

Who were the Native American inhabitants that originally greeted European visitors to Poningo (present Rye)?

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It has always been difficult for researchers to identify the tribal identities of Native American populations in southeastern New York and adjacent southwestern Connecticut. Pennsylvania State University *Emeritus* Professor of Anthropology Dean R. Snow explained the problem in terms of the early colonial documentation of Indigenous peoples in those regions. A Northeastern archaeologist whose research has often focused on colonial period Native communities in the Northeast, Dr. Snow blamed early European writers for this lack of clarity.

“To the confusion caused by the use of modern state boundaries we can add the confusion inherent in the written sources relating to the historic Indian communities of the region. A specific Indian group referred to in a colonial document may be an ethnic unit, a village name, a river name, a personal name, a kin unit, a cluster of refugees, a complete fabrication, or a slip of the pen.” (Dean R. Snow, 1980) (Endnote 1)

Noted anthropologist and linguist Dr. Ives Goddard, curator and linguist *Emeritus* in the Department of Anthropology of the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, and a specialist in Northeastern Native American languages, concurred that:

“The political groupings and proper designations for the Sound-shore Indians of Westchester and Fairfield counties thus remain obscure” (Goddard 1978b). (Endnote 2)

There are several reasons for this conundrum.

1. The Dutch were the earliest documented Europeans in present Westchester and Fairfield Counties. Those county lands were part of the new Dutch colony of New Netherland, which extended eastward to Cape Cod in eastern Massachusetts and westward to the present Delaware River, which forms the boundary line of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. It was a new and unknown country to those early explorers and traders. They were unfamiliar with both the natural and social landscapes of these regions, particularly those inland from the immediate seacoast. They were also unfamiliar with the Eastern Algonquian language spoken by their new trading partners. Intercommunications must have been difficult and minimal. Consequently, seventeenth-century European documents and maps rarely identify by name the tribes inhabiting these regions.

Edward Manning Rutenber, the 19th century historian of the Indigenous history of eastern New York, noted: “The names and locations of the Indian tribes were not ascertained with clearness by the early Dutch writers.” Rutenber was referring to the early 17th century Dutch historians Nicolas Van Wassenaer, Johannes De Laet, and Adriaen Van der Donck. *(Endnote 3)* In the Preface to his book, Rutenber went even further, claiming that:

“Not only had the history of the Indians who occupied the valley of Hudson’s river never been written, but the incidental references to them, in the histories of nations more

prominent at a later period – treating them as mere fragmentary bands without organization or political position among the aboriginal nations – being regarded as erroneous, the inquiry [by Ruttenber] involved the rejection, to a very great extent, of the conclusions of others....” (E.M. Ruttenber 1872). (Endnote 4)

2. Later Colonial-Indigenous warfare (especially the Pequot War of 1636-1637 and Kieft’s War circa 1642-1645 ^(Endnote 5)), coupled with accelerated colonial settlement in the region, led to Indigenous population movements and emigration out of the area very early in the colonial period. ^(Endnote 6) By the 18th century, southern Westchester County and adjacent southwestern Connecticut were devoid of tribal political units *per se* – although some Native Americans continued to dwell in the area. The Connecticut Indian Census of 1774 listed only 17 Indians living in southwestern Connecticut at that time. ^(Endnote 7) As Connecticut historian John De Forest noted in his 1852 book on the history of the Indians of Connecticut:

“The Indians of Greenwich, Stamford, and Norwalk seemed to have melted away unnoticed: a great part of them probably moved to other homes, and one portion appears to have settled for a time in what is now Ridgefield. We learn from the Census of the Connecticut Indians, taken in 1774, that there were only eight natives remaining in Greenwich, nine in Norwalk, and not one in Stamford.” (John W. De Forest, 1852)

^(Endnote 8)

In other words, by the time Europeans were just beginning to familiarize themselves with the physical and social landscapes of these lands, the political units known as tribes and their leadership emigrated out of the area. (More on this below.)

3. There is also the possibility that the devastating effects of European diseases on the local Native communities so depleted tribal populations that the village, or multi-village localities (political districts referred to as “chieftaincies” – see Ruttenber 1872), was the main political unit in this region at that time. That is, there was no centralized tribal government with a grand sachem, but rather village and multi-village leaders who dealt directly with European leadership in regard to their specific village lands. There is evidence that Europeans mistook the village name to be the name of its tribe. (See below.)

The Wiechquaeskecks

Documentary research of primary European sources indicates that the Indigenous communities who welcomed Dutch explorers and traders to present Westchester County were members of the Wiechquaeskeck tribe. ^(Endnote 9) According to seventeenth century Dutch sources, Wiechquaeskeck homelands included present-day Westchester, Bronx, and New York Counties in southern New York, and the southwestern portion of present-day Fairfield County in Connecticut. They extended from the Hudson River to possibly as far east as present-day Norwalk. Their homelands were bounded on the north by those of the Wappingers (AKA Waping), and on the south by Long Island Sound. To their east were homelands of the Pequannocks and Paugussetts, both of whom were non-Munsee speakers.

“The Weckquaesgeeks....Their territory appears to have extended from Norwalk on the Sound, to the Hudson, and to have embraced considerable portions of the towns of Mount Pleasant, Greenburgh, White Plains, and Rye; it was very largely included in the Manor of Phillipsborough. Their sachem, in 1649, was Ponupahowhelbshelen; in 1660,

Ackhough; in 1663, Souwenaro; in 1680, Weskora, or Weskomen, and Goharius his brother; in 1681, Wessickenaiuw and Conarhanded his brother. Their chiefs are largely represented in the list of grantors of lands.” (Edward M. Ruttenber, 1872) (Endnote 10)

The Wiechquaeskecks were Munsee speakers. Munsee and Unami are two Eastern Algonquian languages that were spoken by the Lenni Lenape peoples whose homelands included what is now known as New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, and northeastern Delaware. Because many of their villages were located along the river the English named in honor of Lord De La Warr (a large investor in British colonization of North America), the Lenape were dubbed the Delaware by English colonists.

