

Transcript of Lecture Delivered by
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Lion Gardiner: Long Island's Founding Father

In the year of our Lord, 1635, the tenth of July, came I, Lion Gardiner and Mary my wife from Woerden a towne in Holland, where my wife was born . . . to London and from thence to New England and dwelt at Saybrooke forte four years . . . of which I was commander: and there was borne to me a son named David, 1636 . . . the first born in that place, . . . Then I went to an island of mine owne which I had bought and purchased of the Indians, called by them Manchonake by us the Isle of Wight, and there was born another daughter named Elizabeth . . . in 1641, she being the first child of English parents that was born there. — Lion Gardiner, lines in a family Bible¹

Long Island as America is the premise that the history of this Island reflects as well as contributes to most major phases of national life from colonial times to the present. One may examine the Long Island story through the prism of national history, or view the nation's history in terms of events on Long Island—the subjects are interchangeable.

2 The Long Island as America thesis applies equally to the impact of European settlement on the Native American people: the pattern of colonial growth; Long Island in the Revolution and then in the early Republic; slavery; whaling; the building of the Long Island Railroad; farming, fishing, and shipbuilding; the Civil War and the Gilded Age; the Gold Coast estates; the rise of the suburbs; the Roaring Twenties, replete with the Jazz Age, Prohibition, and the revival of the Ku Klux Klan; Long Island as cradle of aviation; the Great Depression; Robert Moses, the controversial master builder; Long Island as arsenal of fighter planes and producer of the Lunar Module; the post-World War II population boom, exemplified by Levittown; the social upheavals of the sixties; the change at the end of the Cold War from a manufacturing to a service economy; and current, postsuburban Long Island, where most of its people work as well as live, beset by the high cost of taxes, housing and energy. There is no better example of this concept than the career of Lion Gardiner, with whom the search for Long Island's founding father begins and ends. Lion Gardiner, who lived from 1599 until 1663, was the original English settler not only of Long Island but also the future state of New York. This robust pioneer stands as the first as well as the prototype of the colonists, who, in the words of Silas Wood, Long Island's first major historian, "had forsaken the scenes of civilization, broken asunder the ties that bound them to their native soil, . . . encountered the dangers of the ocean, and . . . submitted to the hazards and privations of a new and savage country." 3 Gardiner's lifework exemplified the transition from the old to the modern world. He took part in three of the principal movements that marked the emergence of popular government from the bonds of absolute monarchy: the winning of Holland's independence from Spain, the English Revolution, and the Puritan colonization of New England and Long Island. As a young man, he served as an engineer in an English regiment stationed in the Netherlands in support of the northern provinces' battle to break away from the Spanish empire. While engaged in this early war of national liberation, he was hired by leading opponents of the state and church of England to build a fort at

Saybrook, at the mouth of the Connecticut River. In 1639, at the end of his four-year contract, he crossed the Sound to become lord of the manor of Gardiner's Island, a fertile sliver of land between the forks of Paumanok. In 1650 he purchased land in the recently founded town of East Hampton; three years later he left Gardiner's Island in the hands of retainers and moved to the fledgling village to assume a leading role in its civil and religious affairs. His cordial relations with Native Americans saved eastern Long Island from the bloody interracial warfare that plagued New England. Toward the end of his life, he became the catalyst for the creation of Smithtown, conveying to William Smith the thirty thousand acres given to him by the Montauk sachem, Wyandanch, whose daughter Gardiner helped to ransom when she was kidnapped by mainland Indians.⁴

Gardiner exerted a major influence on the development of East Hampton, which, together with Southold, Southampton, Shelter Island, Huntington, Brookhaven, and Smithtown, comprised the scale-model city-states that distinguished eastern Long Island. Although they restricted first-class citizenship only to Puritan co-religionists, these self-governing Bible commonwealths endowed future generations with two of the building blocks of liberty—the town meeting and the independent church, wholly owned and managed by its congregation. As Silas Wood described them, "each town of the first settlement was a pure democracy: the people of each town exercised the sovereign power. All questions were determined by the voice of the major part of the people, assembled in town meeting."⁵ These eastern towns found themselves outside the orbit of domination, so distant were they from the centers of Dutch and British power. In the words of another of Long Island's nineteenth-century historians, Nathaniel S. Prime, they were "absolutely in a state of nature, possessing all the personal rights and privileges which the God of nature gave them, but without the semblance of authority one over another." When they found it expedient to ally themselves with New England, it was not because of doubt that they could manage their internal affairs, "but solely for defence from foreign aggression. And the nature of the union was rather that of an alliance than subjection."⁶ When parting from Great Britain took center stage a century later, the descendants of Puritan pioneers were ready for a republic.

