

**The Story of Wunnee-Neetunah, or
The Life of an Indian Princess of Connecticut**
by Mathias Spiess (1873-1959)

The Manchester Historical Society thanks Mark Abraitis, of East Hartford, for the donation of this signed edition of the leather-bound 83-page book, in May 2019.

Mathias Spiess called his 1934 book about Wunnee-Neetunah “A Tale of Truth,” so right from the title page there is the duality of fiction and fact. The foreword adds an element of fantasy, as he says he had fallen asleep or “because of my drowsiness, my thoughts took flight into the dim and misty past, for I ... beheld tribes of Indian people passing by in pageant before me. I saw them erecting wigwams and building villages.” So, the Manchester Historical Society presents the book here as a work of fiction, acknowledging the inclusion of the facts available at the time, as well as mention of “Squaw Cave” on the “new highway” in Bolton, that is, Route 44, near Bolton Notch. That cave does exist and is accessible from the parking lot for Bolton Notch Pond State Park.

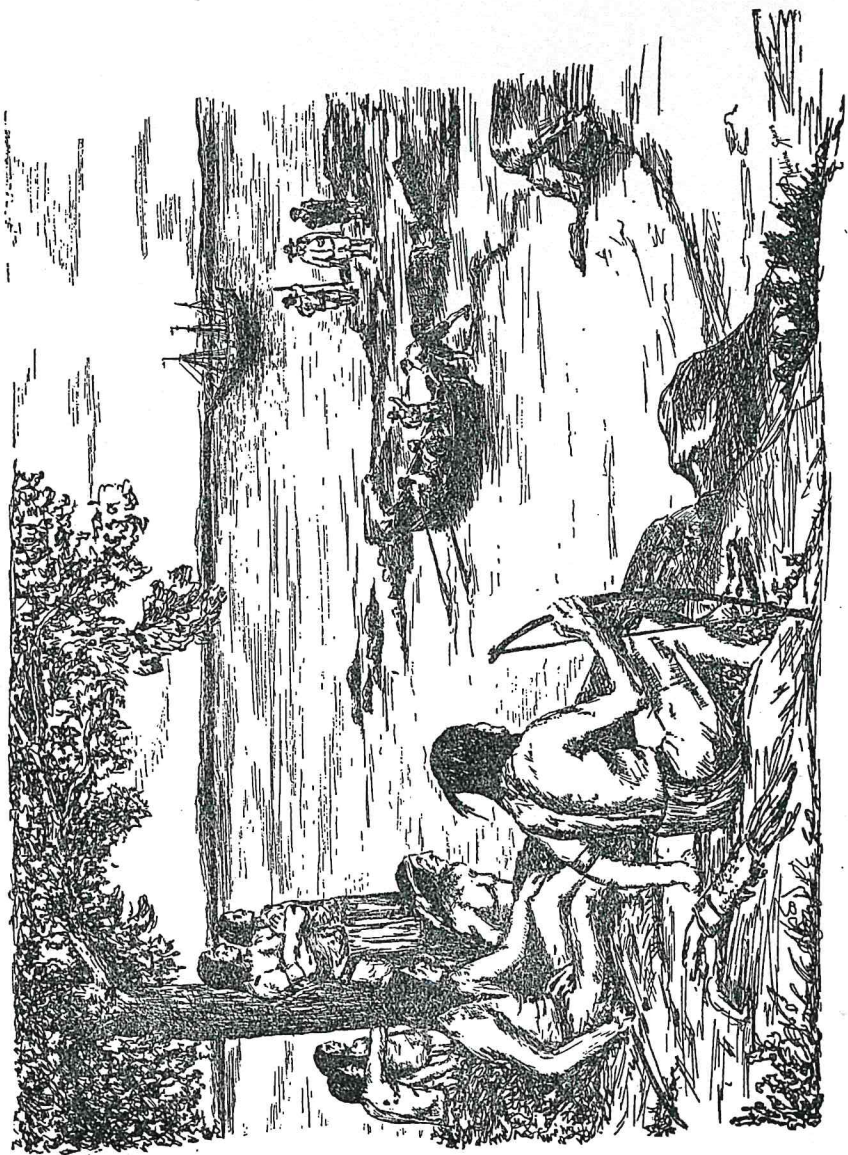
– webmaster *Susan Barlow*

Note: Our Historical Society website has a lengthy *Manchester Herald* article about Mr. Spiess, written in May 1967 by Anna McGuire, Historical Society member and an English teacher at Manchester High School. The article is in the *People Then & Now* area of the Reprints section, alphabetically under “S” for Spiess.
http://www.manchesterhistory.org/reprints/MHS3_MathiasSpiess.html

