

Transcripts of Lecture Delivered By:
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Wyandanch: Sachem of the Montauketts

In the spring of 1637 the English waged a devastating war against the Pequots and nearly destroyed them. They attacked a Pequot settlement near present-day Mystic, Connecticut and massacred nearly seven hundred men, women, and children (Salisbury 1984 220-25; Jennings 1976, 215-27; Cave 1996, 123-67). The victory opened up the Connecticut Valley to English settlement. Lion Gardiner, a military engineer recruited by Governor John Winthrop, Jr. of Connecticut commanded the Fort Saybrook at the mouth of the Connecticut River.

The English victory also opened up a scramble for control over the Pequots' tributary communities in southern New England and on Long Island. The English, the Dutch, and The Algonquian sachems, such as Ninigret, Miantonomi, and Uncas, now began campaigns of political intrigue to gain influence in the region. Winthrop and the English were particularly anxious to gain a foothold on Long Island before the Dutch expanded their control eastward. The Montauketts and several other Long Island communities, who had established tributary relations with the Pequots, were now thrust into the center of the scramble.

Shortly after the Pequot massacre, Wyandanch, a young Montaukett sachem, came to Fort Saybrook to negotiate an alliance with the English (Gardiner 1980, 137-38). They reached an agreement and Wyandanch joined the English campaign to hunt down the Pequots who were still in arms against the English. One of the reasons that Wyandanch wanted an alliance with the English was because he knew that Ninigret, the Niantic sachem, wanted to bring the former Pequot tributaries on Long island under his control.

The tangle of conflicting interests became evident in the late spring of 1638 when Ninigret led a war party of eighty men across the sound to convince Wyandanch that he should ally himself with the Niantics, a southern branch of the Narragansetts, instead of Massachusetts Bay or Connecticut (WP 1929-1947, 4:43-5). Ninigret was attempting to take advantage of what he believed was a power vacuum on Long Island. He hoped to break the newly formed alliance between the Montauketts and English before it could become firmly established. It was a daring plan which would strengthen his position against his rivals, Uncas and Miantonomi.

Shortly after he landed on Long Island, Ninigret sent a delegation to Wyandanch and urged him to abandon the English and accept a tributary status with the Niantics (WP, 4:43-4). Wyandanch refused and went into hiding to avoid capture, perhaps hoping the English would intervene on his behalf. Ninigret finally did catch the Montaukett sachem and pressed him to reconsider, arguing that Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay would take the Montaukett's wampum, but would not protect them as well as the Niantics could. The Englishmen, said Ninigret, "are liars, they do it but only to get your wampum." The English of Connecticut, he continued, "will speak much but do little" (Ibid.).

Roger Ludlow, one of the founders of Connecticut, reported this incident and the quotes attributed to Ninigret, to John Winthrop, Sr. of Massachusetts Bay. The letter was heavily biased towards Wyandanch and was, no doubt, intended to provoke an angry response against Ninigret from the leaders of the two colonies. There was more at stake here than the question of Wyandanch's security. Ludlow realized that if the Long Island sachems became tributaries of the Niantics, who allied with Roger Williams of Rhode Island, Connecticut would lose an important advantage in future attempts to gain jurisdiction over the area. In spite of Ludlow's own agenda, his report of the raid itself is probably accurate, however much he embellished Ninigret's words.

When Wyandanch refused to abrogate his alliance to the English, Ninigret humiliated him by stripping him in front of his people, seizing thirty fathoms of wampum and other goods, and burning several wigwams (Ibid. 44). The Niantics then attacked several neighboring villages, finally convincing some of the Montaukett elders to accept his terms. Ninigret demanded future payments in corn and wampum as terms of the alliance. Although Ludlow portrays this as a coerced agreement, it is possible that there was some genuine support among the Long Island communities for Ninigret because his agents made several overtures to sachems there over the next three decades. In 1669, for example, a Montaukett faction traveled to Ninigret's village and freely offered to accept him as their sachem (RCRI 1968, 2:269-73).

Ninigret's raid was a strategy commonly used by Indians to establish authority over tributaries (Johnson 1996, 40-43). The purpose was not to seize territory nor to kill many people. Ninigret wanted to assert his dominance over Wyandanch in a dramatic gesture. Uncas, an ambitious Mohegan sachem who had very little power and influence prior to the Pequot War, employed a similar strategy as well as some cleverly adapted European diplomatic tactics to help him become one of the most powerful sachems in New England. Uncas's raid on the Pequot community at Nameag in 1647 was very similar to Ninigret's actions on Long Island. The intent of the raid was to humiliate the Nameag, who were allies of the English. Uncas stripped the people, burned their wigwams and stole their goods (Ibid. 40-41). The English reprimanded Uncas, but left the Nameag under Mohegan control.

Uncas, Ninigret, and Miantonomi were attempting to establish themselves as the primary intermediaries between the English and the smaller Algonquian communities in each of their areas. They wanted to control the flow of information, trade, and tribute between the English and the smaller bands such as the Nameag and the Montaukett. Each sachem also seized any opportunity to gain control of one of their rival's tributaries.

Wyandanch went immediately to Roger Ludlow and demanded that the English recover his wampum. According to Ludlow, the Montaukett sachem made a compelling argument. How can I pay tribute to the English, asked Wyandanch, if they allow Ninigret to come and steal it from me at will? Ludlow agreed and so did John Mason, the commander of the troops who massacred the Pequots. Mason took an armed guard of eight men to confront Ninigret, telling him that unless he made restitution to Wyandanch,

the English would send an army against him (WP, 4:45). The Niantic sachem, whose village was only a few miles from the site of the Pequot massacre, reached a peaceful accommodation with Mason.

Wyandanch must have been pleased with the success of his diplomatic efforts, but he also realized how vulnerable he was to such raids in the future. These fears undoubtedly prompted the eastern Long Island sachems to invite Lion Gardiner to establish the first English presence on Long Island the following year. The sachems decided that they would be safer from attack if an English military man took up residence nearby. The English were very receptive because they wanted to obtain a foothold on Long Island before the Dutch expanded eastward from New Amsterdam.