As a townsman of East Hampton, Gardiner helped to shape a new and American social design, which enabled ordinary folk to own property and enjoy the freedoms restricted to the privileged gentry across the sea. However, though he was our founding father he was not our patron saint. While his statesmanship cemented peaceful relations between the settlers and the Indians, he also presided over the peaceable but permanent transfer of Long Island real estate from its Native American owners to himself and his fellow settlers. As the symbol of two phenomena—the formation of the model Puritan township and the nonviolent displacement of Indians—Lion Gardiner personified the dual and sometimes ambivalent mission of the colonists of Long Island. Necessity compelled Gardiner and his compatriots to cope with the basic conditions of life in completely new surroundings. This involved the providing, from a standing start, of food, shelter, and artifacts, and a safe and harmonious social order attuned to the New World, not the Old. Above all, as they dealt with these elementary needs, the uninvited settlers

grappled with the question of their legal right to the land that was now their only home. It was glaringly apparent that every acre was the possession of the indigenous Native Americans. It is easy to judge the past by present standards. A moralist can argue that the six thousand Long Island Indians were entitled to hold their land forever, thus changing the English influx from a settlement to an invasion. Or, that because there was so much room to coexist on this lush and sparsely settled island, Lion Gardiner et al cannot be excused for basing their system of land acquisition on dispossessing the Indians. In particular, why did the English not pay a fair price instead of trading trifles for treasure?

We may beg the question by reminding ourselves that in many ways it is moot: by the end of the seventeenth-century, Long Island's Indian population was almost wiped out by the germs of smallpox, measles, and other diseases inadvertently spread by their almost immune English carriers. In his memoir, written in 1660, Gardiner mentioned a recent "time of a great mortality," during which "two thirds of the Indians upon Long-Island died." Ten years later, in the first English account of New York, Daniel Denton observed how few Indians remained on Long Island, a state of affairs he welcomed as God's serendipitous bonus to British colonists: "It hath been generally observed, that where the English come to settle, a Divine Hand makes way for them, by removing or cutting off the Indians either by Wars one with the other, or by some raging mortal Disease."⁷ Although death by disease played the largest part, the issue of how the Indians lost their land still goads our historical conscience, and we seek acceptable motives for the policies of the colonists. The blunt reality is that the tide of English immigration, swelled by the prospect of land for the taking, proved far too strong for deterrence by legal niceties. Lion Gardiner, the intrepid pioneer and archetype of English homesteaders, was also a business man obsessed with acquiring real estate from its present, ancestral owners. Many of his contemporaries held that the Indians were primitive simpletons, whose collective holding of tribal grounds made real estate dealing impossible. According to the conventional wisdom, the aborigines were too uncivilized to conceive of buying and selling land they naively believed belonged to all who lived on it.

Lion Gardiner, to his credit, exhibited none of this pervasive prejudice. He accepted Indians as friends and not inferiors: his cordial relations with Yovawan and Wyandanch, the successive sachems with whom he dealt, exempted eastern Long Island from the interracial bloodshed that afflicted Connecticut and Massachusetts. In the process, however, Gardiner amassed a fortune in land by "buying" it for trinkets, and expediting sales by promoting the Native American seller, especially Wyandanch, to the fictitious but handy rubber-stamp rank of "Sachem of all Long Island." One way to obtain the land was by force: the Long Island way, perfected, if not invented, by Lion Gardiner, was to "purchase" deeds from a super-sachem and have them confirmed by colonial writ. As contended by John A. Strong, a current authority on Long Island's Indian legacy, Lion Gardiner crowned Wyandanch with the title of Grand Sachem "to legitimize his purchase of lands all over Long Island." The Montauks' lack of military power "made a mockery of this presumptuous title," the sham enabling "Gardiner and his associates to avoid the difficulties of negotiating with the numerous small bands living on the lands in

question."8 Lion Gardiner's lineage has not been traced, but according to Curtiss C. Gardiner, who wrote the history of his famous ancestor on the two-hundred-and fiftieth anniversary of Lion's arrival on his island, "He was probably a gentleman without title, of the middle rank, between the nobility and the yeomanry, yet he might have been a yeoman." Granted that seventeenth-century spelling was on a do-it-yourself basis, Lion generally signed himself as "Gardener," a name which Curtiss C. Gardiner pointed out "may be derived from an occupation, the keeper of a garden," and subsequently "may have been changed . . . to Gardiner, that the occupation and the name of a person might be the more readily distinguishable." His unusual first name "was Lion, as he invariably wrote it so": there is no reason to speculate that his baptismal name was Lionel. His army grade was sergeant, as evidenced by letters to John Winthrop Jr., the governor of the Saybrook colony and Gardiner's only superior there, in which one correspondent referred to "Seriant Gardener," another to "Sergiant Gardiner." Gardiner's later rank of "Leiftenant" was a promotion for his service at Saybrook. 9