THE STORY of
WUNNEE-NEETUNAH

MATHIAS SPIESS

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or
THE LIFE OF AN INDIAN PRINCESS OF
CONNECTICUT

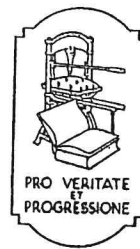


The Discovery of the Connecticut River, by Adrean Block, 1614.

THE STORY of
WUNNEE-NEETUNAH
or
THE LIFE OF AN INDIAN PRINCESS OF
CONNECTICUT

A TALE OF TRUTH

By
MATHIAS SPIESS



BOSTON
MEADOR PUBLISHING COMPANY
MCMXXXIV

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*To the memory of the red-skinned
American natives who welcomed the
European foreigners in New England.*

Mathias Spiess

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THE MEADOR PRESS, BOSTON

FOREWORD

One day, while wandering about in quest for Indian relics and locations of Indian village sites, I climbed to the summit of Manatuck mountain.

There I found, besides numerous spear and arrow points, traces of campfires and what seemed to me to be the ruins of an Indian fort.

Feeling fatigued after my climb and hunt, I sat near the edge of a cliff and enjoyed the beautiful scenery between Mt. Tom in Massachusetts on the north, and the hanging hills of Meriden, Connecticut, on the south.

Just below was the road which I knew was once a section of the great trail which led from Quinipiac (New Haven) to Canada.

I also knew that the very spot where I sat, had been a "lookout" place of the Indians, hence the name of the mountain.

Perhaps I should say that I had fallen asleep, or because of my drowsiness, my thoughts took flight into the dim and misty past, for I had glimpsed behind the pages of history and beheld tribes of Indian people passing by in pageant before me.

I saw them erecting wigwams and building villages.

I was with the men hunting and fishing and observed their women cultivating the fields.

I listened to the older folks as they related

ancient legends and folklore to their children.

Yes,

I played and danced with them.

Thus centuries passed before me in a flicker of time, when suddenly someone shouted an alarm. There appeared out on the sea, a tiny white speck. What it could be, no one seemed to know, but nearer and nearer it came—it was the Mayflower!

I saw the Indians welcoming the Pilgrims and sat with Massasoit and his sagamores at the first Thanksgiving feast.

I travelled with the early settlers through the primeval forest, led by red skinned guides who brought them to the great Valley of Connecticut.

I witnessed the burning of the Pequots, when a thousand men, women and children were consumed by the flames.

I was present when the body of brave King Philip, son of the great Massasoit, was quartered and distributed among the settlers.

I read the laws enacted against the natives and saw Indian men, women and children shipped out and sold into slavery.

I perceived tribe after tribe retreating westward before the advancing European invaders, and I asked myself: "Were the Indians really blood-thirsty savages as pictured in history?"

After many years of research and study, I concluded that the Indian as pictured in history is a portrayal of him as he was after he had tasted the white man's fire water and had forfeited freedom, land and hunting grounds. That portrayal pic-

tures the Indian after he had realized his losses and hated the white foreigners.

All that is written about the Indian was written by his enemy, the white man. Because of the lack of a written language, the Red Man could not convey to posterity his story of the conflict which developed between the two races for the possession of the land.

All that the Indian did to the white man is recorded but much of what the Whites did in return is forgotten. When the settlers won in battle in their attempts to exterminate the natives, it was heralded as a glorious victory, but when the Indians killed white men in defense of homes, family and country, all this was recorded as a massacre.

True, among the settlers were men like Roger Williams. He described Indian character as it was when he took refuge among them, and again after years of demoralization. (See his "Key into the Language of America").

There was John Elliott, who preached among them; John Easton, governor of Rhode Island; and others who give us revealing glimpses of true Indian character.

