

# THE SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUTTON, MASSACHUSETTS

## — BULLETIN —

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1704 . . . and before THAT

### Preface

Probably the earliest known land deed transaction in the Sutton geographical area was in 1681/2 between a Nipmuck Indian settlement [Manchaug] near West Sutton and William Stoughton and Joseph Dudley representing the Bay Colony General Court. Of special interest here is the Indian symbols used as signatures on the deed. Our Society stationery is embellished with these signs. Recently, observations by Dr. Barry Fell, author of "America B. C." and "Saga America", an epigraphist [study of ancient inscriptions] of international reputation recognized that certain Indian symbolic signatures may relate to BC Cypriot script. The 1681/2 deed signatures were presented to Dr. Fell for analysis. He prepared the following report and has graciously consented to its publication prior to his own release - EDITOR

### THE NIPMUQ SIGNATURES

About a dozen different alphabets were in use among the North American Indians at the time when the colonies were established three hundred years ago. Unfortunately the founding fathers paid no attention to these matters, and regarded the true native scripts that were used on the early Deeds as no more than illiterate "marks." Later on, in the early eighteen-hundreds, missionaries such as James Evans became aware of some of the Algonquian scripts, and then adopted them for teaching Christian religion. Because of this, Evans has been wrongly credited with "inventing" Cree script; what he really did was something much more praiseworthy, he made it the official method of printing the Cree language, including the entire Cree Bible - and thereby he preserved an ancient alphabet. In 1978 some stone tablets in the museums in San Sebastian and San Telmo, in the Basque provinces of Spain, were referred to me for study by Spanish scholars. I noticed that some of them, including stones known to have been engraved before the time of Columbus, carried lines of letters that appeared to be identical with the Cree

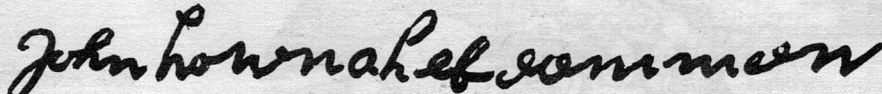
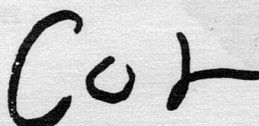


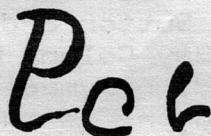

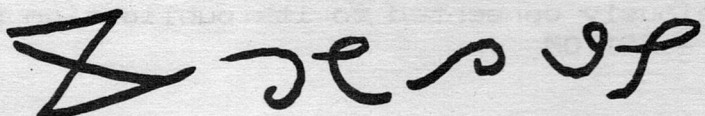

Name of signatory as written in Colonial English spelling	Actual signature as it appears on the Deed
John Hownaheteammen	
Cotoosok	
Sebquat	
Mattaomp	
Pacataw	
Aspenaw	
Pamphosit	
the signature	
read as Cypriot	
sounds of signs	Pi _____ ma _____ po _____ sa _____ ta

Figure 1: The Indian signatures on the Nipmuq Deed of 1681/2 can be classified into four groups. Group 1, illustrated by the uppermost example, are signatures written out in full, in English, evidently by alumni of the schools established by the colonists. Group 2, comprise signatures that render only the first syllable or letter, in English script. Group 3, lowermost, signatures written in full in the ancient script of Cyprus. Group 4, shown in Figure 2, are abbreviated Cypriot signatures. The name rendered as Pamphosit is erroneous; there was no f [ph] sound in the Algonquian tongues. The Cypriot rendering omits the h.




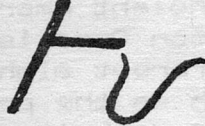
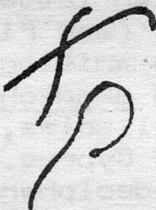









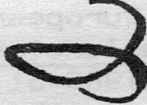
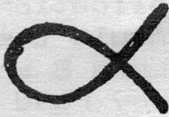


Name of signatory as written in Colonial English spelling	Actual Nipmaug	Equivalent signs of the ancient Cypriot script
<u>Na</u> ontock		 - Ni
Tascomp		 - Ta-Sa
Papomsham		 - Pa-Po
<u>To</u> bi Alatoquish		 - To
<u>Ja</u> mes Acojock		 - Ja, Me [superimposed]
<u>Si</u> mon Wolomp		 - Sa-Mo
<u>Ja</u> n Awagwon		 - Ja, Ne [superimposed]
Cook <u>Ro</u> bin		 - Ro
<u>Si</u> an Jasco		 - Si

Figure 2: Nine signatures showing the correspondence between the initial syllables of the names [left, underlined letters] with the equivalent syllabic signs of the ancient Cypriot script, that died out in Europe at the time of Alexander the Great, but survived in America.

