

Documents from the History and Memory of King Philip's War

Document A

They said they had been the first in doing good to the English, and the English the first in doing wrong, said when the English first came their king's father was as a great man and the English as a little child, he constrained the other Indians from wronging the English and gave them corn and showed them how to plant and was free to do them and good and had let them have a 100 time more land, then now the king had for his own people, but their king's brother when he was king came miserably to die by being forced to court as they judged poisoned, and another grievance was if 20 of their honest Indians testified that a Englishman had done them wrong it was as nothing, and if but one of the worst Indians testified against any Indian or their king when it pleased the English that was sufficient. Another grievance was when their kings sold land the English would say it was more than they agreed to and a writing must be proof against all them, and sum of their kings had done wrong to sell so much. He left his people none and some being given to drunkenness the English made them drunk and then cheated them in bargains but now their kings were forewarned not for to part with land for nothing in comparison to the value thereof. Now whom the English had owned for king or queen they would disinherit, and make another king that would give or sell them their land, that now they had no hopes left to keep any land. Another grievance the English cattle and horses still increased that when they removed 20 miles from where the English had anything to do, they could not keep their corn from being spoiled, they never being used to fence, and thought when the English bought land of them that they would have kept their cattle on their own land. Another grievance the English were so eager to sell the Indians liquors that most of the Indians spent all in drunkenness and then ravened upon the sober Indians and they did believe often did hurt the English cattle, and their kings could not prevent it.

John Easton Excerpt from "*A Relacion of the Indyan Warre*"¹

Document B

Miantonomi, Narangansett sachem to the Montauk 1643.

A while after this came Mantenomie from Block-Island to Mantacut with a troop of men . . . ; and instead of receiving presents, which they used to do in their progress, he gave them gifts, calling them brethren and friends, for so we are we all Indians as the English are, and say brother to one another; so must we be one as they are, otherwise we shall all be gone shortly, for you know our fathers had plenty of deer and skins, our plains were full of deer, as also our woods, and of turkies, and our coves full of fish and fowl. But these English having gotten our land, they with scythes cut down the grass, and with axes fell the trees; their cows and horses eat the grass, and their hogs spoil our clam banks, and we shall all be starved; therefore it is best for you do do as we, for we are all the Sachems from east to west,

¹ Cited in Neal Salisbury ed., *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God by Mary Rowlandson with Related Documents*. (Boston: Bedford, St. Martins., 1997) 117-18.

both Moquakues and Mohauks joining with us, and we are all resolved to fall upon them all, at one appointed day. . . And when you see the three fires that will be made forty nights hence, in a clear night, then do as we, and the next day fall on and kill men, women, and children, but no cows, for they will serve to eat till our deer be increased again. . . .²

Document C

Mary Rowlandson from *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*

Oh the dolefull sight that now was to behold at this House! Come, behold the works of the Lord, what dissolutions he has made in the Earth. Of thirty seven persons who were in this one House, none escaped either present death, or a bitter captivity, save only one, who might say as he, Job 1. 15, And I only am escaped alone to tell the News. There were twelve killed, some shot, some stab'd with their Spears, some knock'd down with their Hatchets. When we are in prosperity, Oh the little that we think of such dreadfull sights, and to see our dear Friends, and Relations ly bleeding out their heart-blood upon the ground. There was one who was chopt into the head with a Hatchet, and stript naked, and yet was crawling up and down. It is a solemn sight to see so many Christians lying in their blood, some here, and some there, like a company of Sheep torn by Wolves, All of them stript naked by a company of hell-hounds, roaring, singing, ranting and insulting, as if they would have torn our very hearts out; yet the Lord by his Almighty power preserved a number of us from death, for there were twenty-four of us taken alive and carried Captive.³