“Goddard (1978a) concludes that there were two Delaware languages around A.D. 1600. Munsee was spoken in the upper Delaware and lower Hudson drainages. The people of the lower Delaware drainage, below the Delaware Water Gap, spoke Unami, close but not identical to Munsee.” (Dean R. Snow, 1980) (Endnote 11)

There is archaeological evidence for a relatively peaceful population movement of Munsee-speaking Lenape northward into southern New York around AD 1000-1300, which would explain why the 17th century Indigenous communities dwelling on both sides of the Hudson River and in southwestern Connecticut spoke Munsee. (Endnote 12) Beginning around AD 1000, pottery fragments recovered from sites in southern New York and southwestern Connecticut exhibit a marked change in cultural styles. Smoothed or cord-marked surfaced pots decorated with bold incising or linear cord-wrapped stick, or paddle-edge stamping appear to have replaced the earlier Windsor tradition brushed, net-marked, and fabric-marked vessels with brushed or stamped decoration. Archaeologists named the new pottery types Bowmans Brook Incised and Bowmans Brook Stamped, and the ceramic tradition that it represented the East River tradition.

“The initial intrusion of people from the Delaware Drainage into the lower Hudson is marked by the appearance of the Bowmans Brook [archaeological] phase. This later becomes the Clasons Point [archaeological] phase (Figures 8.6 and 8.7), which in turn leads to the historic Munsee. This intrusive sequence is called the East River tradition by Smith (1950: 190-193). As described by Smith and later by Ritchie (1969a:268-270), Bowmans Brook appears to contrast with Sebonac in terms of pottery types used, but little else.” (Dr. Dean R. Snow, 1980) (Endnote 13)

Many of the pottery sherds recovered from archaeology sites within the Marshlands Conservancy have been identified as representing vessels of the East River ceramic tradition. (Endnote 14) The material culture of Rye’s Indigenous inhabitants support the documentary evidence that they were descendants of Munsee speakers’ emigrants from New Jersey.

Researchers have suggested several translations for the Munsee name Wiechquaeskeck, AKA Weckquaesgeeks, Wickquaeskeck, Wicjerscreeke, and other spelling variations thereof. (Endnote 15) Ruttenber cited two translations based on the supposition that the name was derived from the Algonquian words *wigwos*, meaning “birch bark” and *keag*, meaning “country”: O’Callaghan’s “the country of the birch bark” and Bolton’s “the place of the bark kettle.” (Endnote 16) More likely, the name is associated with the Lenape term *week-qua-chick*, which means “head of the cove”. (Endnote 17) Ruttenber believed that the word Wiechquaeskeck was a geographic place name applied to the homeland of a specific Native American community (but not necessarily what tribal members of the community called themselves), (Endnote 18) and I agree.

There are numerous examples of this phenomenon in Connecticut Indigenous histories. One example is the word “Pishgatikuk,” a geographic place name meaning ‘at the confluence of two streams’ in the Eastern Algonquian language once spoken in northwestern Connecticut. *(Endnote 19)* It was applied to one of the northernmost villages of the Weantinock tribe (located at the confluence of the Housatonic and Scaticook rivers in south Kent), mispronounced by the local English as “Scaticook” (AKA Schaghticoke) and eventually applied to its villagers and the tribe as a whole by the neighboring colonists.

*The word "Schaghticoke" is an anglicized version of the Algonquian word "Pishgatikuk," which means "at the confluence of two streams" according to Schaghticoke elder and culture keeper Eunice Mauwee (1756-1860), the granddaughter of the Tribe's first recorded sachem, Gideon Mauwee/Mauwehu (Figure 2). The Moravian missionaries, some of whom only spoke German, mispronounced the Algonquian word as "Pachgatgoch". The Moravian mission at Schaghticoke was known by this name as well as by various spellings of Scaticook.” (Paulette Crone-Morange and Lucianne Lavin 2004) *(Endnote 20)**

The Schaghticoke Homelands centered about the confluence of Macedonia Brook (AKA Schaghticoke River, according to early Kent historian Barzillai Slosson) and Housatonic River, where the Tribe's main settlement(s) was located; they also included southern portions of the Webatuck River Valley.

Wiechquaeskeck Political Leadership

A number of colonial documents, including land transactions in present Rye and other Westchester towns, were signed by the Indigenous leader Shawanórōckquot (AKA Shanarocke, Sauwenaroque and various other spellings), from 1636 to 1666. Shanarocke is described as a sachem of Rye. Bolton calls him Shanarocke/Shanarockwell, sagamore of Poningoe (the southern part of Rye). *(Endnote 21)* The lands purportedly “sold” by Shanarocke extended along the coast from the Bronx on the west to the Connecticut border on the east, and well inland including present Somers. *(Endnote 22)* Anthropologist Dr. Robert S. Grumet, a noted scholar on Hudson Valley Indigenous histories, has identified the name of the Wiechquaeskeck leader Sauwenaroque, a signatory in various Westchester County land deeds, as another spelling of Shanarocke.

