

no one (shall) sell land, but if anyone larcenously sells land, you shall take (back) your land, because it is forever your possession. But if any one does not keep this agreement, he shall fall (and) have nothing more of this land at Gay Head and Nashaquitsa at all forever. I Muttaak and we the chief men, and our posterity, (say): And it shall be so forever. I Ummuttaak say this, and my chief men, if any of these sons of mine protects my sachemship, he shall forever be a sachem. But if [any of] my sons does not protect my sachemship and sells it, he shall fall forever. And we chief men say this, and our sachem; if any of these sons of ours protects our chieftainship, he shall forever be a chief man. But if any of our sons does not protect our chieftainship and sells it, he shall fall forever. I Umuttag, sachem, say this and my chief men, [this is] our agreement. We say it before God. It shall be so forever. I Ummuttaak, this is my hand (X), on the date September 11, 1681.

We chief men say this [and] our sachem; this is our agreement. [We say it] before God. It shall be so forever. These are our hands (X — X — X).

I John Keeps an a witness and this is my hand concerning the agreement of Ummuttaak and his chief men of Gay Head and Nashaquitsa, all (and) both. I Puttukquannan am a witness. I witnessed this agreement of Ummuttaak and his chief men of Gay Head and Nashaquitsa, both. No one forever (shall) sell it; they (shall) keep it. I Puttakquannan, this is my hand (X).

I Sasauwapinnoo am a witness. I witnessed the agreement of Ummuttaak and his chief men of Gay Head and Nashaquitsa, all (and) both. I Sasauwapinnoo, my hand.

<sup>3</sup>The brackets signify small omissions in the original copy, presumably copying errors by the English clerk who recorded it.

## The "River Indians" Answer Governor Burnet

*In late August 1722, William Burnet, governor of New York, met with Mahican Indians from the Hudson River (the English called all Indians on the lower Hudson "River Indians") to renew the Covenant Chain, the metaphor of friendship between the king of England and the Indians. In his opening remarks, the governor admonished the Mahicans for squandering their pelts and corn to buy rum and advised them to be more sober in the future. The Indians' reply was first translated from Mahican into Dutch and then from Dutch into English. Indians sometimes punctuated*

*their speeches with presentations of beaver pelts rather than wampum, and such gifts represented an important ingredient of Indian diplomacy. Twenty years later, the Onondaga orator Canasatego gave the governor of Pennsylvania a bundle of furs at a conference in Philadelphia, remarking, "It is customary with us to make a Present of Skins whenever we renew our Treaties."<sup>1</sup>*

## 23

## MAHICAN INDIANS

*Reply to William Burnet, Governor of New York*

1722

Father

We are sensible that you are much in the right, that Rum does a great deal of Harm, we approve of all that you said on that Point, but the matter is this, When our people come from Hunting to the Town or Plantations and acquaint the Traders & People that we want Powder and Shot & Clothing, they first give us a large cup of Rum, and after we get the Taste of it crave for more so that in fine all the Beaver & Peltry we have hunted goes for drink, and we are left destitute either of Clothing or Ammunition, Therefore we desire our father to order the Tap or Crane to be shut & to prohibit y<sup>e</sup> selling of Rum, for as long as the Christians will sell Rum, our People will drink it, do give 3 Beavers

Father

We acknowledge that our Father is very much in the right to tell us that we squander away our Indian Corn which should subsist our Wives & Children but one great cause of it is y<sup>e</sup> many of our People are obliged to hire Land of the Christians at a very dear Rate, to give half the Corn for

<sup>1</sup>Kent, *Pennsylvania Indian Treaties*, 38.

