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Item of the Week *from the* Long Island Collection

LONG ISLAND COLLECTION | DIGITAL LONG ISLAND | EAST HAMPTON STAR ARCHIVE



Princess Pocahontas Pharoah, 1878-1963

This image of Princess Pocahontas Pharoah (alternately spelled Pharaoh) as a young woman was given to the Long Island Collection by Red Thunder Cloud, also known as Carlos Westez. Red Thunder Cloud lived in East Hampton and documented local indigenous people, self-identifying as Catawba.

Pocahontas Pharoah, occasionally identified as Sarah Pocahontas Pharoah, was born on the Montauk reservation near Indian Field, Montauk Point, on February 15, 1878. Pocahontas was the youngest child of David Pharoah, typically identified as King David Pharoah, and his wife Queen Maria Fowler Pharoah. Pocahontas' father would die from consumption six months after her birth, when he was about 40 years old. Red Thunder Cloud's [caption](#) on the back of this photograph recalls his experiences with the disagreement between the Fowler and Pharoah families, related to the leadership of the Montaukett people.

Pocahontas was born in the middle of the attempts by Arthur Benson and the Long Island Railroad to force the Montauketts off their land. In October of 1879, before Pocahontas' second birthday, Arthur Benson purchased the Montaukett reservation for \$151,000. When Benson took control of the property, he allowed the Long Island Railroad to expand service through this land, connecting Montauk to rail service. In 1897, Pocahontas' brother King Wyandanch Pharoah turned to the courts to try to get the Montaukett land back, continuing the fight until 1910.

Known for her skilled beadwork, woven baskets, and the scrub brushes she whittled, Pocahontas never married. She spent most of her life working as a janitor for the Telephone Company in their East Hampton offices. She was known as the last Montaukett to be born on the reservation. She would spend most of the rest of her life in the Freetown section of East Hampton, on the land the Montauketts were given as part of the land deal for their reservation. Pocahontas [died](#) on February 6, 1963 at 84 years old.

EXPLORE MORE

[The Digital Long Island Collection](#) is part of New York Heritage Digital Collections. Included are searchable scans of deeds, drawings, etchings, inventories, letters, maps, paintings, pardons, patents, photographs, plans, postcards, prints, sculptures, sketches, textiles, tiles, yearbooks and more to come.

[The East Hampton Star Archive](#) is a fully searchable, online digital archive of our local weekly newspaper, that features each complete issue of the paper from 1918-1968, exactly as it appeared in print. Visit the archive online, for a tour of our Town's history that will fascinate both the amateur and professional historian!

[The Karl Grossman Research Archive](#) is an extensive collection of materials digitized from the personal archive of Karl Grossman, an investigative reporter, columnist, author, and current professor of journalism at SUNY Old Westbury. The archive brings together a decades long career in reporting and journalism with topics ranging from the economy and pollution to fishing and East Hampton Town. Patrons are capable of searching this 9,500+ item collection by collection name, year, title, or keyword search.

[The Local Artist Research Archive](#) is a collection of over 19,000 items digitized from Guild Hall, containing materials including personal letters, photographs, news clippings, and art catalogs concerning artists of the East End. Patrons are capable of searching this archive by collection, title, or keyword search.



We are an archive dedicated to the history and people of Long Island, with a special interest in all things East Hampton and East End. Unlike some small local history rooms in other public libraries, we have over 100,000 items including, but not limited to, rare books, maps, photographs, deeds, postcards, letters, newspapers, and whaling logs. We also have a dedicated and hardworking staff ready to help you with any questions you may have. Unable to make it to the library? No problem! We upload images from the collection to Digital Long Island on a weekly basis, so there's always something new and interesting to behold.

Please visit us at the Library, make use of our extensive online digital resources, or contact us for assistance. Public hours are: Mon. - Tues. and Thurs. - Sat., 1:00-4:30 p.m.

Researched and written by Andrea Meyer, Librarian/Archivist, Long Island Collection.

Andrea Meyer began working in the Long Island Collection in January 2015. Her responsibilities include updating Digital Long Island, scanning, processing new collections, and assisting patrons with research. She earned her M.L.I.S. through Long Island University, and completed her M.A. in Archives and Public History at New York University through the dual-degree program. Andrea started working in archives in 2005. Prior to working for the East Hampton Library, Andrea worked at the New Jersey State Archives, at NYU Libraries, and as a private research consultant. Her clients included the New-York Historical Society. She is also involved with the Sag Harbor Historical Society.

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