More and more are the writings of modern historians tempered by a sense of justice. But, the true history of the American Indian will not be complete until his sorrows and sufferings inflicted upon him by the white man, are written without prejudice.

This story of Wunnee-neetunah reflects Indian character at the dawn of civilization in Connecticut. If its effect upon the reader impells him to join those

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who in the name of justice and humanity cry out against further misrepresentation in history of the aboriginal natives of America, then the purpose of this little book shall have been achieved.

M. S.

Manchester, Conn.
January 15, 1934.

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The Story of Wunnee-neetunah

CONNE-TIC-UT

It was during the summer of 1614, when the Dutch of New Amsterdam (now New York City) began an extensive fur trade with the Connecticut River Indian tribes.

It was the first appearance of white men in what is now known to us as the state of Connecticut.

The country abounded with beaver, otters, black, gray and red foxes, racoons, wild cats and wolves. There were also many deer, moose, bears and occasionally a panther.

Ancient chronicles inform us that the Dutch purchased not less than ten thousand skins annually in Connecticut, previous to the days of settlement by the Whites.

There were also in the bogs, creeks, rivers and lakes, wild geese and ducks of all kinds.

In 1621, William Bradford wrote: "Besides water fowle there are great store of wild Turkies."

Flocks of wild geese by the thousands followed the course of the Connecticut River northward in the spring and southward in the fall of the year. Wild pigeons were so plentiful that they seemingly obscured the light of the sun during migration periods. In the rivers, creeks and lakes "there was a variety and an innumerable multitude of fish. Connecticut River in particular was distinguished for the

plenty and variety which it afforded in proper season and especially for those excellent salmon with which its waters were replenished." (Trumbull, History of Connecticut, Vol. 1, pp. 36-39).

There were the finest oaks of all kinds, chestnuts, walnuts and all kinds of maple, beech, birch, ash and elm. White and yellow pine, white and red cedar, hemlock and spruce "grew to a notable height and magnitude." As late as 1846 Ralph Waldo Emerson tells us of trees in New England that were 250 feet in height and six feet in diameter.

Berries grew wild in great variety and there were grapes and "an almost endless variety of esculent and medicinal herbs and roots."

Such descriptions enable us to visualize the country before the impact of the white race upon it.

Through the stately primeval forest were foot-paths leading into every direction and from one village to another, inhabited by the native Americans whom we erroneously call Indians.

THE PODUNKS

Between the winding river which the Indians called Conne-tic, (i.e. long river), and a fortified village (now South Windsor) there was open meadow land, about one mile in width and ten miles in length. This fortified village, situated on the high upland, on the north bank of the Podunk River,

was the first to be visited by white men. It was the Podunk headquarters and tribal summer village.

Several years had passed since the first ship, commanded by that ambitious Dutch navigator, Adrean Block, had sailed up the river. During the summers of those years there came a great ship which anchored off the bank at every Indian village while the captain bartered with the natives for peltry.

It was in the year 1620 and summer time had come again. The meadows resembled a sea of daisies, and buttercups were waving softly in the breeze. Here and there were fields of corn, squash, beans and tobacco. Nature smiled in all her glory. From the throats of countless thousands of pretty choristers came the warbling songs of praise to Him who tuned their throats in gleeful harmony. Mother Nature, invested in her festive robes, scented the air with her breath of fragrance from the flowery meadows.

Here in Connecticut's Garden of Eden, in the wilds of the Podunk country, lived Wunnee-neetunah, the daughter of Tantonimoh, favorite sagamore of Grand Sachem Arraramet.

She was just a flower bud in years, but well had she learned the tribal legends from her mother and the older folks of her tribe.

She knew that when the Great Spirit had formed the Great Valley, He had revealed its fruitfulness to her forefathers and led her people here.

She knew that Keta Manitto, whose home was in the great Southwest, had blessed and smiled upon His children of the forest and had given them strength and health. He had ordained that her

people should live like the eagle, as free, and that they should never surrender the land which they had obtained as a Divine gift. And so her forefathers lived during countless moons.

She had learned that old age and the final end of life's journey was like unto the stalk of corn which sprouts, bears and ripens with time; and laden with plenty it bows down to Mother Earth whence it came. Just so, all living things had work to do and duties to perform until Mother Earth would summon them to return to her bosom.