*“The hamlet of Shenorock is currently located on the banks of Lake Shenorock at the north end of the Amawalk Reservoir (see above). Developers established the Lake Shenorock Corporation in 1930. Company managers took the name from the pages of Robert Bolton's history (1881 2:150-152), which noted a sachem identified as Shenorock in three Indian deeds to land in the area signed between November 8, 1661, and January 12, 1662. Shenorock, also documented as Shanorocket and Shanorockwell, was Sauwenaroque, a prominent local Indian leader who took part in land sales in and around today's Westchester County between 1636 and 1666.” (Robert S. Grumet, 2014; underlined emphasis added) *(Endnote 23)**

"Shawnarockquot and Anhooke's June 27, 1654 sale of land east of Aquaoung (noted as Aquehung, today's Bronx River, in the March 12, 1663 deed) took in territory patented in 1667 as the town of Westchester. Subsequent deeds either confirmed earlier sales to Van der Donck or the Westchester townfolk or settled disputes to places like Wakefield (above

Rattlesnake Brook), West Farms, and Fordham uncertainly demarcated within previous purchases. Data presented within the surviving deeds include names of several people noted as Indian owners, proprietors, or sagamores (chiefs, also called sachems and sakimas). Perhaps the most prominent of these was a leader identified as Shawnarockquot on the June 27, 1654, Pell deed and Shonearockite on the March 12, 1663, West Farms conveyance. These names are almost certainly variant spellings of Sauwenaroque, (fl. 1636-1666), a leading Wiechquaeskeck sachem. Many of the other Indians named in these documents as co-signatories or witnesses appear in contemporary documents recording events in nearby locales." (Robert S. Grumet, 2016; underlined emphasis added) (Endnote 24)

Another important leader who Ruttenber associated with the Poningo section of present Rye was the sachem Ponus. Ponus was an important sachem of the region called *Toquams*. *Toquams* is believed to have included the northern portion of present Stamford, Connecticut and the adjacent towns of Darien and New Canaan (originally part of old Stamford) north to Pound Ridge in present Westchester County, New York. Ponus's brother was Wascussue (AKA Wascusee/Wascussuc/Wescus and other variations thereof), "sagamore" of Shippan, which is thought to have included the region of present Shippan (i.e., Shippan Point, East Shippan) in southern Stamford. According to Ruttenber, Ponus's residential village was called Poningoe, and that he was the leading sachem of an extensive political district, or "chieftaincy," called *Tankiteke*. In 1640, Ponus purportedly sold those lands to the Englishman Nathaniel Turner, who represented New Haven Colony. (Endnote 25)

"The lands occupied by this chieftaincy are now embraced in the towns of Darien, Stamford, and New Canaan, in Connecticut, and Poundridge, Bedford, and Greenbush, in Westchester County. They were purchased by Nathaniel Turner, in behalf of the people of New Haven, in 1641, and are described in the deed as the tracts called Toquams and Shipham. Ponus was sachem of the former and Wasenssne of the latter. Ponus reserved a portion of Toquams for the use of himself and his associates, but with this exception their entire possessions appear to have passed under a deed without metes or bound." (Ruttenber, 1872) (Endnote 26)

Ruttenber attempts to show socio-political connections between the sachems of Rye and those of greater Stamford by claiming Ponus and Shanorocke/Sau were contemporaries living in adjacent Rye localities (Poningoe and Manussing, respectively) and that both men were sachems of the polity of *Tankiteke* but at different times.

"Their ruling sachem, in 1640, was Ponus, whose jurisdiction was over tracts called Rippowams and Toquams, and the place of whose residence was called Poningoe. He left issue three sons, Omenoke, Taphance and Onox; the latter had a son called Powhag. In 1661, Shanasockerell, or Shanorocke, was sachem in the same district, and, in 1680, Katonah [the grandson of Ponus] and his son Paping appear as such....Shanasockwell is represented [by Dutch sources] as 'an independent chieftain of the Siwanoy's' of the island called Manussing" (Edward M. Ruttenber, 1872) (Endnote 27)

However, his association of Ponus with the geographic location Poningoe/Poningo appears to come from the earlier writing of Robert Bolton, who apparently made the association solely on the similarity in the two names, and the assumption that the suffix *oe* was the same as the Algonquian suffix *oug/aug*, which has been translated as "place of".

*"Poningoe, the Indian name of Rye, is apparently derived from Ponus, the title of the aboriginal proprietor of this territory, A. D. 1640. The final termination *oe* or *oug*,*

denoting locality. Thus, the whole word may emphatically express the place or locality of that Sachem's residence. Nothing however remains at this late period, to establish the connection with any degree of certainty. (Robert Bolton, 1848). (Endnote 28)

For the next 60 years or so, however, that 'sale' was renewed several times by Ponus and his sons and grandsons, ^(Endnote 29) strongly suggesting that the English considered Ponus and his male relatives the sachems of Tankiteke and its tracts known to them as Rippowams, Toquams, and Shippan, not the sachem Shanorocke. It also strongly suggests that seventeenth century Indigenous leadership had no comprehension of the institution of single proprietorship and its consequences. Native people did not own land. Homelands were given to human communities by the Creator, to preserve and care for all its inhabitants.

"Native American people have a special way of viewing the universe, believing that one must live in harmony with all living things. To Us, maintaining that balance of nature is critical to survival. We are taught that the land does not belong to the people, but rather the people belong to the land." (Trudie Lamb Richmond, 1987, Schaghticoke tribal elder, author, educator, storyteller, & former tribal chair) (Endnote 30)

Wiechquaeskeck Economy

Archaeological evidence, colonial documents, and the physical environments of southern Westchester County, including present Rye, indicate that the Wiechquaeskeck had a broad-spectrum economy similar to other Indigenous communities along Long Island Sound. Citing Verrazzano, Van der Donck, and other early 17th century European chroniclers, the 19th century Rye historian Charles W. Baird described 17th century Rye as a fertile, fruitful region with a diversity of ecological resources – deciduous woodlands, inland swamps and marshes fed by brooks and streams, meadowlands, fertile valleys, and the seacoast. ^(Endnote 31) The Native American inhabitants fished, hunted, and collected a range of wild plant and animal sources from a variety of local habitats. They also practiced maize horticulture.