*Where does John Elliot and his translation of Bible into Indian language come into this?*

letters. When I substituted the sound values of the Cree letters for these signs on the Basque tablets, the resultant language that emerged proved to be Basque. I then sent translations back to Spain, and these were in turn studied by the leading Basque linguist, Imanol Agire, who is the author of major works on ancient Iberian inscriptions and on the Basque language. After Dr. Agire had studied the matter, he wrote back to me this year [1980] congratulating me on the decipherment, and confirming that it was correct. Thus now, we are able to read and translate ancient Spanish inscriptions, by using the Algonquian alphabets. In the new edition of the Grand Basque Encyclopedia these important links with ancient America are stressed.

The Sutton Deed is signed by Indian owners of the land, and they used two different alphabets. Those who had attended the schools for Indians, such as the pre-college level school in Cambridge, set up by Harvard, signed their names in English letters, either the whole name or the first few letters of the name [see Figure 1]. Those who preferred to use the ancient Algonquian writing system signed their names in a form of script sometimes called mamalohikan, in which the individual letters stand for separate syllables, and the letters themselves are those of the ancient alphabet of Cyprus. The Cypriot inscriptions, in the island of Cyprus, remained undecipherable until 1871, when an English linguist named George Smith discovered inscriptions in Greek and Cypriot on the same stone, and was able to use this bilingual key to discover the sound values of the mysterious signs. In Table 2, I have set out a series of the Nipmauq signatures, side by side with the corresponding letters of the Cypriot alphabet which, like the Cree, is also syllabic. If Smith had only known, he could have summoned Algonquians to aid him!

The Cypriot alphabet, or syllabary as it is more correctly called, was in use at least until 1727, in northern Maine, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, for a treaty signed at Annapolis Royal, N.S., in that year carries 32 Cypriot signatures. It has since died out in North America, though the Cree Syllabary on the other hand has flourished, and is used today by newspapers and magazines published in the Cree tribal lands. In recent years it has been adapted for use by the Eskimo, and some Ojibways still use it also.

In Europe, on the other hand, the Cypriot syllabary was no longer used after the third century B.C., for Greek letters replaced it during the administration of Alexander the Great. Thus, in order for it to have been brought into use in America, the alphabet must have been transmitted here before the time of Alexander. These new discoveries have, needless to say, called forth the condemnation of some archaeologists. They are, however, now firmly established and have already been incorporated into the learned publications by European linguists. For further information readers may consult the Occasional Publications of the Epigraphic Society especially volumes 8 and 9 [1980-81], and my popularized versions in book form; or, if they read Spanish, the much larger works issued by the Grand Basque Encyclopedia in Madrid and Bilbao, Spain.

It is clear that a great deal of lost history remains to be discovered, and colonial Deeds, such as the Sutton document, are playing an important role. The rocks of Massachusetts also carry ancient inscriptions in the Cypriot syllabary, rendering names of Algonquians and also Algonquian proverbs. The ancient people of Cyprus were great sailors, and worked in copper. After the mines of Cyprus were exhausted they imported copper. Perhaps the copper mines of Michigan attracted them here. The finest examples of inscriptions in Cypriot are found on the gold and bronze tablets of the National Treasure of Ecudaor, comprising works of art plowed up by farmers in the Cuenca region. Other varieties occur as rock inscriptions in the Carolinas and in various Caribbean islands. -

*Dr. Barry Fell*

1<sup>st</sup> air mail flight May 15, 1918 - D.C. to N.Y. - pilot lost his way and never made it - but that flight made history

### LOOKING BACK

By Donald King

From "The Post Office Dept." by Gerald Cullinan  
Praeger Library of U.S. Government Departments and Agencies

Many times as I travel over Putnam Hill by the home of the Hastings, I think back to the time in the 1920's when I lived with my family in the house now owned by the Eatons on Mendon Road. At that time it was all farm land and the Donaldsons farmed the north side of Putnam Hill raising cabbage and cauliflower to sell at the Salem Street market in Worcester. They also produced milk for the United Dairy. This was the time when everyone began looking skyward to see the new fangled airplanes that the young men were buying surplus from the U.S. Government, World War I types.