In May of 1639, Gardiner negotiated the first purchase of land from the Indians on eastern Long Island. Whether Gardiner knew about the Stirling patent or not is uncertain. If he was aware of it, he ignored it and negotiated directly with a sachem named Yovawam for the purchase of an island called Manchonat, the place where they all died, located adjacent to the Montaukett lands. The name may refer to an epidemic which possibly wiped out the inhabitants. Yovawam is probably the sachem identified in a later document as Youghco, from Shelter Island (RCNP 9:18). Gardiner promptly renamed Manchonat after himself and moved his family there later that year.

Wyandanch's role in the transaction is not recorded, but he undoubtedly was the one who brought the two parties together. He saw the advantages for trade and military security if the English established a presence near his village. Gardiner and Winthrop, of course, were eager for an alliance which would serve to discourage the Dutch from pressing their claims to this area. These common interests served as the primary basis for a close relationship between Gardiner and Wyandanch, which later became celebrated in local folklore.

Although the Earl of Stirling had intended to establish a colony here, his health failed and he decided to sell the patent off in small parcels to companies of settlers who wanted to establish their own towns. On June 7, 1639, he commissioned his agent, James Farrett, to travel to New England and look for customers. Farrett set up a temporary residence on Shelter Island in Peconic Bay in the summer of 1639 and from there explored the shore of Long Island in his small sloop. He had the temerity to take his patent to New Amsterdam where he announced that Lord Stirling's patent included all of Long Island. The Dutch, of course, ridiculed him and ran him out of town (NYCD 1:285-86).

In 1640, however, Gardiner belatedly recognized the authority of the Stirling Patent by agreeing to pay Farrett a yearly fee of five pounds sterling. Farrett then proceeded to sell a parcel of land near what is now Oyster Bay to a company of settlers from Lynn, Massachusetts (Calder 1966, 78-81). When the settlers arrived and began to construct their homes, the Dutch arrested them and sent them back to Massachusetts. Farrett then sent the company to the far eastern end of Long Island, out of reach of the Dutch, where they established the town of Southampton. The episode underscores the fact that claims

based solely on the right of discovery had no legal standing in international law. Later that fall the settlers completed the dual purchase by negotiating a deed with representatives from the local Indian villages, led by Mandush, the sachem from Shinnecock.

The Earl of Stirling died in 1640 and his family cut off Farrett's funds, leaving him stranded in New England. Farrett sold his sloop and his title to Robin's Island, and mortgaged the remaining land in the patent to a group of entrepreneurs which included Governor Theophilus Eaton of New Haven and Governor Edward Hopkins of Connecticut. Farrett, however, never told the Stirling family that he had mortgaged their patent.

The governors, who were both interested in establishing settlements on Long Island, advanced 110 pounds sterling to Farrett on the condition that he either repay the sum in three years or forfeit all rights to the lands on Long Island. Farrett left for England in 1642 and never returned. When the three year period ended in July, 1644, the governors claimed possession of the Stirling Patent lands. They made no attempt to notify the Stirling family about the foreclosure. By this time the civil war was raging in England and the Stirling family was in no position to protect their interests from Puritans in New England. Although the Stirling family continued to press their claims for several decades, the local colonial authorities on Long Island ignored them (Brodhead 1853-1871, 2:12-12).

A Dutch war against the Indians in New Netherland in 1644 followed the English destruction of the Pequots. Under the administration of Governor Wilhem Kieft, the Dutch troops massacred three Indian settlements in brutal attacks. These defeats made a dramatic impact on all of the Indians in southern New England and on Long Island. Both the English and the Dutch had now demonstrated the effectiveness of their military technology and organization.

Wyandanch, Youghco (Yovawam), Moughmaitow, the sachem from Corchaug on the North Fork of Long Island and Weenagamin, who was probably from Shinnecock, apparently decided that the only way to survive was to accept a tributary relationship with the English. The sachems came to Hartford in the fall of 1644 for a meeting of the commissioners of the United Colonies, which included New Haven, Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut. These colonies had formed the union the year before for mutual protection against Indian attacks and to thwart Dutch encroachment on their lands. Roger Williams's Rhode Island, of course, was not invited to join the union. Williams's theology and his Indian policies remained an anathema to the Puritans.

The commissioners included Governors Eaton and Hopkins, who had foreclosed on the Stirling patent two months earlier. These men may have taken the lead in the negotiations with the sachems. The agreement reached at the Hartford meeting began with a statement affirming that the Stirling Patent had been passed over to some of the English in these United Colonies (RCNP 9:19). The sachems agreed to become tributaries to the English, and granted them exclusive purchase rights to eastern Long Island.

The Hartford Treaty reaffirmed an important principle in English colonial law. The crown and its agencies, the colonial governments, held the exclusive right of purchase. During the early years following the arrival of the English in North America, they applied this principle primarily against Dutch rivals, but they soon expanded it to include private individuals within the settler communities as well. Following the English seizure of New Netherland in 1664, all private entrepreneurs had to obtain permission to enter into negotiations with Indian owners for land sales.

This clause in the treaty also reaffirmed the concept of dual purchase. The English were careful to say that the Indians had "engaged their land to them," clearly implying that specific parcels would have to be purchased through negotiation with local sachems later (RCNP 9:19). The commissioners of the United Colonies, although they would have been loath to acknowledge the source, had accepted Roger Williams's thesis that the king's patent was not an absolute title of ownership.

Although the English accepted the principle of dual purchase as a practical compromise, they made few other concessions to Native American sovereignty. From the time of their arrival they assumed de facto jurisdiction over the Indians within their patents. They demanded that all crimes of theft or violence which Indians committed against the English be prosecuted in English courts. The English authorities, however, reserved the right to punish an Englishman who committed similar offenses against the Indians.

Winthrop defended this principle with the assertion that the concept of jurisdiction was moot in an uncivilized, non-Christian community which had no laws or courts. The English, therefore, required Wyandanch and the four sachems to accept English jurisdiction as a part of their tributary relationship. The sachems promised that any Indians who harmed the English or their goods "upon due notice and prooffe they will deliver all such to deserved punishment, or provide due satisfaction for all injuries and offenses donnö (RCNP 9:19).