"These villages were most numerous along the shores of the Sound. There the supplies of fish upon which the hunter depended, especially in the winter season, to eke out the scanty subsistence derived from the chase, could be obtained in its waters, and in those of the streams that empty into them. the level grounds along the shores of the creek north of the present village of Milton, were cultivated as Indian fields.... The interior of the country retained all its primitive wildness Much of it, we have said, was overspread by swamps." (Charles W. Baird 1871) (Endnote 32)

Although Baird disparaged their presence in Rye, swamps and marshes were key ecozones in the economic systems of regional Native American communities.

"[They] are veritable food factories, nesting areas, and nurseries for a variety of animal life. Southern New England marshes contain more than fifty species of plants and produce huge amounts of edible vegetation. For example, a 12-hectare marsh in Stonington, Connecticut produces 88 metric tons of plants annually. The decay of this vegetation releases enormous amounts of nutrients into tidal waters, the basis of a food chain that supports an amazing assortment of wildlife in dense concentrations: 100 species of birds, 30 species of insects, 25 species of fish, 20 species of mammals, 18 species of mollusks, 15 species of crustaceans, and 10 species of amphibians." (Lucianne Lavin, 2013) (Endnote 33)

These and other activities were performed at a number of localities within the village/multi-village homeland. At the time of early European contact, the Wiechquaeskeck appear to have had a settlement system based on winter and summer villages, ^(Endnote 34) around which were a myriad of smaller camps and sacred precincts; hunting lookouts; hunting kill sites; fishing camps; shellfish-collecting camps/shell midden sites, for processing shell for food and wampum manufacture; nut-collecting and processing camps; berry collecting camps; wild tuber and other edible plant collecting sites; stone quarry sites for tool manufacture; burying grounds; ceremonial sites for ritual, prayer, and contemplation; etc.”

Pathways connected all of these places to the main villages, the villages to one another, and two other villages on the landscape. For example, Griswold and Spiess’s map of 1930, purportedly illustrating the social geography of 1625 Connecticut, also showed the locations of major Indian trails. ^(Endnote 35) One of these is the “Shore Path” that ran all along the coast eastward up the New England coast to the Canadian Maritimes. Westward it connected with another old Indian trail known to colonists as the “old Westchester Path”, ^(Endnote 36) linking the Wiechquaeskeck villages in Toquams and Shippan with Poningo and other villages in Westchester County. The old Westchester Path continued west to Manhatta (present New York City), and likely beyond.

Siwanoy and Siwan

As anthropological archaeologist Dr. Stuart Fiedel noted in his article “Archaeology and Ethnohistory of the Marshlands Site,” posted on *The Friends of Marshlands* website, some 19th century historians have suggested that the original settlers of southwestern Connecticut and adjacent southeasternmost New York were the “Siwanoy”.

“Since the mid-19th century, some scholars have believed that “Siwanoy” was the name of the Native group that occupied the coastal areas of present Westchester County, including Rye and Harrison.” (Stuart J. Fiedel) ^(Endnote 37)

The term sometimes appeared on 17th century Dutch maps of southern and eastern New Netherland. According to Blake A. Bell, the Town Historian of Pelham, New York at the time of his writing, all of the mentions of a Siwanoy group of Indians in the region could be traced back to a single source, Robert Bolton’s 1848 first edition of *A History of the County of Westchester from its First Settlement to the Present Time*.

“Careful scrutiny of the work of these authors and others including Robert Bolton, Reginald Pelham Bolton, Alanson Skinner, William Ritchie and many, many others shows that none details actual evidence showing that the Native Americans in the area in and around today’s Town of Pelham were referenced at any pertinent time as “Siwanoy.” Rather, each author seems to rely on other authors to form a “consensus” over time that a group properly known as “Siwanoy” once existed – all traced as far back, at least for now, to the first edition of Bolton’s History of Westchester County published in 1848 in which Bolton, likewise, asserted the existence of a group known as “Siwanoy” without providing evidence other than the assertion that many Native Americans who signed deeds and the residents of many local settlements were ‘Siwanoy’” (Blake A. Bell, 2014, underlined emphasis added). ^(Endnote 38)

In his footnote 24, Blake expanded on this statement by quoting Bolton further and noting that Bolton, “without citation or evidence,” claimed “that ‘it is well known’ that ‘a tribe of the Mohegans [!] called Siwanoy’s held possessions that extended from Norwalk to the neighborhood of Hellgate.” (Endnote 39)

According to the website for *WordReference.com/Online language dictionaries*, “siwan” (also spelled sewan, sewant, zewan, and zewant) was the Munsee Delaware term for wampum (Endnote 40) -- purple or white shell beads made from the interior of quahog clam shells and from whelk shells, respectively. The beads had important spiritual and political meanings for Indigenous peoples, for which they were much prized by Dutch traders, who knew that many fur pelts could be had from inland Native Americans in exchange for the siwan. (Endnote 41)

One of the major sources for the shells were the waters of Long Island Sound. As anthropological archaeologist and former Director of Research for the Mashantucket Pequot Museum Dr. Kevin McBride wrote in his chapter on “Early Seventeenth-Century Trade in Southern New England,”