Rent & the other half they are tempted by Rum to sell, & so the Corn goes,  
y<sup>t</sup> y<sup>e</sup> Poor women & children are left to shift as well as they can do give  
3 Beavers

Father

We have no more Land the Christians when they buy a small spot of  
Land of us, ask us if we have no more Land & when we say yes they  
enquire the name of the Land & take in a greater Bounds than was  
intended to be sold them & the Indians not understanding what is writ  
in the Deed or Bill of Sale sign it and are so deprived of Part of their  
Lands — Give 3 Beavers

Father

In former days when the Christians came to settle this Country they  
came with a ship & desired to fasten their Cable to the Hills near Hosak  
above Albany, which we readily granted & ever since we have lived in  
Friendship & Amity together, which we hope will continue so long as  
Sun & Moon endure Gave 3 Beavers

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## The Alienation of the Natchez

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*In 1723, the Natchez Indians of what is today southern Mississippi went to war with the French. Antoine Simon Le Page du Pratz, a French traveler who spent five years among the Natchez, sensed the growing tension when the Stung Serpent, a high-ranking noble he had counted as his friend, passed him by with barely a word. When du Pratz demanded to know the reason for his coldness, the Stung Serpent, "brother to the Great Sun, and Chief of the Warriors of the Natchez," gave a reply, reprinted here, to which the Frenchman could not find an answer.*

*The French virtually destroyed the Natchez in the ensuing conflict. Natchez survivors fled for refuge to the Chickasaws, who also waged bitter war against the French in the first half of the eighteenth century.*

## ANTOINE LE PAGE DU PRATZ

*Reply of the Stung Serpent*

1723

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Why did the French come into our country? We did not go to seek them. They asked land of us, because their country was too little for all the men that were in it. We told them they might take land where they pleased, there was enough for them and for us; that it was good the same sun should enlighten us both, and that we should walk as friends, in the same path, and that we would give them of our provisions, assist them to build, and to labor in their fields. We have done so; is not this true? What occasion, then, had we for Frenchmen? Before they came, did we not live better than we do, seeing we deprive ourselves of a part of our corn, our game, and fish, to give a part to them? In what respect, then, had we occasion for them? Was it for their guns? The bows and arrows, which we used, were sufficient to make us live well. Was it for their white, blue, and red blankets? We can do well enough with buffalo skins which are warmer; our women wrought feather blankets for the winter, and mulberry mantles for the summer; which indeed were not so beautiful, but our women were more laborious and less vain than they are now. In fine, before the arrival of the French we lived like men who can be satisfied with what they have; whereas at this day we are like slaves, who are not suffered to do as they please.

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### Signing and Disputing a Treaty

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*Treaty documents drawn up by Europeans constituted only the summary of lengthy proceedings with Indian delegates in formal councils. Misunderstandings, mistranslations, and even deliberate distortions and deceptions sometimes crept into the final text, as this testimony by*

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Antoine Le Page du Pratz, *The History of Louisiana*, trans. from the French (London, 1774), 41. Reprinted by J. S. W. Harmanson, New Orleans, 1947.

a Penobscot Indian named Sauguaarum, also known as Loron, demonstrates. Sauguaarum traveled from Maine to Boston to discuss peace with the English; he returned later, accompanied by delegates from the Norridgewock, Passamaquoddy, Mi'kmaq, and other tribes the English called "Eastern Indians." In 1725, after almost a month of negotiation, at a signing ceremony held in the Council Chamber, four Indian delegates signified their agreement to the terms by inscribing images at the bottom of the treaty document that Massachusetts officials had written. The images may represent clan totems, kinship networks, or family identities rather than four tribes, and perhaps they served a similar function to the seals that Europeans attached to treaties and other important documents. Sauguaarum drew a beaver, Arexis [Arexrus] drew a thunder being, François Xavier drew a turtle, and Meganumbee [Alaganumlee] drew a crayfish (see Document 25).<sup>1</sup>

As was usual in English treaties with the Eastern Indians during this era, the language and the terms of the treaty placed blame for past hostilities squarely on the shoulders of the Indians and depicted the Indians as rebellious subjects begging peace from their sovereign King George. The parties agreed to hold a formal ratification of the terms of the treaty at Falmouth in Casco Bay in May. Bands who missed that ceremony ratified the agreement the following summer, in July 1727. That occasion gave Sauguaarum an opportunity to compare the written treaty with the negotiations in which he had participated. His testimony is extremely valuable in that it gives a detailed account of the deliberations from the Indians' perspective and points to the gulf that could exist between what Indian delegates remembered saying and what English treaty makers recorded.