In the early spring of 1648, Governors Eaton and Hopkins sent Thomas Stanton, a Connecticut merchant to purchase lands for them on the eastern end of Long Island. The English frequently called upon Stanton to negotiate with the Indians because he was one of the few Englishmen who had mastered any of the native languages spoken in southern New England and on eastern Long Island. The governors were anxious to complete the dual purchase of these lands because the Dutch had made an attempt to buy land near the town of Southampton in the fall of 1647 (RCNH 1: 523-24; Ales 1993:20-21). The English met with Wyandanch, his interpreter, Cockenoe, (Note 1) and three other sachems to negotiate the purchase of a thirty-one thousand acre parcel of Montaukett land between the eastern boundary of Southampton and Napeague Bay.

Two provisions of the deed reflect patterns found in many of these early transactions. The English gave the sachems twenty coats, twenty-four mirrors, twenty-four hoes, twenty-four hatchets, twenty-four knives, one hundred small metal drills called "muxesö which were used to make wampum (RTEH, 1:3). In spite of the clause in the deed stating that the Indians gave

up all rights and interest in the parcel, the sachems probably viewed the transaction as a gift exchange in return for the right of the English to use the land. Certainly there was no connection between the value of these goods, which Governor Hopkins had purchased for thirty pounds, four shillings and eight pence, and the value of the land in the English market. (Note 2)

The second provision in the deed, which allowed for the joint use of the 31,000 acre parcel, could also have been interpreted in terms of Native American concepts of land ownership. The Indians retained the rights to hunt, fish, collect shells for wampum, and take the fins and tails from beached whales. They agreed, in return, not to molest the English or their goods. It is, of course, impossible to know what was in the minds of the sachems who negotiated the agreement, but the arrangement is certainly closer to the Native American concept of land use than it is to the English view of private property.

Another clause in the deed also suggested a concept of joint usage. The English promised that, if the Indians, hunting of any deer, they should chase them into the water, and the English should kill them, the English shall have the body, and the sachems the skin (RTEH 1:3). According to Indian custom, when hunters drove deer or bear into rivers or ponds, the skins were sent to the sachem who controlled the hunting territory (RTSH 1:157). The Montauketts must have assumed, at the time, that they still had a claim to the parcel (Ales 1993, 21).

There is another aspect of the transaction which is significant. In contrast to the Southampton deed, where the proprietors bought their purchase rights from Lord Stirling's agent and then negotiated a deed with the local Indians, the English governors, who owned the patent, purchased the land from the Indians and then sold it to the local proprietors. This process established a precedent for government involvement in such transactions with Indians. Quarrels both between Indians and English and between rival English purchasers over boundaries and terms in the deeds frequently forced public officials to intervene. The extent of public supervision over private purchases of Indian land, however, remained unresolved until the English established colony of New York in 1664.

The New England governors, who had been primarily concerned with the Dutch, did not show any interest in expanding their own colonies to Long Island at the time. A few families established homesteads in East Hampton over the next three years and finally, in 1651, they purchased title from Governor Hopkins, adding what appears to be an interest payment of eight pounds sterling to the sum paid by Hopkins for the goods given to the Indian sachems in 1648 (Ales 1993, 21; RTEH 1:4).

Wyandanch's growing ties with Lion Gardiner and the East Hampton community increased his status among the sachems on eastern Long Island (Strong 1996). The Montaukett sachem, therefore, was careful to fulfill his obligations under the

Hartford Treaty of 1644. In 1649 the English put Wyandanch's commitment to a severe test. They asked him to honor a sensitive clause in the treaty which compromised his sovereignty. The clause stipulated that Indians who injured English people or property be turned over to the English courts. When the Southampton settlers accused the Shinnecocks of murdering an Englishwoman, Mandush, the Shinnecock sachem, refused to cooperate with the investigation.

The two communities armed themselves and stood ready for a confrontation (RCNP 9:143). The Shinnecocks made a proposal which was in accordance with their custom of providing restitution for the victims and their families rather than punishing the guilty parties. They offered a payment that would be borne by their whole community, but the English rejected this form of restitution.

Lion Gardiner sent Wyandanch to the Shinnecock village and urged him to use his influence to end the impasse. The Montaukett sachem took advantage of the close kinship ties his people had with the Shinnecocks to help him locate and capture the men responsible for the murder. With Mandush's consent, Wyandanch took the accused men to Hartford where they were tried and executed. (Strong 1996, 57-58). Mandush accepted a tributary status under Wyandanch and granted the Montaukett sachem full control over all of the Shinnecock lands. This was a major success for the English policy of indirect rule through alliance sachems. The English had now neutralized a troublesome sachem and strengthened a reliable ally.

The English repaid Wyandanch's loyalty a few years later. In 1653, when Ninigret, his old nemesis from Rhode Island, raided Wyandanch's village, killing about thirty of his men and seizing his daughter, Quashawam, and fourteen other captives, the Montaukett sachem turned to Gardiner and the English for help (Ibid., 59-61). Although the episode is very poorly documented, it appears that Gardiner helped to raise money for Quashawam's ransom.

The kidnapping of Wyandanch's daughter was later celebrated in local folklore. The story was told and retold, and, of course, embellished over the centuries. In 1840, David Gardiner, one of Lion Gardiner's descendants, wrote the earliest account of the incident. "Tradition has it," said Gardiner, "that the raid took place during the festivities celebrating the wedding of the daughter" (Gardiner 1973:23). Other accounts further embellished the tragic event, adding that her intended husband had been killed the cruel Niantic warriors. Although none of these details are documented, the story of the wedding feast has been repeated many times (Strong and Karabag 1991:192).

Ninigret claimed that Wyandanch and the Montauketts were now his tributaries. Wyandanch and his English allies in East Hampton rejected this assertion. The East Hampton proprietors feared that their exclusive right to the future purchase of Montauk would be jeopardized if Ninigret controlled the Montauketts. The Niantic sachem would not be bound by any agreement between East Hampton and the Montauketts. The United Colonies commissioners were concerned about the shift in the fragile balance of power among the Algonquian sachems. Fearing that the growing power of the Niantics might

lead to more violence, they rejected Ninigret's assertion that the Montauketts were his tributaries. The New Haven court voted on August 23, 1654 to send twelve pounds of gunpowder and thirty pounds of shot to Wyandanch (RCNH, 1:117-18).