“The Dutch were the first Europeans to systematically explore the region known as New Netherland and develop trade relationships with many of the Native groups inhabiting Long Island Sound and the Connecticut River.” (Endnote 42) Citing primary colonial documents from New York history, Professor McBride stated that “The Dutch referred to wampum as the ‘source and mother of the fur trade’ and to eastern New Netherland [southern New England] as the ‘mint’ of wampum manufacture.” (Kevin A. McBride, 2021) (Endnote 43)

Dutch traders knew the locations of friendly villagers who collected shells and made and traded siwan, and they sometimes marked those localities on their maps. On his 1614 map, Adriaen Block marked “Sywanois” at a locality in what is now northeastern Massachusetts. On his 1616 map, Cornelius Hendricksen placed the term “Sauwanew” at an Indigenous village (symbolized by an image of wigwams) northeast of the island of Manhatta on the east bank of the Hudson River. Editions of a mid to late 17th Century map entitled “Novi Belgii Novæque Angliæ” by Nicolaes Visscher contains the term “Siwanoy’s” above the coastal towns of Greenwich and Stamford. (Endnote 44) In his article on the *Friends of Marshlands* website, Dr. Fiedel shows a detail from the 1651 Dutch map by Jansson, upon which he states the 1655 Visscher’s map was based, with the word “Siwanoy’s” in a similar location on it. (Endnote 45)

The fact that “Siwanoy’s” and variants thereof (Endnote 46) marked three different localities on several early to mid-17th century Dutch maps – including a region in northeastern Massachusetts far to the north and east of western Long Island Sound – strongly indicates that the term referred to the makers of siwan, and not a specific Indigenous socio-political entity. (Endnote 47) Those manufacturers noted on the Jansson and later Visscher maps appear to have been located in Wiechquaesgeck homelands along Long Island Sound. Not surprisingly, the extent of the “Siwanoy” lands as provided by Bolton appears to parallel the coastal homelands of the Wiechquaesgeck tribe, evidence that the makers of siwan (i.e., Siwanoy’s) were Wiechquaesgeck tribal members. (Endnote 48)

What Happened to the Wiechquaeskeck?

The ill effects of European colonization of southern New England and southern New York created continual, massive population movements in and out of those regions for many years. Severe land losses, epidemics caused by European diseases, and wars resulted in the impoverishment, physical displacement, and emigration of individuals, families, and even major socio-political groups such as the 18th century Brothertown Indian Movement and the Stockbridge Mohican removals westward out of New England.

The Wiechquaeskeck were caught up in this social downspiral early in the colonial period. After the outbreak of Kieft's War in New Amsterdam and adjacent coastal areas, some community members may have emigrated northward to Wiechquaeskeck villages in the upland areas of present northern Westchester County or to those in inland Connecticut, such as Ramapo, a major village vicinity in present Ridgefield, whose lands remained in Wiechquaeskeck hands until after their sale in the early 18th century.

Others moved west across the Hudson River into the Raritan Valley of southwestern New York and Northern New Jersey, which may have been a buffer zone, an area between tribal homelands that belonged to no one tribe, but rather whose resources were shared by all. *(Endnote 49)* Colonial documents show that emigration into the Raritan Valley had already occurred by 1649.

“Pennekeck, sachem in Achtercol, stated on the 16th July, 1649, (before the Director and Council) that the tribe named Raritans residing before at Wecquaeskeck had no sachem etc.” *(Albany Records 1649) (Endnotes 50)*

Anthropological archaeologist Dr. Marshall Becker's careful reading of primary Dutch documents showed Wiechquaeskecks emigrating to the Raritan Valley as early as the 1630s, where they were identified by the Dutch as the Raretangh (Raritans). Some Raritans moved even farther west to the locality of Minisink in the upper Delaware River Valley of northwestern New Jersey, where they joined other displaced Hudson Valley Indigenous peoples to form the community eventually known as the Munsees.

“While a substantial number of the Wiechquaeskeck may have relocated to the Raritan Valley ca. 1630, most of the tribe remained in their traditional range. How many Wiechquaeskeck remained behind or shifted into the Connecticut (eastern) portion of their territory, or went elsewhere, we do not know....By the 1750s the Wiechquaeskeck in the area that became Westchester County, New York and southwestern Connecticut were no longer an identifiable people.” *(Marshall Joseph Becker, 2021) (Endnote 51)*

Although the Wiechquaeskeck tribe is no longer recognized in New York or Connecticut, their Indigenous identity lives on in a descendant community who call themselves the Ramapough Mountain Indians, and who have continued to live in the Ramapo Mountains of Bergen and Passaic counties in northern New Jersey, and in adjacent Rockland County, New York to the present day. *(Endnote 52)* In 1980 they were officially recognized as an American Indian tribe by the state of New Jersey. *(Endnote 53)*

“The Ramapough Munsee people remain on our ancestral lands. Due to forced migration, the Turtle Clan of the Ramapough is concentrated today in what is now known as Passaic County, New Jersey, with Ringwood as the core area, plus also Sussex County and Orange County. The Wolf Clan is in Mahwah – long our sacred Gathering Place – and Oakland in Bergen County, New Jersey. The Deer Clan is in the towns of Ramapo and Hillburn in

Rockland County, New York” (Ramapough Munsee website entitled Ramapough Culture and Land Foundation). *(Endnote 54)*