Document D

From Abijah Marvin's History of Lancaster 1879

"The fate of the Nashua Indians cannot be read without a feeling of sadness. For though there is no proof that the fathers of the town ever violated their agreement with the natives, or treated them unjustly, yet there is something painful in the thought that the first occupants of these plains, hills and forests were involved in a contest, by the arts of Philip, which led to their death, or dispersion. Some were killed in Philip's war; some were sold into slavery with other Indians; some were dealt with as malefactors; and the rest abandoned the homes of their childhood, and the graves of their fathers. Some joined the Nipmucks and other Indians, to the number of two hundred and fifty fighting men besides women and children. They fled westward, were overtaken beyond Westfield, and many of them were slain or captured. More than two hundred crossed the Hudson below Albany and became incorporated with a tribe of Indians in that vicinity. Another part of the tribe took their way eastward to the right bank of the Piscataqua, where they were surprised by the troops, and those who had been

²American Social History Productions, *GMU History Matters: The US History Survey Course on the Web*. <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6227> <Last Accessed July 20, 2015>

³Salisbury, 70.

engaged in the war were separated from the rest, taken to Boston, and sold into perpetual slavery in the West Indies. Shoshanim and several other leaders were executed, a fate which they preferred, doubtless to banishment and servitude. Those Indians who escaped capture took refuge among the Pennecook, and nevermore returned, unless as stragglers, to revisit the scenes of childhood, and drop a tear over a mother's grave." ⁴

Document E

Rev. F. L. Weis lecture at Lancaster's Three Hundredth Anniversary

"The several Indian Trails are now hard-surfaced highways. Though there was not then a single habitation and the whole countryside consisted of open fields and virgin forest. . . There was more and cleaner water in the river which then teemed with vastly more trout and salmon and bass than the most inveterate fisherman could now hope for: while deer, bears, wolves and small game were so abundant as to seem inexhaustible. Land was to be had for the taking; farms for the labor of breaking the soil, homesites for the choosing and clearing; and within a stone's throw enough lumber for a cabin or a home for the cutting."

"When they arrived they found their Indian neighbors - friendly and useful to them for the first quarter century, for the natives provided the settlers with fresh fish and game from the ever plentiful supply, while the settlers were breaking the ground and building their homes. Here too, 'struggle with savage men and savage nature compelled self-dependence, and soil and climate favored liberty of thought and conscience!'"⁵

Document F

Congressman Philip Philbin's address at Lancaster's Three Hundredth Anniversary

"These early settlers dauntlessly faced the primitive dangers that lurked in this wilderness. They assiduously cleared the virgin forests and industriously tilled the rich soil of the lovely valley of the Nashua River and its undulating hills and intervalles. They endured the rigors and hardships of frontier life. They suffered bloody massacres by savage Indian tribes that inhabited the area. Their little village was sacked and burned several times, their meager possessions carried away, their wives, children, and neighbors slaughtered in cold blood or kidnapped by the merciless Indians and taken to remote places."

But neither the rigors of nature nor the ravages of the bloodthirsty savages could deter them from their goal of establishing a settlement in this wilderness where they could worship God according to their will, ordain their own free institutions under an orderly government, and seek a meager livelihood and greater opportunities for themselves and their posterity. . ."

⁴ Rev. Abijah Marvin, *The History of Town of Lancaster: From the First Settlement to the Present Time*. (Lancaster, MA: Published by the Town, 1879) 113-14.

⁵ Rev. F. L. Weis, "Historical Sketch of the Town of Lancaster." *Clinton Item* 69, no. 282(June 23, 1953) 1.

"First it is well to remember that they were primarily motivated by absolutely unselfish purpose. There were two central themes. . ." "belief in the Almighty and the resolution always to worship and revere Him, and secondly, determination to secure freedom in all its import- independence of the mind, dignity of the individual, fellowship of the spirit and all the graces and benefits of free government and free civilization which untrammelled and unfettered human beings seem able to achieve."

". . . we shall surely go forward, expanding in knowledge and power, and that the roots of our institutions will strike deeper into the affections of the people, and that through the united efforts of the East and the West, the North and the South, blended into one sublime word 'America,' our primacy will be established and everywhere acknowledged, and that in the future, as in this hour, our chief glory will be that wisdom, justice, and mercy will preside over us and the destiny of the great republic." ⁶

⁶ Philip Philbin, "Address on the Town of Lancaster." *Clinton Item* 69, no. 284(June 25, 1953) 1.