Wyandanch quickly launched a surprise attack against a party of Niantics who were visiting the Indians on Block Island. The raid was a success, taking the lives of Ninigret's nephew, two Niantic sachems, and sixty of his men (RCNP 10:125). The English aid undoubtedly played a significant role in Ninigret's defeat. The military victory also increased Wyandanch's influence with the English and among his own people. This new status, however was soon to bring the Montaukett sachem serious troubles and new challenges at home.

The relations between Wyandanch and the English reflect one of the patterns which emerged following the defeat of the Pequots. Sachems in New England and Long Island sought alliances with the English, who had displaced the Pequot as the dominant power in the area. The English used this opportunity to gain influence in the internal affairs of the Indian communities by providing military and economic support to selected sachems. The English expected the "alliance" sachems to control their own communities, to keep in close touch with their English allies, to help resolve conflicts between their people and the English, to prevent any of their people from harming English settlers or their property, and to negotiate and enforce the terms of land sales. In return the sachems, who in the past governed primarily by persuasion, were now able to use English support to increase their status and their authority over their communities (Note 3). The system worked well for both parties, but it was clear from the beginning that the English were the dominant partners in the alliances.

Cockenoe, one of the first Long Island Indians to become fluent in English, very likely played an important role in developing Wyandanch's accommodationist policy with the English. He remained one of Wyandanch's closest advisors until the Montaukett sachem's death in 1659. Cockenoe strengthened his relationship with the Montauketts when he married Wyandanch's sister (RTEH 1:261). His familiarity with the English language and customs enabled him to play an important role as a diplomatic liaison between the two cultures. He also benefited materially from his English connections. The colonial documents indicate that Cockenoe was paid for his work as an interpreter, and for such services as marking out the boundaries for deeds and tending the grazing lands on Montauk (Tooker 1980, 183-84; RTEH 2:109-111).

Relations between the Indians and English generally involved such matters as trade, land sales, labor contracts, conflicts involving livestock, and cultural misunderstandings about the nature of "ownership." The latter two concerns played a major role in Algonquian-English relations during the first few decades after the English established settlements on eastern Long Island. The Indians continued to build their wigwams within the boundaries of the deeds. They saw no reason why they should not be able to use any of the unoccupied lands around the English towns. In English law, however, the proprietors, who had put up the money to purchase the property, owned these "undivided" lands.

The town proprietors in Southampton and East Hampton, for example, allotted to each member of the corporation parcels of land which became their private property. The whole community used the remaining lands for grazing or hunting. Each proprietor held a claim to acreage in the undivided lands which was determined by the amount of money he had contributed to the initial purchase. As the communities grew, the proprietors allotted some parcels of the undivided lands to their children and sold others to new arrivals. It was inevitable that this process would soon force conflicts with the Indians who were living on the undivided lands.

The expansion of these farming communities, of course, caused an increase in the numbers of livestock feeding on the land. The introduction of domestic livestock made a dramatic impact on the ecosystem and was a frequent cause of tensions between the English and the neighboring Algonquian communities (Williams 1995:249-53). The English settlers allowed their hogs to range freely in the woods until harvest time when they brought them in to fatten them for slaughter. (Note 4) Occasionally, when the Indians came upon the hogs they hunted them like wild game and killed them. This was most likely to happen whenever the Indians caught them rooting up shellfish beds. Cattle and horses also created problems. The Indians kept their winter food in storage pits near their wigwams. When they moved to another location, they left the pits open. Grazing livestock sometimes fell into the pits and injured themselves. Another problem arose when the animals invaded the unfenced Indian corn fields and destroyed the crops. Fences, of course, were an alien concept to the Indians.

About the time that the first settlers arrived in East Hampton, a conflict involving these issues arose in Southampton which set a precedent for eastern Long Island. The Shinnecock continued to plant their crops on land which was within the boundaries of the 1640 purchase. The English did not protest until 1649, when they sought to allot some of the undivided lands. The increase in English livestock had also caused friction between the two communities. The Indians complained that English cattle, horses and hogs were getting into their planting grounds.

The Southampton officials called upon Wyandanch to use his growing influence to help them resolve the dispute. Thomas Stanton came from Hartford to serve, once again, as an interpreter. Southampton, anticipating such needs, had placed itself under the jurisdiction of Connecticut in 1644. Stanton and Wyandanch negotiated a settlement with Mandush, the local sachem. The agreement called for the Shinnecock to move their planting ground and fence off their remaining fields. The new agreement allowed the English livestock, except for hogs, to graze in the Shinnecock fields ten days after the harvest so they could graze there all winter. The English were to herd the livestock out of the planting grounds in early spring before planting time.

Apparently the same conflicts which had been resolved at Southampton became an issue in East Hampton about six years after the first settlers arrived there. In the spring of 1655 Wyandanch and two of his advisors, Sassakata and Pauquatoun, met with Lion Gardiner, the Reverend Thomas James, John Mulford, and several representatives from East Hampton. The East Hampton people agreed to build and maintain a fence east of the

village which would keep their horses out of the Indian planting grounds from early spring until after the fall harvest. The English also agreed that if their horses got through the fence they would pay for the damages. The presence of Indian planting grounds on the eastern portion of the 1648 purchase indicates that the Indians were still living on the land they had sold.

The East Hampton officials were also concerned about the possibility that the Dutch or rival English investors might purchase the remainder of the Montaukett lands east of Napeague. They pressed Wyandanch and his advisors to give the town exclusive purchase rights. This concession may have been a factor in the English decision to increase their military support to Wyandanch and to bestow upon him a title which greatly overstated his powers at that time. In the text of the 1655 agreement, the English referred to Wyandanch as the "Chief Sachem of Long Island" (Cooper 1993:174). It was an empty title, of course, without English support.