Endnotes

1. Dean R. Snow, 1980, *The Archaeology of New England*, pg. 4, Academic Press, New York.
2. Ives Goddard, 1978b, "Delaware," *Handbook of North American Indians, vol. 15, The Northeast*, ed. Bruce G. Trigger, pp. 213-239, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, p. 214.
3. E.M. Rutenber, 1872, *History of the Indian tribes of Hudson's River: their origin, manners and customs, tribal and sub-tribal organizations, wars, treaties, etc., etc.*, J. Munsell, Albany, pg. 34.
4. E. M. Rutenber, 1872, pg. 1.
5. After witnessing how the English prospered from their 1636-1637 war with the Pequot tribe in southern Connecticut, Willem Kieft, who in 1638 became the Director of New Netherland, attacked Wiechquaeskeck villages outside of New Amsterdam (present New York City) in the hope of attaining similar success. Being ignorant of the local and regional Indigenous political landscape, Kieft's plan backfired. The Dutch inhabitants were strongly against the war, and called for his dismissal. Native communities throughout the Hudson and Housatonic drainages rose up in support of the Wiechquaeskeck and a bloody conflict ensued, even after a peace treaty was signed in 1645.
6. Rutenber 1872, pp. 101-119. Allen Trelease, 1997 [1960], *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: The Seventeenth Century*. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, pp. 60-84. Russell Shorto, 2005, *The Island at the Center of the World*, Vintage Books, New York. Lucianne Lavin (ed.), 2021, *Dutch and Indigenous Communities in Seventeenth Century Northeastern North America*, particularly the chapter by Marshall Joseph Becker, "The Dutch and the Wiechquaeskeck: shifting alliances in the Seventeenth Century," pp. 138-143.
7. There is a great range in the Indigenous population estimates for the Northeast by researchers (for some examples, see Snow 1980: 31-42). All, however, show greatly decreased numbers after European contact due to disease, conflict, and emigration. Snow (1980:34), for example, estimates a "pre-epidemic population" of 24,300-51,300 "Munsee" people in New England, and a mid-17th century "post-epidemic population" of only 4,500 people, a loss of 81-91 percent of the Munsee population in New England alone. The 17 Native Americans listed in the 1774 Connecticut Indian Census as living in what was once the homelands of Munsee speakers in southwestern Connecticut suggest a population loss of 99.5 percent or more before the American Revolution.
8. John W. De Forest, 1852, *History of the Indians of Connecticut from the Earliest Period to 1850*, Wm. Jas Hamersley, Hartford, p. 359.
9. Marshall Joseph Becker, 2021, "The Dutch and the Wiechquaeskeck" in *Dutch and Indigenous Communities in Seventeenth Century Northeastern North America: What Archaeology, History, and Indigenous Oral Traditions Teach us about their Intercultural Relationships*, pp. 129-169. State University of New York Press, Albany, pg. 129-132. Blake A. Bell, 2018a, "Thursday, August 09, 2018b, Evidence that the Most Famous Native in Pelham History Was a Wiechquaeskeck, Not a "Siwanoy," Historic Pelham website, <http://historicpelham.blogspot.com/2018/08/evidence-that-most-famous-native-in.html>, accessed April 17, 2023. Blake A. Bell, 2014, "Wednesday, January 29, 2014. There Were No Native Americans Known as Siwanoy," Historic Pelham website,

- <https://historicpelham.blogspot.com/2014/01/there-were-no-native-americans-known-as.html> accessed June 30, 2024. Edward M. Ruttenber, 1872, p. 78.
10. Ruttenber, 1872, p. 78.
 11. Snow, 1980, p. 96, citing Ives Goddard, 1978a, "Eastern Algonquian Languages" in *Handbook of North American Indians: Volume 15, Northeast*, pp. 70-77. Trigger, Bruce G. (ed.); The Smithsonian Institution: Washington, D.C.
 12. Carlyle S. Smith, 1950, "The Archaeology of Coastal New York," *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of American History* volume 43 (2), 94-200. pp. 156, 190-193; Bert Salwen, 1968, "Muskeeta Cove 2: A Stratified Woodland Site on Long Island," *American Antiquity* volume 33(3), pp. 322-340; Snow 1980, pp. 307,322-330; Lucianne Lavin, 2013, *Connecticut's Indigenous Peoples: what Archaeology, History, and oral Traditions teach us about their Communities and Cultures*, Yale University Press, New York and London, pp. 246-249.
 13. Snow, 1980, p. 325.
 14. Lucianne Lavin and Birgit Faber Morse, 1985, "Ceramic Assemblages from the Rye Marshland Area of Southern New York," *Bulletin of the New York State Archaeological Association* volume 91, pp.13-25. See also the article "Pre-contact Cultural Context" by Dr. Stuart Fiedel on the Marshlands Conservancy website Friends of the Marshlands, <https://marshlandsconservancy.org/history/pre-contact-cultural-context>, accessed July 9, 2024.
 15. Pelham Town Historian Blake A. Bell noted that "the term "Wyckerscreeke" as well as the terms "Wickerscreek", "Wickerscreeke", "Wickersheck" "Wiskerscreeke", "Witqueschreek" and "Wyquaesquec" are among **more than fifty commonly used colonial-era spellings of "Wiechquaeskeck** (Bell 2014). At the time, there was no standard for the written word. People wrote phonetically, spelling out a word as they had heard it spoken to them.
 16. Ruttenber, E.M., 1906, "Footprints of the Red Men. Indian Geographical Names," pp. 24-25, in *Proceedings of the New York State Historical Association*, volume 6, pp. 1-9, 11-235, as cited by Blake A. Bell on Friday, June 15, 2018, in his article "Who Was Shawanóröckquot, a Native American Sachem Who Signed the Pell Indian Deed on June 27, 1654?" on the *Historic Pelham* website; <https://historicpelham.blogspot.com/2018/06/who-was-shawanorockquot-native-american.html>; accessed June 28, 2024. Robert Bolton, 1848, *A history of the county of Westchester, from its first settlement to the present time*. Printed by Alexander S. Gould, New York, p. 163.
 17. Weequahic Park section under the *Newarkology Website*, <http://www.newarkhistory.com/weequahicpark.html>; accessed July 2, 2024.
 18. Ruttenber, E.M. 1906, pp. 24-25.
 19. Translated by Eunice Mauwee, granddaughter of the first documented Schaghticoke sachem, Mauwehue, baptized Gideon Mauwee, ca. 1859 during an interview with W.C. Reichel in W.C. Reichel, 1860, *A memorial of the dedications of Monuments erected by the Moravian Historical Society*, C.B. Richardson, NY and J.B. Lippincott and Co., Phila.
 20. Paulette Crone-Morange and Lucianne Lavin, 2004, "The Schaghticoke Tribe and English Law: A Study of Community Survival", *Connecticut History*, volume 43(2), pp. 132-162.
 21. Robert Bolton, 1881. *History of the County of Westchester* (1881 edition), volume 2, p. 361, as cited in Bell 2018a.