Nothing is known of Gardiner's life before 1635, the starting point of his memoir, "Leift. Lion Gardener his Relation of the Pequot Warres." While serving as "an Engineer and Master of Works of Fortification in the legers of the Prince of Orange, in the Low Countries," he was recruited by Hugh Peter and John Davenport, the exiled Puritan ministers of the English church of Rotterdam, and "some other well-affected Englishmen of Rotterdam," to build and command a fort in New England. The project was sponsored by upper-class dissenters from the government of Charles 1, who, during the 1630s, suspended Parliament, demanded Anglican orthodoxy, and levied unacceptable taxes. In addition to Davenport, who became a founder of New Haven, and Peter, a firebrand chaplain-to-be of Oliver Cromwell's army and Protectorate, its supporters included Viscount Saye and Sele (William Fiennes) and Baron Brooke (Robert Greville), the spokesmen in the House of Lords of the Puritan opposition; Sir Arthur Haselrig, a prominent rebel in the House of Commons; and George Fenwick, another member of Parliament who defied the royal authority. Of these, only Fenwick came to live at the fort—it was he who named the place Saybrook to honor its two main sponsors. Once the Long Parliament convened in 1640, and especially after war with the Crown erupted two years later, the organizers lost interest in Saybrook; Fenwick sold it to the colony of Connecticut in 1644, before returning to England to resume his seat in Parliament and command a militia regiment.¹⁰ A third nineteenth-century Long Island historian, Benjamin Franklin Thompson, assessed Lion Gardiner as "one of the many young men of Britain of bold and adventurous spirit, who, seeking fame or sympathizing with the oppressed," joined the ranks of English nonconformists, "both of the church and the laity," fighting to liberate Holland. Lion's commander in the lowlands was Sir Thomas Fairfax, the future general of Cromwell's army. His Saybrook employers were ringleaders of the movement that eventually overthrew the British monarchy, beheaded the king, and instituted a short-lived republic: it seems unlikely that this band of dissidents would hire Gardiner had he not sided with their cause. According to Curtiss C. Gardiner, "he adhered to the Parliamentary party, and was a Dissenter and a friend of the Puritans." However, Lion Gardiner's memoir expresses no political viewpoint in connection with Holland or Saybrook. While in Holland, Thompson noted, he married

"Mary Willemson, a native of [the small city of Woerden], and a lady of prominent connections." It is tempting to assume that Gardiner sympathized with his rebel employers, but it is also possible that this unblinking realist took the Saybrook job for the hundred pounds a year it paid, and the chance to begin married life as the leader of a bold and prestigious venture.¹¹ As it turned out, Saybrook was a disaster. "According to promise," wrote Lion, "we expected that there would have come from England 300 able men, 50 to till the ground, and 50 to build houses. But our great expectation at the River's mouth, came only two men, Mr. Fenwick, and his man." A recent historian of the Winthrops found that after five discouraging months, John Winthrop Jr., Gardiner's superior, "quit Saybrook . . . before the end of his term as governor, and left Lion Gardiner in charge of the thinly manned outpost, to spend a miserable winter [1636-37] behind the palisades, beleaguered by Pequots." Somehow, Lion managed to shepherd his small flock of settlers through the hardships of that bitter season, when he "had but twenty-four in all, men, women, and boys and girls, and not food for two months, unless we saved our cornfield, which could not possibly be if they came to war, for it is two miles from our home."¹² The war he dreaded was with the Pequots, the intractable local Indians with whom traders had been skirmishing, and whose extermination was held necessary by many New England settlers. As a harbinger of impending conflict, twenty Massachusetts Bay men raided the Pequots and marched home again, to Lion Gardiner's "great grief, for, said I, you come hither to raise these wasps about my ears, and then you will take wing and flee away." He was a pragmatist, not a pacifist. He disapproved of small sorties that resulted in counterattacks on his vulnerable fort, in one of which he was shot in the thigh by a Pequot arrow. But in 1637, when Captains John Mason and John Underhill led a large force of colonists and Indian allies against the Pequot stronghold, Lion rejoiced in the "Victory to the glory of God, and honor of our nation, having slain three hundred, burnt their fort, and taken many prisoners." Although he praised the outcome of the Pequot War, he criticized the carnage as the avoidable result of violence and counter-violence that began with the murder of a Pequot by an Indian friendly to Massachusetts:

Thus far I have written in a book, that all men and posterity might know how and why so many honest men had their blood shed, yea, and some flayed alive, others cut in pieces, and some roasted alive, only because . . . a Bay Indian killed one Pequit.¹³

The Pequot's defeat led to Gardiner's meeting with Wyandanch, the Montauk leader, who visited Saybrook three days after the battle. Although Gardiner referred to Wyandanch as the "next brother to the old Sachem of Long Island," it is more likely that they were colleagues, with Wyandanch next in line to succeed the "old Sachem," Yovawan, whom the English called Poggatucut.¹⁴