When Ninigret again threatened Wyandanch in the fall of 1655, the English moved quickly to protect their loyal ally. The United Colony commissioners ordered John Youngs, an experienced sailor from Southold, to patrol the sound and block any attempt by Ninigret to attack the Montauketts. The commissioners instructed Youngs to take, sink or destroy Ninigret's canoes (RCNP 10:151). The action successfully thwarted any plan the Niantic sachem may have had to retaliate for his defeat on Block Island. He did not initiate any further action against the Montauketts until after Wyandanch's death in 1659. Youngs maintained the blockade for over a year and was paid one hundred and fifty-three pounds by the United Colonies. In contrast, the missionary, John Eliot, was paid a yearly salary of only fifty pounds by the United Colonies for his "Indian work." Clearly missionary work was far less important to the English than the protection of their alliance sachem. Few Long Island sachems would now openly challenge any leader who could draw on this level of English support. The importance of a reliable Algonquian ally who had the power to influence the behavior of his fellow sachems was becoming more evident as the scramble for Indian lands continued. English settlers and speculators were purchasing Long Island real estate from any Algonquian sachem who appeared to have some authority over a given tract of land. This inevitably led to conflict because some Indians viewed the transactions as a lease which could be sold again to another buyer, and others purposely misled English buyers into purchasing land which did not belong to them. Wyandanch proved to be most adept at resolving these potentially explosive conflicts. The Dutch also recognized the importance of cultivating an alliance with a sachem who could guarantee smooth relations with the Indians residing in their territory. They were quick to respond when Tackapousha, the sachem from Massapequa, sought to open negotiations for an alliance with them. The Massapequa sachem had the support of several influential local sachems including Waghtummore, Wogquatis, Uppahanuum, Adam, and Rumegie who represented the villages at Secatogue, Maskinekaug (Matinecock), Merrick, Rockaway, and Canarsie in what is now Brooklyn, Queens and Nassau County. The negotiations were held at Hempstead on March 12, 1656 (Pelletreau 1903:85; Brodhead 1853-71, 1:519). The Dutch eagerly agreed to an alliance with Tackapousha and anointed him the "Chiefe Sachem" over the Indians of western Long Island (RTNSH, 1:43-44).

Both parties to the treaty agreed, "That all injuries formerly past . . . shall be forgiven and forgotten That Tackapousha being chosen Chiefe Sachem, doth ask the Governor of New Netherland to [be] his and his peoples protector and in consideration of that do put under the said protection, all of their lands and territories upon Long Island, so far as the Dutch line doth run according to the agreement made in Hartford" (DSBD, 2:129-131). They also agreed to consult each other on all negotiations with other Indian groups, and Tackapousha promised not to harbor any enemies of the Dutch (Trelease 1971:146; RTNSH, 1:43-45).

Later, in the fall of 1656, the settlers in Brooklyn, Midwout, and Amsfort complained to Governor Stuyvesant that some clothing had been stolen by Indians from Secatogue, who were under Tackapousha's authority. They told the governor that they had "very gloomy forebodings," and feared that the thefts might be followed by an attack (NYCD 14:368). Tackapousha, realizing that his alliance with Stuyvesant was threatened, moved quickly to assert his authority over the Secatogues. He ordered them to return the goods, "else it might create disharmony and quarrels" and promised the settlers that whenever a theft was reported to him he would provide restitution (Ibid., 369). The settlers rewarded the sachem with a present of gunpowder.

Tackapousha and Wyandanch, supported by their European allies, soon became the two most powerful and influential sachems on Long Island. Both men became the primary liaisons between their people and the new immigrants to Long Island, as well as important players in the international struggle between the English and the Dutch for control over Long Island.

As the East Hampton community grew, the town officials pressed the Montauketts to move from the undivided lands and resettle east of Napeague. They resisted these pressures just as the Shinnecock had done in 1649. In the fall of 1656, the town asserted its right of ownership by ordering that "noe wigwams shall be set up by any Indians whatsoever within our bounds" (RTEH 1:101). This sweeping decree was apparently directed at the dwellings in areas which were desired for new allotments, because a decade later there were many Montauketts still living on the undivided lands near Three Mile Harbor two miles north of the English village.

A year after Tackapousha resolved the difficulties between the Dutch and the Secatogues, the English called upon Wyandanch to resolve a much more serious confrontation. Several Shinnecock men and an African American woman conspired to burn down several buildings in the settlement. One of the buildings was the home of Eleanor Howell, the widow of Edward Howell, who had helped to found the town in 1640. One or more of the conspirators may have been servants in the Howell household. There had been an unpleasant incident involving the servants of the Howells years before. A young Indian servant woman named Hope had a child by another servant named George Wood. The town court found the couple guilty of "carnal filthiness" and sentenced them to be publicly whipped. The child was given to the Howells to serve as a domestic in their house until he reached the age of thirty (RTSH 1:35). Unfortunately, there is no further mention of Hope or her child in the town records.

According to the sparse court records from the Particular Court of Connecticut, Wigwagub, a Shinnecock, testified that he had been hired to burn the Howell home by two other Shinnecock named Awabag and Agagoneau (RPCC 1928, 22:175-76). Awabag gave him a gun and Agagoneau paid him seven shillings, six pence. Another man, Auwegenum, was present when Wigwagub was hired, but his role in the affair was not mentioned. No motive was mentioned in the records, but it was not simply an act of revenge against the Howells, because several other buildings in the town were also burned. Possibly the attacks were also related to the conflicts over the invasion of Indian planting grounds by English livestock, a common problem during this period. The Shinnecocks had frequently complained to Wyandanch about the English horses that wandered into their corn fields and destroyed their crops (RCNP,10:180).

The court records did not mention the African American woman, but Wyandanch later reported that the servant woman was *ôfar deeper* in that capital miscarriage than any or all of the Indians (Ibid.). It is possible that Wyandanch was attempting to shift the blame away from the Indians, but even so his account raises some fascinating questions about the relationship between the small population of African American servants and slaves and the Indians. Both groups certainly shared common frustrations in their relations with the dominant white settlers. The suggestion that a woman had taken a role of leadership in the small rebellion is also interesting.

When news of the house burnings reached Hartford, the colonial authorities raised a troop of nineteen men, armed them with twenty-five pounds of powder and fifty pounds of shot, and sent them to Southampton under the command of John Mason, the veteran who had commanded the troops at Mystic during the Pequot War (RPCC 1928, 22:176). The mere presence of the man who ordered the massacre of the Pequot must have unsettled the Shinnecock. Mason was ordered to consult with Wyandanch about the matter and to determine whether or not any of the Indians involved in the incident were under Wyandanch's authority.