22. Blake A. Bell, 2018a, "Who Was Shawanórōckquot, a Native American Sachem Who Signed the Pell Indian Deed on June 27, 1654?" on the Historic Pelham website; <https://historicpelham.blogspot.com/2018/06/who-was-shawanorockquot-native-american.html>; accessed June 28, 2024.
23. Robert S. Grumet, 2014, "Beyond Manhattan: A Gazetteer of Delaware Indian History Reflected in Modern-Day Place Names," *New York State Museum Record* 5, p. 29, as cited in Bell 2018a.
24. Robert S. Grumet, 2016, "Indians in the Bronx: The Ethnohistorical Evidence," p. 3, draft manuscript dated Oct. 3, 2016; cited by Blake A. Bell, 2018a, as "copy in files of the author."
25. E.B. Huntington, 1868, *History of Stamford, Connecticut from its settlement in 1641, to the present time, including Darien, which was one of its parishes until 1820*, published by the author, Steam Press of Wm. W. Gillespie & Co., Stamford, pp. 94-95. Edward E. Atwater, 1902, *History of the colony of New Haven to its absorption into Connecticut* (Meriden, Conn.: Journal Publishing Company), pp.319-320.
26. Rutenber, 1872, p. 80. According to Connecticut historian Edward Atwater (1902: 320), the sachems who sold Greenwich to the English were sons of Ponus. According to Robert S. Grumet, one of Ponus's sons, Taphow (AKA Tapgow, Tapehow, Tapeshaw, Taphance, and other variant spellings), signed land deeds in New Jersey, and was a witness to a transaction for land between the Byram River and Mianus River, Westchester County/Greenwich, CT. He was referred to as the "Sakimau and Commander in Chief of all those Indians inhabiting northern New Jersey". See Robert S. Grumet, 1991, pp. 221-222, "The Minisink Settlements: Native American Identity and Society in the Munsee Heartland, 1650-1778", in *The People of Minisink: Papers from the 1989 Delaware Water Gap Symposium*, David G. Orr and Douglas V. Campana (eds.), Philadelphia: National Park Service, Mid-Atlantic Region. hdl:2027/wu.89073127573, accessed April 6, 2023.
27. Rutenber, 1872, p. 82.
28. Bolton, 1848, p. 16.
29. Huntington, 1868, pp. 97-99. Ramapough Munsee website entitled *Ramapough Culture and Land Foundation*, image of the 1701 deed in the section "Ramapough Munsee History", <https://ramapough.org/ramapough-munsee-history/>, accessed April 6, 2023.
30. Trudie Lamb Richmond, 1987, Open letter to her granddaughter Wunneanatsu in "Algonquian Women and the Land: A Legacy," in *Rooted Like the Ash Trees: New England Indians and the Land*, pp. 6-8, ed. Richard G. Carlson, Eagle Wing Press, Naugatuck, CT, p. 7.
31. Charles Washington Baird, 1871, *Chronicle of a border town: history of Rye, Westchester County, New York, 1660-1870, including Harrison and the White Plains till 1788*, pp.4-5, A.D.F. Randolph and Company, New York. See also Robert Bolton, 1848, pp. 14, 96, 130, 431, 440, 490, for additional biological descriptions of early colonial Westchester County, particular the abundance of deer, turkeys, and nut trees, traditional staples in the Indigenous economy of southern New England for thousands of years (Lavin 2013)
32. Baird, 1871, p. 5. See also Marshall Joseph Becker, 2021, pp. 132, 156 for additional information on Wiechquaeskeck economic activities, especially fishing.
33. Lavin, 2013, p. 146.
34. Blake A. Bell, 2014, "There Were No Native Americans Known as Siwanoy's," Archive of the *Historic Pelham* Web Site, Home Page of the Historic Pelham Blog, posted Wednesday