According to Gardiner, the purpose of Wyandanch's call was to "know if we were angry with all Indians," or only with Pequots. In his typically forthright manner, Lion answered "No, but only with such as had killed Englishmen." When Wyandanch asked if the English would trade with "they that lived on Long Island," Gardiner gave him a conditional yes: "If you will kill all the Pequits that come to you, and send me their heads, then . . . you shall have trade with us." Wyandanch said he would bring this news to "his brother . . . and if we may have peace and trade with you, we will give you tribute,

as we did the Pequits." Gardiner sealed his bargain with a grisly demand with which Wyandanch complied:

If you have any Indians that have killed English, you must bring their heads also . . . so he went away and did as I had said, and sent me five heads, three and four heads for which I paid them that brought them as they had promised.¹⁵

It was not a squeamish age on either side of the ocean. Settlers captured by Native Americans sometimes suffered deaths as horrible as that inflicted by fellow Englishmen on one of Gardiner's former employers, the Reverend Hugh Peter, who, shortly after the Restoration, was hung, drawn, and quartered after being forced to witness the similar fate of a friend.¹⁶ The price of peace on Long Island was harsh, but the pact between Gardiner and Wyandanch, and the lasting friendship that followed, relieved eastern Long Island of the English-Indian carnage that persisted for forty years in New England, from the Pequot War in Connecticut through King Philip's War in Massachusetts. Soon after Winthrop left Saybrook, Lion wrote to him that those who remained would be loyal and work hard for the colony, but "it seemed wee have neither masters nor owners." If not provided for, he continued, "then I must be forced to shift as the Lord may direct."¹⁷ To shift as the Lord may direct was something Lion did incredibly well. At the end of his Saybrook contract, in 1639, he crossed the Sound with his family and some farmer-soldiers from the fort to become the first of an unbroken line of lords of the manor of Gardiner's Island, seven and a half miles long and three miles across at the widest point, a few miles off-shore from East Hampton. Lion called it the Isle of Wight because of its contour; the Indian name, "Manchonake," meant a place where many had died, perhaps from some great sickness that swept the east end of Long Island before the coming of the English. The description of Gardiner's Island in 1798 by its seventh-generation proprietor might well have applied to the island in Lion's time:

The soil . . . is good & is very natural for Wheat and White clover. The timber is of various kinds, mostly large White oak . . . The land is well watered with brooks, springs & ponds . . . Beef, Cheese, Wheat, and Wool are the staple articles . . . Fish of various kinds may be procured at almost any time. For fertility of soil & for various advantages it is not perhaps exceeded by many farms in the United States.¹⁸

In the opinion of Curtiss G. Gardiner, the traditional consideration of "one large black dog, one gun, a quantity of powder and shot, some rum and a few Dutch blankets [is] not well founded." The real price, recorded in a lawyer's notebook, was "ten coates of trading cloath," paid to "Yovawan Sachem of Pommanocc and Aswaw Sachem his wife," for Lion Gardiner and his heirs "to have and to hold . . . forever (as of) the third day of the moneth, called, by the English May in the yeare by them of their Lord . . . 1639." Ten months later, Lion obtained a confirming grant from the agent of the Earl of Stirling, then the king's grantee for Long Island and its adjacent islands. The consideration of five pounds a year empowered Gardiner to enjoy that Island . . . he hath now in possession, Called . . . by the English the Isle of Wight . . . forever . . . And also to make Execute & put in practice such Laws for Church & Civil Government as are according to God the King and the practice of the Country without giving any account thereof to any