Mason arrived in Southampton to find that the magistrates had issued gunpowder to the townsmen in preparation for a conflict. The town passed a resolution allowing only four representatives from Shinnecock to enter the English village. The magistrates appointed Wapeacom, Powcowwantuck, Suretrust, and James to carry on all relations between the twocommunities (RTSH 1:114-115).

There is no record of Mason's activities in the town, but there is a reference in a later document to a Shinnecock man, who killed himself to avoid *ôjust execution* by the English (RCNP 10:180). The man may have been Wigwagub, the only one who confessed to the arson. Mason, apparently not satisfied to leave the matter at that, imposed an exorbitant fine of seven hundred pounds on the Shinnecock community. The Shinnecock, well aware of Mason's role in the massacre of the Pequot, agreed to accept the fine, which was to be paid over a seven year period (Ibid.). The fine forced them into a debt servitude which could be used both as an instrument of social control by the English and as a means to press for the sale of land to pay

the fine. For the Shinnecock, who were not yet engaged in the European economic system, the sum was an impossible burden.

The Montaukett sachem demonstrated that the role of the alliance chief could be more than that of a passive conduit for English governance when he sent a representative with a written petition to the United Colonies session in Boston the following September and appealed the Connecticut court's fine (Ibid.). Wyandanch's decision to go over the head of the Connecticut court and the articulation of his arguments indicate a growing familiarity with English institutions.

When he submitted the petition, Wyandanch also sent 78 fathoms of wampum to the United Colonies' treasurer in New Haven. The wampum was undoubtedly intended to influence the commissioners (Ibid., 194). The sachem began his presentation to the commissioners by reporting that the Shinnecock had already sustained losses from English horses that destroyed their crops. He then argued that Mason had not been fully informed about the arson when he imposed the fine. He told the commissioners that the African American woman was primarily to blame for the arson and that the Shinnecock involved was dead. Given these circumstances, argued Wyandanch, the fine was excessive. The United Colonies' commissioners agreed with Wyandanch and asked the Connecticut court to reconsider the amount.

While the matter was pending before the Connecticut court, the town of Southampton paid the widow Howell twenty shillings to repair her losses. The damage was apparently not very severe. John Mason received twenty pounds from the town for his role in the affair. The cost of repairing the damage and paying the troops certainly did not justify a fine of seven hundred pounds. When the Connecticut court reconsidered the matter, they reduced the amount to five hundred pounds over a six year period (RCC, 1:316-17). For the Shinnecock the reduction had little significance because the fine was still far beyond their means.

The Hartford court appointed a group of prominent Southampton men to collect the fine and distribute payment to those who had suffered damages. The committee was empowered to "take from them a certain company of ye Indian men," if the payments were not made (RTSH 2:206-7). The brief reference does not explain what was to be done with the captives, but most likely it was intended that they would be sold as slaves in the West Indies to pay the debt. Although John Ogden, a member of the committee, apparently favored such action, the magistrates refused to take such a drastic measure, knowing full well that it might provoke a much more violent reaction among the local Indians. The Indians were well aware of the fate which befell those shipped out to the West Indies.

Fines of this kind were often used in New England as an effective means of social control. As long as an Algonquian community remained under the shadow of the debt, the English could intervene in their community affairs. The debt was also a strategy used to obtain Indian lands. According to historian, Francis Jennings, a favorite strategy of the English was "the

imposition of fines for a wide variety of offenses, the Indian's lands becoming forfeit if the fines were not paid by their due date (Jennings 1976:144-45). As we shall see the English on Long Island were to make equally effective use of this strategy.

In the summer of 1657, Wyandanch was in Setauket to join with Wenecoheage, the local sachem, in the sale of two necks of land on the south shore lying east of the Connetquot River (Bayles 1882:3; Tooker 1962:280). The local sachem acknowledged Wyandanch's right to supervise the negotiations and to receive a share of the payment. The deed clearly indicated that the payment would go to both sachems. The goods given to them included twenty coats, twenty hoes, twenty hatchets, forty needles, forty muxes, ten pounds of powder, ten pounds of lead, six pairs of stockings, six shirts, one well made trooper's coat, twenty knives, and one gun.

Three days later on July 23, 1657, Jonas Wood of Huntington called Wyandanch to confirm his purchase of a small parcel of meadow land on a neck which bordered on the Massapequa lands from Keossechok, the Secatogue sachem (RTH 1:12-13; Street 1882:10). Wyandanch shared the trade goods which included a new gun, a pistol, and two pounds of powder, with Keossechok. Wyandanch's role as a certifying agent for the deeds set an important precedent which the English hoped would bring some order to the process of land dispossession. The English settlers were now accepting the endorsement of the "chief sachem" as a requirement for the purchase of Algonquian land.

In 1658 Samuel Andrews, a private entrepreneur, traveled all the way to Montauk and had Wyandanch endorse his deed to land in what is now the town of Huntington. When the Huntington town officials, who claimed the same land, learned of Andrews' mission, they rushed to Montauk hoping to obtain Wyandanch's endorsement for their own deed. According to local folklore, Andrews met the Huntington agents on his way back and mocked them, waving his endorsement in their faces telling them that they might as well go back home (RTH, 1:15; Street 1882, 12-13). They did, and promptly brought suit against Andrews. After a long court battle, Andrews' title was upheld, primarily because he had obtained Wyandanch's endorsement (RTH, 1:16). Wyandanch endorsed several more transactions in 1658 and 1659, as Englishmen from all over Long Island sought him out to bolster their land claims.

Two weeks after his endorsement of Andrews' title, Wyandanch turned his attention to the Shinnecock land west of Canoe Place where the Shinnecock Canal is located today. Wyandanch demonstrated his experience as a negotiator and his understanding of English institutions in these transactions. On May 29, 1658, he leased, for ten years, a small tract of meadow land near the present-day village of West Hampton Beach to Thomas Topping. After that time the land was "to be surrendered peaceably unto the said sachem, his heirs, or successors, to be disposed of, at his or their discretion" (DSBD 2:152). For the first and, unfortunately, the last time, the Indian concept of limited use appears in the text of a land transaction. Wyandanch managed, for a brief moment, to bring the English to terms with the traditional Algonquian concept of land use.