<sup>1</sup>Heidi Bohaker, "Reading Expressions of Identity on a 1725 Peace and Friendship Treaty," in *Early Native Literacies in New England: A Documentary and Critical Anthology*, ed. Kristina Bross and Hilary E. Wyss (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008), 201–12.

EASTERN INDIANS

*Treaty Pictographs*

1725

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Sig.

Sauguaarum



alias Loron

Sig.

Arexrus



Sig.

Francois



Xavier

Sig.

Alaganumlee



## SAUGUAARUM, ALIAS LORON

*An Account of Negotiations Leading to the  
Casco Bay Treaty*

1727

I Panaouamskeyen, do inform ye—ye who are scattered all over the earth take notice—of what has passed between me and the English in negotiating the peace that I have just concluded with them. It is from the bottom of my heart that I inform you; and, as a proof that I tell you nothing but the truth, I wish to speak to you in my own tongue.

My reason for informing you, myself, is the diversity and contrariety of the interpretations I receive of the English writing in which the articles of peace are drawn up that we have just mutually agreed to. These writings appear to contain things that are not, so that the Englishman himself disavows them in my presence, when he reads and interprets them to me himself.

I begin then by informing you; and shall speak to you only of the principal and most important matter.

First, that I did not commence the negotiation for a peace, or settlement, but he, it was, who first spoke to me on the subject, and I did not give him any answer until he addressed me a third time. I first went to Fort St. George to hear his propositions, and afterwards to Boston, whither he invited me on the same business.

We were two that went Boston: I, Laurance Sagourrab, and John Ehennekouit. On arriving there I did indeed salute him in the usual mode at the first interview, but I was not the first to speak to him. I only answered what he said to me, and such was the course I observed throughout the whole of our interview.

He began by asking me, what brought me hither? I did not give him for answer—I am come to ask your pardon; nor, I come to acknowledge you as my conqueror; nor, I come to make my submission to you; nor, I come to receive your commands. All the answer I made was that I was

come on his invitation to me to hear the propositions for a settlement that he wished to submit to me.

Wherefore do we kill one another? he again asked me. 'Tis true that, in reply, I said to him—You are right. But I did not say to him, I acknowledge myself the cause of it, nor I condemn myself for having made war on him.

He next said to me—Propose what must be done to make us friends. 'Tis true that thereupon I answered him—It is rather for you to do that. And my reason for giving him that answer is, that having himself spoken to me of an arrangement, I did not doubt but he would make me some advantageous proposals. But I did not tell him that I would submit in every respect to his orders.

Thereupon, he said to me—Let us observe the treaties concluded by our Fathers, and renew the ancient friendship which existed between us. I made him no answer thereunto. Much less, I repeat, did I become his subject, or give him my land, or acknowledge his King as my King. This I never did, and he never proposed it to me. I say, he never said to me—Give thyself and thy land to me, nor acknowledge my King for thy King, as thy ancestors formerly did.

He again said to me—But do you not recognize the King of England as King over all his states? To which I answered—Yes, I recognize him King of all his lands; but I rejoined, do not hence infer that I acknowledge thy King as my King, and King of my lands. Here lies my distinction—my Indian distinction. God hath willed that I have no King, and that I be master of my lands in common.

He again asked me—Do you not admit that I am at least master of the lands I have purchased? I answered him thereupon, that I admit nothing, and that I knew not what he had reference to.

He again said to me—If, hereafter, any one desire to disturb the negotiation of the peace we are at present engaged about, we will join together to arrest him. I again consented to that. But I did not say to him, and do not understand that he said to me, that we should go in company to attack such person, or that we should form a joint league, offensive and defensive, or that I should unite my brethren to his. I said to him only, and I understand him to say to me, that if any one wished to disturb our negotiation of peace, we would both endeavor to pacify him by fair words, and to that end would direct all our efforts.