whomsoever.19

Even before he moved from Gardiner's Island, Lion Gardiner took an active part in the affairs of East Hampton and its church. He was instrumental in the selection of the first minister, Thomas James, a young man about whom he wrote to John Winthrop Jr. in 1650, the year the church was gathered. The letter began, characteristically, with a proposal to sell ten cows "for fiftie pound, in good marchantabl wampem, bever, or silver." As for the newly formed church, declared Gardiner in keeping with Puritan striving for a congregation of visible saints, it aimed for quality, not quantity: it would rather part with some of its members than "resave more without good testimonies." East Hampton was willing to pay "the young man . . . 20li a year, with such that as I myself eat, til we see what the Lord will do with us." In a passage illustrative of Gardiner's erudition at a time of widespread illiteracy—his history of the Pequot War was peppered with biblical quotations—he asked Winthrop to tell the "yung man (who) hapily hath not manie books . . . that I have . . . the 3 Books of Martyrs, Erasmus, moste of Perkins, Wilsons Dixtionare, a large Concordiance, Mayor on the New T(e)stement."²⁰ In contrast to many of his peers, Gardiner did not clutter his mind with superstition, as proven by his reaction to an accusation of witchcraft. The defendant, Goody Garlick, was charged with causing the death in childbirth of none other than Lion's young daughter, Elizabeth Howell, in 1657. Perhaps because Goody and Joshua Garlick, her husband, worked for him for many years, or perhaps because he had too much common sense to believe in "black cats and harlequin devils . . . Lion seems to have exerted himself in behalf of this unfortunate woman," wrote Alexander Gardiner. Lion's influence aborted a trial at Hartford and saved Goody "from an awful fate."²¹ Lion Gardiner and Thomas James became bosom friends, a relationship that expanded from ecclesiastical to business matters. A 1658 entry in the East Hampton Town Record reported that "Wyandanch, Sachem of Long Island," gave half of all whales cast up on the beach from "Nepeake eastward to the end of the Island" to Leiftenant Lion Gardiner, and the other half to Thomas James. The "first good whale" was given "freely and for nothing," after which the grantees would pay "what they shall Judge meete, and according as they find profit by them." However, it is likely that this windfall was prompted by the Montauks' by-now complete reliance on the armed power of the settlers. The Pequots, before their defeat, and the Narragansetts after that had staged predatory raids on the Montauks, extorting payments of wampum in exchange for refraining from violent reprisals. Following Gardiner's pact with Wyandanch, the Indians, decimated by sickness and unable to compete in war, transferred their allegiance and annual payment of tribute from mainland Native American to English "protectors." In his 1983 study of East Hampton, T. H. Breen concluded that the Montauks lost their gamble that "their alliance with Gardiner and the other settlers would translate into power over the Narragansetts." When this "strategy backfired, they found themselves even more dependant upon the English."²² When New England Indians tried, without success, to foment armed resistance to English rule of Long Island, Wyandanch not only refused to join the conspiracy but reported the plot to Gardiner, for which Nathaniel S. Prime commended him:

Though often cajoled and threatened by the N. E. Indians to induce him to conspire against his new neighbors, he not only rejected their overtures but even delivered their

agents into the hands of the English. He reposed unbounded confidence in Lion Gardiner; and communicated to him, without reserve, every thing that involved his own interests, or the safety of the whites.²³ Prime's impression of Wyandanch as a statesman who crossed racial lines to preserve the peace is not shared by Gaynell Stone, a current scholar of Long Island's Indian heritage. According to Stone, the militarily weak

Wyandanch was a figurehead supported by the English . . . to consummate their continuing land purchases . . . Perhaps he had no choice, caught as he was between two aggressive forces, the Narragansetts and the English.²⁴

East End English settlers and Native Americans never met on the field of battle, but the Montauks and Narragansetts did. In a 1654 raid the Narragansett/Niantic warlord Ninigret is said to have pillaged the camp of Wyandanch on the night of his daughter's wedding, killed the groom, and kidnapped the bride. On behalf of the grief-stricken father, Thomas James begged John Winthrop Jr. to help to speed delivery of the wampum raised for ransom, "which he [Wyandanch] hears was intercepted by Thomas Stanton [a colonist]." "At last," wrote Curtiss C. Gardiner, "through the exertions of [Lion] Gardiner . . . (the young woman) was redeemed and restored to her afflicted parents."²⁵ To express his gratitude, Wyandanch, with his wife and son, made a free gift to Lion Gardiner, "his heirs, executors and assigns forever," of land that "lyeth on Long Island . .

between Huntington and Setauket... [and] more than half way through the island southerly." Dated East Hampton, 14 July 1659, the deed acknowledged twenty-four years of Lion's "kindness . . . counsell and advice in our prosperity," with special remembrance that,

in our great extremity, when we were almost swallowed up of our enemies— . . . he appeared to us not only as a friend, but as a father in giving us money and goods, whereby we defended ourselves, and ransomed my daughter.

Above the marks of his son Wiancombone, and "The Sachem's Wife" (Wicchiaubit), the signature of Wyandanch is a drawing of two stick figures shaking hands, an unusual gesture of affection and equality. Yet a skeptic will wonder who worded the document, which states that now that the sachem and his wife are old, "we have nothing left that is worth his [Lion's] acceptance but a small tract of land left us, [which] we desire him to accept," a strangely modest description of thirty thousand choice acres.²⁶

If Lion used his friendship with Indians to his advantage, his trust in them was genuine. When Wyandanch was ordered to testify before the magistrates of Southampton, and his people feared for their sachem's safety, Lion, who happened to be at the Montauk camp, presented himself as a hostage. "I will stay here till you all know it is well with your Sachem," he declared, in his strong, terse, style, "if they bind him, bind me, and if they kill him, kill me." All's well that ends well, albeit somewhat grimly; Wyandanch found the four Indians who committed the murder in question "and brought them to Southampton, and they were all hanged at Hartford." In 1659, Wyandanch met his death, perhaps from sickness, perhaps at the hands of hostile Indians because of his English collaboration. In his memoir, Gardiner