- January 29, 2014. Bell showed that the Wiechquaeskecks had a summer and a winter village when he reported that “Official records refer to “Wyckerscreeke Indyans” as “planting on Mr. Pells Land at Anne Hoockes Neck”.[45] Similarly, records at a Court of Assizes dated October 11, 1675 provide “that the Indyans at Mr. Pells been ordered to remove within a fortnight to their usual Winter Quarters within Hell Gate upon this Island”.[46]
35. *Map of the State of Connecticut showing Indian Trails, Villages, & Sachemdoms*; compiled by Mathias Spiess, drawn by Hayden L. Griswold; 1930; photostat, ink and watercolor on paper. 2012.312.66. Connecticut Historical Society.
 36. Baird, 1871, p.5, n2.
 37. Stuart J. Fiedel, ND, “Archaeology and Ethnohistory of the Marshlands Site,” Friends of the Marshlands website, <https://marshlandsconservancy.org/history/historic-context#exploration>, accessed July 11, 2024. Those historians include Robert Bolton Jr, 1848, *A History of the County of Westchester from its First Settlement to the Present Time*, Vol. I, pg. 513, Alexander S. Gould, New York. E.M. Rutenber, 1872, *Indian Tribes of Hudson’s River*, pp. 81-82. And also, the early 20th century historians Edward E. Atwater, 1902, *History of the Colony of New Haven to its absorption into Connecticut*, pp. 319-320, New Haven: published by the author. Frederick Webb Hodge (ed.), 1912, *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, Part 2, pg. 585, (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution). *Bureau of Ethnology Bulletin* 30; Matthias Spiess and Hayden L. Griswold, 1930, *Map of the State of Connecticut showing Indian Trails, Villages, & Sachemdoms*, Colonial Dames of America.
 38. See Blake A. Bell, 2014. “There Were No Native Americans Known as Siwanoy,” Archive of the *Historic Pelham* Web Site, Home Page of the Historic Pelham Blog, posted Wednesday January 29, 2014. <https://historicpelham.blogspot.com/2014/01/there-were-no-native-americans-known-as.html>, Accessed December 20, 2022.
 39. Blake A. Bell, 2014.
 40. Website for WordReference.com/Online language dictionaries. <https://www.wordreference.com/definition/sewan>, accessed April 13, 2023.
 41. Richard Manack, 2021, “The Fresh River and the New Netherland Settlement House of Good Hope,” in *Dutch and Indigenous Communities in Seventeenth Century Northeastern North America; What Archaeology, History, and Indigenous Oral Traditions teach us about their Intercultural Relationships*, pp. 243-262, Lucianne Lavin (ed.), Albany: State University of New York Press.
 42. Kevin A. McBride, 2021, pg.174, citing Edmund O’Callaghan’s *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York, Vol. II*, pg. 543, “Early Seventeenth-Century Trade in Southern New England,” in *Dutch and Indigenous Communities in Seventeenth Century Northeastern North America; What Archaeology, History, and Indigenous Oral Traditions teach us about their Intercultural Relationships*, pp. 174-214, Lucianne Lavin (ed.), Albany: State University of New York Press.
 43. McBride, 2021, p.177.
 44. Blake A. Bell, 2018c, *Historic Pelham* website. “Monday, August 13, 2018. There Seems to Be Another Early 17th Century Map that References Siwanoy.” <http://historicpelham.blogspot.com/2018/08/there-seems-to-be-another-early-17th.html>, accessed April 17, 2023. Bell was the Town Historian for Pelham, New York from 2005-2020.

45. Fiedel, ND, “Archaeology and Ethnohistory of the Marshlands Site,” which includes a detail from the 1651 Jansson map of New Netherland.
46. The dictionary had not been invented yet, and so even learned individuals spelled words phonetically, i.e., as they heard them spoken; hence, the variations in 17th century spellings of names and other words.
47. As John Alexander Buckland noted in 2009 in his book *The First Traders on Wall Street: The Wiechquaeskeck Indians of Southwestern Connecticut in the Seventeenth Century*, Heritage Books, Westminster, MD, p. xiii, as cited in Bell, Historic Pelham Website, August 13, 2018. See also Blake A. Bell’s 2018b blog on the subject in his Historic Pelham website.
48. Rutenber provided the same distribution for both groups from Hudson River to Norwalk, indicating the Wiechquaeskeck were the makers of siwan (the interpretation of the Eastern Algonquian word Siwanoy), pp. 78-79, 81-82.
49. See Becker, 2021, pp. 133-136.
50. Albany Records, 1649, volume vii, p. 252.
51. Becker 2021, p. 156.
52. Ramapough Munsee website <https://ramapomunsee.net/> *Ramapough Culture and Land Foundation*, <https://ramapough.org/ramapough-munsee-history/>, accessed April 17, 2023. See also the Ramapough Lenape Indian Nation’s *Ramapough Lenape Community Center* website, <https://ramapoughlenapenation-cc.org/home/>, accessed April 17, 2023. According to Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramapough_Mountain_Indians, accessed April 17, 2023), the Ramapough Mountain Indians were previously known as the Ramapough Lenape Nation and the Ramapough Lunaape Munsee Delaware Nation, with a tribal website at <http://www.ramapoughlenapenation.org/>, accessed on July 30, 2016 but which could not be accessed as of April 17, 2023.
53. State of New Jersey, Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 3031, filed January 8, 1980.
54. Ramapough Munsee website entitled *Ramapough Culture and Land Foundation*, <https://ramapough.org/ramapough-munsee-history/>, accessed April 17, 2023. See also the Ramapough Lenape Indian Nation’s *Ramapough Lenape Community Center* website, <https://ramapoughlenapenation-cc.org/home/>, accessed April 17, 2023.

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Oil painting of a southern New England sachem ca. 1700. Note the shell jewelry adorning his neck, chest, and head. (Courtesy of the RISD Museum, Providence, RI.) This image is in the Public Domain and available under a CC0 1.0 Universal (CC0 1.0) Public Domain Dedication.



Trudie Richmond, Schaghticoke tribal elder, educator, author, master storyteller, activist, and former tribal chairwoman. (Courtesy of the Institute for American Indian Studies, Washington, CT)

