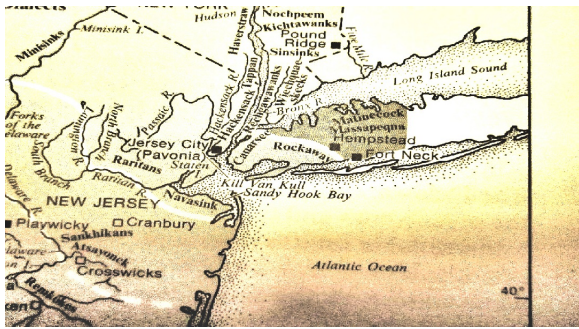
Munsee Territory: Dean Snow’s Map



Munsee Territory : Bert Salwin’s Map (Location of Unkechaug is uncertain).

In the same volume Ives Goddard distinguishes between a Munsee-speaking area west of the Hartford line and a Quiripi-Mohegan-Pequot speaking area to the east (Goddard 1978, 72). The sparsity of data, however, is reflected in his cautious qualifications. “It may be,” he writes, “that Unkechaug should be considered a dialect of the western Connecticut language represented by Naugatuck and Quiripi and that the Montauk should be grouped as a third dialect with the Mohegan-Pequot” (Goddard 72).

In reference to the Munsee, he continues, “A single language appears to have been spoken, in an unknown number of dialects, from western Long Island and southeastern New York State....” In his account of the Delaware he places the Canarsie, Rockaway, and *perhaps* the Massapequa and Matinecock within the Delaware- Munsee speaking group, adding that, it *may be* that the Massapequa and Matinecock were not Munsee speakers at all, but were the linguistic ancestors of the eighteenth century Unkechaugs” (214). Quashawam’s testimony suggests that Goddard’s “*may be*” is too cautious.



Note: These 5 tribes were under Tackapousha in 1657 Treaty with the Dutch and in the 1643 confirmation agreement. (J. Strong)

The second area of interest concerns the nature of the relationship between the sachems who formed alliances with the English and their own extended families. These “alliance sachems” have often been summarily dismissed as “puppet sachems” who had no legitimate authority in their own communities. Quashawam’s testimony and the documents cited above suggest that Wyandanch did have some legitimate authority based on kinship to distribute Indian lands on western Long Island. In fact, this kinship connection may have been one of the reasons why the English found him to be so useful to their interests in the first place.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The documents suggest that Alliance Sachems, to be useful to the English, had to have legitimate kinship connections giving them respect and influence.
2. The Massapequa, Matinecock and other western communities may have been more closely related to the Unkechaugs, Shinnecocks and Montauketts than to the Munsees across the East River, contrary to the maps in vol. 15 of the *Handbook of North American Indians*..
3. The maps of tribal boundaries on Long Island may be misleading. Frank Speck’s research on family hunting territories may be a more accurate reference for the Algonquian peoples of Long Island.

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RTNSH=*Records of the Townes of North and South Hempstead* edited by Benjamin Hicks 1896-1904. 8 vols. Jamaica, N.Y.: Long Island Farmer Printer.

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Kathleen Bragdon-Brown Obituary



May 17, 1953 - June 29, 2023, 70, Kathleen Joan Bragdon-Brown, who was set to retire this year from the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia after 34 years as a Professor of Anthropology, died in New Haven, Conn.

Dr. Bragdon was one of her generation's finest scholars of the

history and culture of Indigenous peoples in New England and a leading expert on the written form of Algonquian languages in the region. Her work combined archaeological, linguistic, ethnographic, and historical evidence to recreate Colonial-era American society, particularly Colonial-period Native American society, in a unique way.

SCAA is honored to have had Dr. Bragdon write the first chapter in our Volume IV **Language and Lore of the Long Island Indians** "*Reconciling Ethnohistorical and Linguistic Data for Native American Long Island during the Colonial Period*".

The Revolutionary War Pension File Transcription Project

The National Park Service and US National Archives and Records Administration are calling on Americans to help reveal the untold stories of US first veterans to commemorate the upcoming 250th anniversary of American independence. They are asking the public, in the next three years, for help in transcribing the pension files. Volunteers can register for a free account with the National Archives Catalog. - CNN

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