stated that although Wyandanch perished during the "great mortality (epidemic) among them (the Indians) . . . it was by poison." He mourned the passing of the sachem: "My friend and brother is gone, who will now do the like?"—a lament with ambiguous overtones.²⁷ In 1660, the governor of Barbados, who was a friend of John Winthrop Jr.'s, expressed interest in buying Gardiner's Island. Oh no, wrote Lion to Winthrop, "I having children and children's children, am not minded to sell it at present." Not "at present" or ever would this island leave possession of the Gardiners (although it nearly changed hands several times in the present century). "Butt I have another plac," went on Lion, "(I suppose) more convenient for the gentleman that would buy, liinge upon Long Iland, between Huntington and Setokett."²⁸ When this sale fell through, Lion and his son David conveyed to Richard Smith (then known as Smythe) the land that would be the principal part of the future town of Smithtown. Smith, a friend of Lion's, was one of the three English witnesses to Wyandanch's deed; it is said that Wyandanch's daughter was returned to her father at Smith's home in Setauket, where the grateful sachem presented his gift of land to Gardiner. Lion died soon after this, and his son consummated the sale to Smith, of which no record remains.²⁹ Lion Gardiner died in 1663, at the age of sixty-four, one year before the English conquest of New Netherland from the Dutch: the creator of its first settlement never heard the words "New York." Although he had to dilute his fortune in order to redeem the debts run up by David, his extravagant son, he left a considerable estate. In his will he apologized to his wife, his sole beneficiary, for not leaving more, because David, "after hee was at liberty to provide for himself, by his own engagement hath forced me to part with a great part of my estate to save his credit, soe that I cannot at present give to my daughter and grandchild that which is fitting for them to have."³⁰ In 1665, one year after the English ousted the Dutch from New Netherland, Mary Gardiner died and, contrary to Lion's wishes, left Gardiner's Island to their son. Richard Nicolls, the governor of the newly formed New York Province, gave David Gardiner a grant for the Isle of Wight at an annual quit rent of five pounds. Five years later, the rent was commuted to one lamb yearly, upon demand, by Governor Francis Lovelace. In 1686, David received a new patent from Governor Thomas Dongan, who erected the Isle of Wight "a lordship and manor to be henceforth called the lordship and manor of Gardiner's Island." The rent of one lamb a year was renewed, as was the Gardiners' sovereignty. In the judgment of Benjamin F. Thompson, the fees for these parchments were "perquisites of the governors . . . to fill their pockets at the people's expense." Power to hold court-leet (criminal) and court-baron (civil), as well as the advowson (the naming of clergy), and other ancient rights issued to David Gardiner were never exercised—they were given in anticipation of the manor's "becoming a numerously tenanted estate," which it did not. Their ownership remained uncontested, but the Gardiners' unlimited powers were curtailed in 1788, when the state legislature annexed the island to the town of Easthampton (then one word).³¹ The life of Lion Gardiner, Long Island's first English settler and founding father, illumines our understanding of Long Island as America. To begin with, his experience contradicts the assumption that Long Island was cloned from New England. Gardiner and fellow settlers were not New Englanders who came to Long Island, but English emigrants who sojourned in New England before choosing to make the Island their permanent home. He embodied the old and new system of ownership: he was the lord of his own manor who also served as a townsman of the Puritan commonwealth of East Hampton. There, in the words of the

historian Peter Ross, "he filled the office of magistrate and in all respects was regarded as the representative citizen of that section of the island." His rejection of charges of witchcraft shows that even widely held superstition did not corrupt the clarity of his mind, even though the case pertained to the death of his own daughter.³²

Gardiner learned the language and gained the trust of his Indian neighbors, whom he treated without condescension. When a Southampton court summoned Wyandanch to testify, he unflinchingly offered himself as a hostage pending the safe return of the sachem. Largely due to his diplomacy, the interracial wars of the mainland did not erupt on eastern Long Island. In the process, Gardiner acquired a handsome fortune in Long Island land by inducing his Indian friends to sell him large tracts at small prices, confirmed by English deeds. Three hundred and fifty-nine years have passed since Lion Gardiner, freedom fighter and pioneer, set foot on eastern Long Island. He and his hardy wife, Mary, who left her comfortable home in Holland to cross the ocean with her husband and suffer the rigors of frontier life, are symbols of the transition from the Old World to the New by the first generation of emigrants. They were Americans long before the word was coined.

NOTES

1. Curtiss C. Gardiner, *Lion Gardiner and His Descendants* (St. Louis: A. Whipple, 1890), 3.

These lines, in Gardiner's hand, were written in a Geneva Bible found many years after his

death. First published in 1560, the unauthorized, pocket-size Geneva Bible, with Calvinistic

marginal notes, was the pre-King James version favored by the English laity. Gardiner's inscribed copy, published in 1599, the year of his birth, is in the exhibit case of the East Hampton Free Library's Long Island Room, open from 1 to 4:30 p.m. , Monday through Saturday, under the supervision of Dorothy King.