Less than two weeks later Wyandanch, along with his advisors, Cockenoe, Sassakata, and

Momoweta (Moughmaitow) and his young son, Wyancombone, sold Lion Gardiner a large tract of beach land in the same area for an undisclosed sum of money and trade goods (RTSH 1:170-71). Once again, however, Wyandanch insisted on a clause which would provide him and his family with a regular income. Gardiner agreed to pay the sachem and his heirs twenty-five shillings a year, each October, forever. The whales which were cast up on the beach, a major source of wealth on the south shore of Long Island, remained Wyandanch's property. The Indians also retained the right to cut flag grass and bulrushes, which they used to make mats for the wigwams. These transactions with Topping and Gardiner were unique in that they guaranteed a continuing return of income rather than a final dispossession. Six months later Gardiner granted the right to use a portion of the tract to a Southampton man named John Cooper on the condition that he pay Wyandanch the yearly fee (RTSH 1:171).

In August, Wyandanch, Cockenoe, and Sassakata were back in Huntington to sell three more necks of land on the south shore lying to the west of the land purchased by Jonas Wood the year before. Henry Whitney, who made the purchase for the town, paid Wyandanch twelve coats, twenty pounds of powder, twenty Dutch hatchets, twenty Dutch hoes, twenty Dutch knives, ten shirts, two hundred muxes, five pair of handsome stockings, one good Dutch hat, and a looking glass. Cockenoe, who was paid a separate fee for marking out the boundaries, received one coat, four pounds of powder, six pounds of lead, one Dutch hatchet and seventeen shillings in wampum. The emphasis on Dutch goods suggests that they were considered superior to those produced by the English.

Wyandanch could usually rely on English support against rival sachems. In one instance, however, he overreached his authority. He prohibited the Pequot from coming to Long Island for quahog shells which were used in the manufacture of wampum. The Pequots, realizing that the traditional means of resolving such grievances were no longer possible, brought their case to the United Colonies and asked that their ancient privileges be restored (De Forest 1852:261). The commissioners agreed with them and gave notice to Wyandanch that "the Pequots . . . be permitted to freely fetch shells there . . . as formerly they had done" (RCNP, 10:199-200).

The English concern for keeping the control of wampum resources and production in their hands is easy to understand. They had established a monopoly over the wampum trade in the Connecticut Valley following their defeat of the Pequot in 1637 and, as a result, soon dominated the lucrative fur trade on the Connecticut River (McBride 1994:41). The English, who were collecting significant amounts of tribute wampum from the Pequots, did not want any limitation on their access to quahog shells

This minor setback may have prompted Wyandanch to strengthen his alliance with Gardiner and the influential men in the East Hampton community whenever he could. The land titles were, of course, a primary concern of the English, but another important source of wealth on the East end of Long Island was whale oil. The Montauketts took the tales and fins of the whales for their ceremonial feasts, but the English were primarily interested in the oil and baleen because these commodities could be turned into hard currency on the European market (Strong 1990, 17-29). Drift whales were the first cash

crop on Long Island.

The question of drift whales came up again in November, 1658 when Wyandanch gave Lion Gardiner and the Reverend Thomas James of East Hampton one half of the whales or other great fish which drifted onto the beach between Napeague and the far end of Montauk. This was an important grant because it gave the two men an exclusive right to all of the ocean beaches on Montaukett lands. The town of East Hampton owned the whale rights from Napeague on west to the Southampton border and held them in common trust. Wyandanch did require a small percentage of their profit, but left it to James and Gardiner to pay what they shall judge meete and according as they find profit by them (RTEH 1:150). Wyandanch's generosity to the two influential East Hampton men may have served him well two months later when he brought suit in the town courts against a young townsman named Jeremy Vaile for damages to his large canoe. The vessel, probably one used for trips across the sound, may have been thirty or forty feet long. The suit is significant because it is one of the earliest recorded instances of an Indian plaintiff seeking damages from an Englishman in an English court.

Lion Gardiner testified for Wyandanch against Vaile, and charged him with negligence. Vaile and Anthony Waters, another East Hampton man, borrowed the canoe to carry some goods over to Gardiner's Island and ran into some bad weather. They landed the canoe on the island, but failed to secure it properly. Gardiner ordered them to return and make sure it was safe, but by the time they got back, the canoe was damaged and full of water. The court ruled for the plaintiff and awarded Wyandanch ten shillings (RTSH, 1:152)

As Wyandanch's influence grew, proprietors from all over Long Island sought him out to bolster their land claims. The Southold magistrates, led by Barnabas Horton, met with Wyandanch, Cockenoe and the Corchaug Indians in January 1659 to clear up some questions about who had the right to sell the land on the North Fork of eastern Long Island (Pelletreau 1882:9). Unfortunately we have no record of the specific issues involved in the dispute, but later documents indicate that Plum Island was one of the areas in contention. The Southold settlers on the north fork of Long Island English raised some questions about the property on Plum Island, which had been purchased by Governor Eaton from two Corchaug sachems, Momoweta and Paummis, in 1648. Southold officials, William Wells and Richard Woodhall, bought the island from Eaton for the use of the town, but they never established a settlement there. Later, John Youngs bought the land, but he never occupied it either (DSBD, 1:15). The Corchaug, acting on their traditional view of ownership, apparently reasserted their control over the island by default. The Southold men called upon Wyandanch to resolve this matter and other questions about the rest of the North Fork as well.

Wyandanch asserted that the Corchaug were not now, nor had they ever been, the owners of the North Fork or Plum Island. These lands, said the Montaukett sachem, were inherited from his ancestors, and had been sold to Richard Woodhall and William Wells some years since (RTS, 1:194). The Corchaug did not protest this claim by

Wyandanch and remained wholly silent not in the least contradicting what the sachem said. Their silence may have been a commentary on Wyandanch's growing power and influence rather than a sign of their agreement with his assertion of hegemony over their lands.