He again said to me—In order that the peace we would negotiate be permanent, should any private quarrel arise hereafter between Indians and Englishmen, they must not take justice into their own hands, nor do any thing, the one to the other. It shall be the business of us chiefs to

decide. I again agreed with him on that article, but I did not understand that he alone should be judge. I understood only that he should judge his people, and that I would judge mine.

Finally he said to me—There's our peace concluded; we have regulated every thing.

I replied that nothing had been yet concluded, and that it was necessary that our acts should be approved in a general assembly. For the present, an armistice is sufficient. I again said to him—I now go to inform all my relatives of what has passed between us, and will afterwards come and report to you what they'll say to me. Then he agreed in opinion with me.

Such was my negotiation on my first visit to Boston.

As for any act of grace, or amnesty, accorded to me by the Englishman, on the part of his King, it is what I have no knowledge of, and what the Englishman never spoke to me about, and what I never asked him for.

On my second visit to Boston we were four: I, Laurence Sagourrah, Alexis, Francois Xavier and Migounambe. I went there merely to tell the English that all my nation approved the cessation of hostilities, and the negotiation of peace, and even then we agreed on the time and place of meeting to discuss it. That place was Caskebay, and the time after Corpus Christi.<sup>1</sup>

Two conferences were held at Caskebay. Nothing was done at these two conferences except to read the articles above reported. Every thing I agreed to was approved and ratified, and on these conditions was the peace concluded.

One point only did I regulate at Caskebay. This was to permit the Englishman to keep a store at St. Georges; but a store only, and not to build any other house, nor erect a fort there, and I did not give him the land.

These are the principal matters that I wished to communicate to you who are spread all over the earth. What I tell you now is the truth. If then, any one should produce any writing that makes me speak otherwise, pay no attention to it, for I know not what I am made to say in another language, but I know well what I say in my own. And in testimony that I say things as they are, I have signed the present minute which I wish to be authentic and to remain for ever.

<sup>1</sup> Corpus Christi is a feast of the Catholic Church.

## The "Walking Purchase": A Delaware Complaint and an Iroquois Response

Between 1630 and 1767, the Delaware or Lenni Lenape Indians of New Jersey and Pennsylvania signed nearly eight hundred deeds of land to colonists. In 1734, Thomas Penn, the son of William Penn, first governor and proprietor of Pennsylvania, claimed to have found a copy of a deed made in 1686 in which certain Delaware chiefs agreed to grant his father and his heirs lands "as far as a man can go in a day and a half," and from there to the Delaware River and down its course. Thomas Penn and the colonial authorities were eager to measure out the lands, and a number of Delaware chiefs reluctantly agreed. The Pennsylvanians violated the spirit of the agreement, however, by clearing a path and, on the day appointed for the "walk" in September 1737, they produced not a single person to walk the distance but a team of three runners. The point at which the third man collapsed exhausted at noon on the second day, about sixty-five miles from the starting point, was taken as the distance a man could walk in the time allotted.

The infamous "Walking Purchase" deprived the Delawares of the last of their lands in the upper Delaware and Lehigh valleys in Pennsylvania. The Indians made many complaints to the colonial authorities, but to little avail. In the petition of November 21, 1740, Delaware chiefs admitted selling certain tracts of land but denied ever having sold any land to William Penn or his sons. The governor of Pennsylvania complained against the Delawares' "Rudeness & ill Manners" on the issue and solicited the support of the Iroquois during a council in Philadelphia in the summer of 1742. After due deliberation of the evidence, the Onondaga Canasatego delivered a stinging rebuke to the Delawares, in which he asserted Iroquois dominance over the Delawares and their lands and ordered them to move to where the Six Nations could keep an eye on them. In 1756, the Delaware chief Teedyuscung was still fuming over the fraud, and in the early years of the American Revolution the Delaware chief White Eyes openly and defiantly rejected Iroquois claims to hegemony over his people or their lands.

The main interpreter at the 1742 conference in Philadelphia, as in many conferences between the Iroquois and Pennsylvania in the mid-eighteenth century, was Conrad Weiser (1696–1760). Weiser had lived with the Mohawks in his youth and had learned their language. He had a long career on the frontier as a farmer, a magistrate, a soldier, and an Indian agent.