2. James E. Bunce and Richard P. Harmond, eds., *Long Island as America: A Documentary*

History to 1896 (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1977); the *Long Island Historical Journal*,

published semiannually by the Department of History, SUNY at Stony Brook, is devoted to

the study of Long Island as America.

3. Silas Wood, *A Sketch of the First Settlement of the Several Towns of Long Island, with*

their Political Condition, to the End of the American Revolution (1824; reprint, *Historical Chronicles of New Amsterdam, Colonial New York and Early Long Island*, Cornell Jaray,

ed. 1865, reprint, Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, 1968), 19.

4. Lion Gardiner is his own best source, in "Leift. Lion Gardener his Relation of the

Pequot

Warres," Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society (hereafter cited as CMHS), vol. 3, 3d series (Cambridge, 1833), 131-60; the manuscript, written at East Hampton in 1660, was found in 1809 among the papers of Gov. Jonathan Trumbull of Connecticut; see also his letters to John Winthrop Jr. in the "Winthrop Papers" (hereafter cited as "WP")CMHS, vols. 10, 3d Series, 6 and 7, 4th series, and 1 and 8, 5th series, and Records of the Town of East Hampton (hereafter cited as EHTR), 5 vols. (Sag Harbor: James H. Hunt, 1887) 1: passim. For secondary sources for Lion and later Gardiners (written mainly by descendants), in addition to Curtiss C. Gardiner, cited above; see John Lyon (most later Gardiners with this name were Lion, but some were Lyon) Gardiner, "Notes and Memorandums Concerning Gardiners Island, Written in May 1798 by John Lyon Gardiner the Present Proprietor of That Island Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1859 (New York, 1970), 260-72; Alexander Gardiner, "History of the Gardiner Family," CMHS, vol. 10, 3d series (Boston, 1846), 173-85; Sarah Diodati Gardiner, *Early Memories of Gardiner's Island (The Isle of Wight, New York)* (East Hampton: East Hampton Star, 1947); William S. Pelletreau, "East Hampton," in *History of Suffolk County* (New York: W. W. Munsell, 1882), especially 5, 25, 30; Robert Payne, *The Island* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1958); Jason Epstein and Elizabeth Barlow, *Last Hampton; A History and Guide*, rev. 3d ed. (New York: Random House, 1985); Roger Wunderlich, "'An Island of Mine Owne": The Life and Times of Lion Gardiner, 1599-1663," *LIHJ* 2 (Fall 1989: 1-14. For Smithtown, see J. Lawrence Smith, "Smithtown," in *History of Suffolk County New York*: W. W. Munsell, 1882).

5. Wood, 19.

6. Nathaniel S. Prime, *History of Long Island, from Its First Settlement by Europeans. to the Year 1845, with Special Reference to Its Ecclesiastical Concerns Part I* (New York: Robert Carter, 1845), 77-78.

7. Lion Gardiner, "Pequot Warres," 157-68; Daniel Denton, *A Brief Description of New-York: formerly Called New Netherlands* (London, 1670, reprinted in Cornell Jaray, ed. 1865, reprint, Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, 1968), 6-7.

8. John A. Strong, "How the Montauk Lost Their Land," in Gaynell Stone, ed., *Readings in Long Island Archaeology and Ethnic History*, vol 3, *The History & Archaeology of the Montauk*, 2d. ed. (Stony Brook: Suffolk County Archaeological Association, Nassau County Archaeological Committee, 1993), 79; for Gardiner and Wyandanch, see also Strong, *The Algonquian Peoples of Long Island: From Earliest Times to 1700* (Interlaken, N.Y.: Empire State Books, 1997, prepared under the auspices of Hofstra University, 1997), passim.

9. Curtiss C. Gardiner, 46. xvii; Edward Hopkins to John Winthrop Jr., 28 October 1635, "WP," CMHS, vol. 6, 4th series (Boston, 1863), 326, 329, announcing the departure from London of the Batcheler, the twenty-five-ton North Sea bark bearing "Serieant Gardener, his wife and her maid, and his workmaster to New England"; Sir Richard Saltonstall to John

Winthrop Jr., 27 February 1635 (new style 1636), *ibid.*, 579-91, asking to be commended to "Sergieant Gardiner . . . whom I purpose, God willing, to visit this summer, if he will provide a house to receive me & mine at my landing." Two letters signed "Lion Gardener," in 1652 and 1660, were endorsed "Leift. Gardiner" by John Winthrop Jr. ("WP," CMHS, Vol 7, 4th Series, 64-65); in the "Pequot Warres" and most of his letters in the "WP," Lion spelled his last name "Gardener."