The Government started flying the mail about this time. One of the routes ran from Boston, Massachusetts to Hartford, Connecticut and ran directly over Putnam Hill. About 1927 a flashing beacon light was placed near a stone wall on the site where Hastings barn is now. Hastings barn was built after the 1938 Hurricane. Before that the Donaldson barns were across the road. Mr. Everett Donaldson said after the Hurricane that he always wanted his barns on the same side of the road but didn't care to be forced into building as he had to after the Hurricane.

The aircraft beacon stood about six feet high and had a clear glass globe on top. It had a Carbide gas generator and when you stood near it, it would make a chunking sound each time the light flashed. It operated day and night and was serviced once a month, as I remember.

My bedroom was over the front hall upstairs and the light would flash into my room and make a design on the door. Today, one cannot see the spot where the beacon was located, the trees have grown up so high. No more farming. After the 1938 Hurricane the beacon was moved about a half mile south to a knoll south of Dodge Lane off Lackey Road where it stayed until World War II.

Several planes used the fields on Putnam Hill for emergency landings. Barnstorming flyers gave rides from the large field on the south side of the hill. I had my first plane ride from here. After the war the farm at the end of Dodge Lane was named Airport Dairy.



### WATERS FARM CONCERT, OCTOBER 5, 1980

Attentive Listeners, L - R, John Brigham, Shirley Nelson, Doris Van Twyver, Betty Pentland, and Charles Pentland

## MONTHLY MEETING PROGRAM REVIEWS - (A Short Synopsis)

October - This was annual election time and as there were no nominees from the floor, the secretary cast one vote to elect the following officers: President, Charles I. Pentland, Vice President, Marjorie Knapp, Recording Secretary, Betty Pentland, Corresponding Secretary, Donald King, Treasurer, Keneth Hoover, Curator, Rae Johnson, Historian, Mary King, and to the Board of Directors for three years, Beulah Wallace, John Brigham, Charles Pentland and G. William Holst. A standing ovation was rendered to Miss Shirley Nelson, outgoing Recording Secretary, for her most faithful and unique style in presenting a detailed reporting of the minutes at our meetings. You will be missed, Shirley! The Waters Farm Preservation Committee reported raising approximately one thousand dollars [\$1,000] from the October 5th Concert. Tom Johnson gave a very interesting slide presentation and discussion on "Bluebirds." Many questions were asked and answered concerning the demise and ways of restoring that attractive bird to our community.

November - Keneth Hoover reported a profit of \$160.00 from the Arts, Crafts, and Hobbies Show held October 11th. The show is not primarily intended as a money raising project, but a community service to display talents and skills. The heavy rains did not deter a good attendance. The Society has been donated the galley proofs of the reprint of Sutton's First Town History by Carol [Cressey] Bornemann. After the business meeting, Program Director, Dan Griffith lead an entourage on a mystery trip to the Railroad Museum in North Oxford.

December - After a short business meeting the annual Christmas auction became the focal attraction. Auctioneers, Rae Johnson, Donald King and Dan Griffith proceeded to open pocketbooks with their banter to the tune of \$286.00. Viva la auction.

### 1980 - OCTOBER, NOVEMBER and DECEMBER - WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

M/M Joseph Barbato, Jr.  
James & Nancy Brigham  
Michael & Yvette Chizy  
Warren & Lois Cressey  
Allen & Dona Font  
Jack & Statia Greece  
Michael J. Hickey  
Lyyle M. Holman  
Terry & Cynthia King  
Roger & Corrinne LaFerriere

Linn McConarty  
Walter & Judith McQuiston  
M/M Herbert M. Putnam  
W.E. Putnam  
Edward & Agnes Riley  
J. Kevin & Phyllis Samara  
Charles G. Sibley  
M/M Harold Soloman  
David & Sally Stevenson  
Harold Swenson

Mark Zarzecki

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