Later, in the spring of 1659, Wyandanch and his young son, Wyancombone, gave a large tract of land from what is now the Shinnecock Canal to the village of Westhampton Beach to John Ogden as a partial payment on the fine for arson in 1657 (RTSH 2:354). Ogden had apparently purchased the debt from the Southampton officials, who were unsuccessful in forcing payment from the Shinnecock. The boundaries included some meadow land which had previously been leased to Thomas Halsey, probably under the same terms as Wyandanch had negotiated with Topping for meadow land on the western border of this deed. When Halsey's lease ran out, the land went to Ogden, but the small parcel of meadow along the south beach which Gardiner had leased from Wyandanch in 1658 and turned over to John Cooper was excluded from Ogden's deed. Wyandanch was careful to include a clause which protected the Indians' right to fishing, hunting and the gathering of wild plants in the area. Lion Gardiner and his son, David, witnessed the lease.

That same day, Wyandanch, Gardiner and their sons confirmed the purchase of a half neck of land by Jonas Wood in 1657 (RTH, 1:21-22). Apparently Tackapousha and the Massapequa sachems challenged that purchase of Secatogue land from Keesossechok (RTH, 1:21n). Wyandanch asserted his authority over Tackapousha and, at the same time, served the English interests by helping to avoid another expensive and disruptive legal battle in the colonial courts.

The following month Gardiner leased the whale rights to a section of Atlantic beach west of the area he had purchased from Wyandanch the year before (DSBD, 2:85-86). The lease ran for twenty-one years, and Wyandanch was promised five pounds sterling or an equivalent amount of goods for each whole whale carcass. The sachem reserved the tails and fins for himself. Gardiner then turned over the whale rights to John Cooper, who was beginning to develop a whaling enterprise, which would soon become a major industry on the south shore of eastern Long Island.

On July 14, 1659, shortly before his death, Wyandanch signed a most unusual document. It reads almost like a last will and testament. Written in the first person as if dictated by Wyandanch, it acknowledged Lion Gardiner's friendship, counsel, and material aid over a twenty-four year period. Gardiner, said Wyandanch, "appeared to us not only as a friend but as a father" (RTSM 1:3-4). In return for this friendship Wyandanch made him a gift of 30,000 acres of land between Huntington and Setauket which included most of what is now the Town of Smithtown in the middle of Long Island. The Nissequogue River, which runs through the center of the tract was the home Nisseconsett, the Nissequogue sachem.

A close examination of the document raises a number of questions about its authenticity. The relationship between Wyandanch and Gardiner was certainly close, but it seems

unlikely that Wyandanch, who had previously sold land and whale rights to Gardiner would now give him a tract of land as big as the one he sold to East Hampton in 1648.

Another question concerned Wyandanch's claim to ownership of the land. Nasseconsett had sold the eastern half of the tract to Edmond, Jonas and Jeremy Wood and Daniel Whitehead in 1650 (Smith 1882, 1-2). The Englishmen, however, never attempted to occupy the site and Nasseconsett later transferred it to Wyandanch, who apparently inherited an interest in the land from his grandmother. In 1656, Asharoken, a Matinickock sachem had sold the land in the tract lying to the west of the Nissequogue to Jonas Wood, William Rogers and Thomas Wilkes (RTH 1:6-7).

One of the witnesses to Wyandanch's most generous gift to Lion Gardiner was Richard Smith, who later purchased a large portion of the tract. In a conversation with Gardiner's widow, Sarah, sometime later, Smith said that he had expected that she should meet a great deal of trouble about the land. Sarah Gardiner confided to Smith that she believed the title was so vulnerable to challenge that she had considered abandoning the claim (RTEH, 1:336).

The challenges came quickly. Nasseconsett took the matter to court, protesting that Richard Smith had taken away his land on the east bank of the Nissequogue. Smith finally paid the sachem a gun, a kettle, ten coats, a blanket, and some powder and lead (RTSM 1:8-9). Settlers in Setauket and Huntington both engaged Smith in a long series of lawsuits which went on for several decades. (Smith 1882, 2-8; Street 1882, 22-23; NYCD 14:640-43).

Wyandanch died some time during the fall of 1659. According to Lion Gardiner, the Montaukett sachem was poisoned, but this is not corroborated in any of the colonial records. It also possible that he died in the plague which took the lives of an estimated two thirds of the Algonquian people on Long Island between 1659 and 1664 (Gardiner 1980, 146; Strong 1996).

Wyandanch's passing was one of the events which marked the end of an era in Indian-white relations on Long Island. The era was characterized by the scramble of imperial powers at one level and aggressive individual entrepreneurs at another, to grab as much land as possible. The other markers were the death of Lion Gardiner in 1663, the English conquest of New Netherland in 1664 and the great plague.

There was no longer a need for a Grand Sachem. The growth of the English settlements and the declining Indian population shifted the demographics heavily in favor of the whites. The English were now in a position to dominate the Algonquian people. The need for a single Indian leader, who could arbitrate disputes and control local sachems, however, was now over. In 1665, Richard Nicolls, the first governor of the newly established colony of New York, officially declared that there was no longer any Grand sachem of Long Island. Every sachem, said the governor, shall keep his particular property over his people as formerly. The English, who had created the position, had now abolished it.

NOTES

1. This is the first time Cockenoe's name appears in the Colonial records. His skill as an interpreter was well known throughout Long Island. He was frequently called in to help negotiate deeds and boundary disputes. In his brief biography of Cockenoe, William Wallace Tooker suggested that he may have learned English while in the service of the missionary, John Eliot (Tooker 1980, 176-79). Eliot mentioned an Indian youth from Long Island who had quickly mastered English. The young man then helped Eliot in his study of Indian languages. Unfortunately there is no way to corroborate Tooker's speculation.
2. It is difficult to determine the value of a specific parcel of land in the English market at this time. In 1659 good meadow land in East Hampton cost 1 pound per acre and woodland was valued at 6 shillings per acre (RTEH 2: 168-170). Later in the seventeenth century land averaged from one to three pounds sterling per acre, unless it was swamp or wetland.
3. Richard White (1991, 36-40) used the term *alliance sachems* to describe the Algonquian leaders who formed alliances with the French in the seventeenth century on the middle ground between the two cultures in the Great Lakes area. His analytical model works very well for the middle ground on Long Island in the same period.
4. As the English settlements grew, the problems caused by free ranging hogs worsened. Finally, in 1683 the colonial government passed a law requiring people to keep their hogs confined (Kavenagh 1973, 2:1288-89). Anyone finding a stray hog could kill it. One third of the meat went to the individual who found the hog and the rest went to the town.

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