10. Lion Gardiner, "Pequot Warres," 136. English units in the Netherlands defended the Dutch Republic, a loose federation of provinces under the stadholdership of the prince of Orange, which waged a long and successful struggle for independence from Spain (see Pieter Geyl, *The Netherlands in the Seventeenth Century*, rev. and enl. ed. (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1961 [first pub. 1936 as *The Netherlands Divided*]); for a guide to modern interpretations of the English Revolution, including those of Christopher Hill, R. H. Tawney, H. R. Trevor-Roper, Lawrence Stone, Perez Zagorin, and many other historians, and the roles of Lord Saye and Sele, Lord Brooke, Sir Arthur Haselrig, George Fenwick, Hugh Peter, John Davenport, Sir Richard Saltonstall, Sir Thomas Fairfax, and others encountered by Gardiner, see R. C. Richardson, *The Debate on the English Revolution* (London: Methuen, 1977), and Derek Hirst, *Authority and Conflict: England 1603-1658* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1986).

11. Benjamin F. Thompson, *History of Long Island from Its Discovery and Settlement to the Present Time*, 3rd. ed., revised and greatly enlarged with additions and a biography of the author by Charles Werner (New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1918) 3:313-14; Curtiss C. Gardiner, 46.

12. Lion Gardiner, "Pequot Warres," 137-39; Richard S. Dun, *Puritans and Yankees: The Winthrop Dynasty of New England 1630-1717* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1962), 69.

13. Lion Gardiner, "Pequot Warres," 140, 150, 151. Like Gardiner, Mason and Underhill were soldiers in the Netherlands before coming to New England; see Major John Mason, "A Brief History of the Pequot War," CMHS, vol. 8, 2d series (Boston, 1836):120-53; Louis B. Mason, *The Life and Times of Major John Mason, 1600-1672* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1935); Captain John Underhill, *Nerves from America . . .* (London, 1638; facsimile reprint ed. New York: Da Capo Press, 1971), an account of the Pequot War that justified the slaughter because sometimes "Scripture declareth women and children must perish with their parents" (40).

14. Lion Gardiner, "Pequot Warres," 150. Yovawan, the Manhansett sachem, and Wyandanch, the Montauk sachem, resided in present-day eastern Suffolk County, the region the Indians called Paumanok.

15. *Ibid.*

16. Prime, 93.

17. Curtiss C. Gardiner, 65.
18. John Lyon Gardiner, "Gardiners Island," 270-71, 261-62.
19. For the terms of the original deed for Gardiner's Island, copied in the records of a Boston lawyer, Thomas Lechford, see Curtiss G. Gardiner, 58-61; EHTR, 2-3.
20. Lion Gardiner to John Winthrop Jr., 27 April 1650, "WP," CMHS, Vol 7, 4th Series, 59;
for William Perkins (1558-1602) and other Puritan theologians, see Perry Miller, *Orthodoxy in New England* (Boston, 1933), *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (1953; reprint, Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), and *Errand Into the Wilderness* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1956).
21. Alexander Gardiner, "Gardiner Family," 183-84; for the charges against Goody Garlick, see EHTR 1: 132-36, and 139-40.
22. EHTR 1:150, 13 November 1658; T. H. Breen, *Imagining the Past, East Hampton Histories* (Boston: Addison, Wesley, 1989), 112.
23. Prime, 93.
24. Gaynell Stone, "Long Island as America: A New Look at the First Inhabitants," *Long Island Historical Journal I* (Spring 1989): 166.
25. Curtiss C. Gardiner, 65; Thomas James to John Winthrop Jr., 6 September 1654, "WP,"
CMHS, vol. 7, 4th series, 482.
26. J. Lawrence Smith, "Smithtown," 2. The deed is recorded in the Book of Deeds, office of the Secretary of State, Albany, NY, 11: 118-19; a copy is in the collection of the Brooklyn Historical Society.
27. Curtiss C. Gardiner, 65; Lion Gardiner, "Pequot Warres," 157-58; for Wyandanch's death, his appointment of Lion and David Gardiner as guardians of his son, the challenging of this by John Ogden, a rival of the Gardiners, and the purchase of 9,000 acres of Montauk land by the Gardiners and others from Wiancombone and his mother Wicchiaubit, known as the Sunk Squaw after her husband's death, see Strong, "How the Montauk Lost Their Land," 35, 79-80.
28. Lion Gardiner to John Winthrop Jr., 5 November 1660, "WP," CMHS, vol. 7, 4th series, 64-65; the governor of Barbados was called "Mr. Serie" by Winthrop, and "Daniell Searle" by Lion.
29. For the founding of Smithtown, without any bull, see J. Lawrence Smith,

"Smithtown," 2-3.

30. Gardiner's estate was inventoried at £256, his property on Gardiner's Island at £511, as enumerated in Pelletreau, "East Hampton" 26.

31. Thompson, 1:198, 209, 3:318.

32. Peter Ross, A History of Long Island, from Its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time, 3 vols (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1902) 1:80.