Wunnee, as she was called for short, had learned to live a clean healthful life in perfect harmony with Nature's laws and believed that by so doing she would reach a ripe old age and a peaceful end. Terror of death was unknown among her people.

She was taught that death to the body meant entrance of the soul into the Happy Hunting Ground where all would meet again and spend eternity in perfect bliss.

She believed that the Great Spirit who guided her people through the trackless forest jungles, would bestow His blessing on all who would love his fellow man and never offend anyone by word or deed. Those who failed in this would arouse the anger of the Great Spirit and misfortune would overwhelm him.

Like all her people, Wunnee saw the Great Spirit manifested in all nature and when only an ordinary accident or the slightest misfortune befell them, would say: "Musquantam Mani," (God is angry and is punishing me).

It was Keta Manitto, the Great Spirit, who

taught her forefathers to build a wigwam; to dig and to plant the fields and construct the light, birch bark canoe with which they could glide over the waters. It was He who gave them golden kernels of corn and showed how to pound them into flour and bake their daily bread. He gave them squashes, beans and the sacred tobacco plant.

From Him they received the calumet in which they should smoke tobacco and thus preserve peace and good will among all tribes. He taught them how to shape the stone arrow, spear and axe; and how to form the clay and mould it into pots and platters. He showed them how to drill the wampum bead and the eye in the bone needle. He revealed the secret of the fire, taught them to cook their food and gave them the recipe for the delicious dish of succotash.

He instructed them to count riches and wealth in terms of health and happiness, and that by so doing they would never know poverty nor taste the bitter fruit of want.

The moose, deer and the bear were placed in the forest, and the fishes in the streams and lakes, as food for them.

Wunnee, though a princess, worked in the fields with the other women, or helped them make clothing for winter use. She had also learned that not all tribes strictly obeyed the wishes of the Great Spirit. There were invading tribes who came from far off countries to disturb those who lived in peace. This caused the young men to train and become powerful warriors. They were the protectors of the women, children and the old men of the tribe

and because of this the women would never allow a young man to do field work. He could hunt and fish and thus provide food but was not permitted to do real laborious work.

Wunnee was born a Podunk, the bravest of all tribes in Connecticut. She had seen her father leading in many battles against the fierce-natured Mohawks who came from the Hudson River and outnumbered the river tribes by many hundreds. Yet, they would not forsake their homeland but fought desperately against intruders whenever they appeared.

CUPID'S DARTS

A Dutch ship lay anchored again at the mouth of the Podunk River. The captain and his men were busily loading the vessel with the furs they had purchased (or bartered) from the inhabitants of the village.

After several days, during which the crew was preparing to sail, the captain missed his cabin boy, Peter Hager, an orphaned Dutch lad who had served the captain several years.

Being well liked by all the crew, the captain had no reason to suspect foul play. Could Peter have fallen overboard and been carried down stream by the rapidly flowing current? Not likely, thought the captain, for Peter was an excellent swimmer.

Suddenly a gloomy thought entered the captain's

mind. Could these "Skrelings" or savages be holding Peter prisoner? Would they, like the Gypsies in European countries, steal the boy and convert him into a "Skreling?"

Quickly the captain ordered the crew ashore and to search every wigwam in the village. He was the first to arrive and by signs and the few words of Indian which he had learned, he asked for the youth. The expression of the officer's face spoke in a language which every human understands. The natives seemed bewildered for a moment; they knew not why the white men came running back.

Only a few moments elapsed before several of the natives cried: "Ah wuskenin!" (the young man) and all rushed toward a splendidly constructed wigwam located on a sandy knoll nearby. They beckoned the visitors to come along and the whole crew led by the captain followed.

When they had reached the place, the Indians said: "Yeu-ut, yeu-ut" (in here, in here) as they pointed to the flap at the entrance of the large wigwam. The captain, in his excitement, forgot all formalities and pulled aside the curtain and entered.

Behold, there was Peter sitting on a mat, enjoying a luncheon with Wunnee and her mother.

"Peter," shouted the captain, "what does this mean?"

Peter jumped to his feet and attempted to excuse himself which only resulted in a stammering of meaningless words.

For a moment the captain's mind was at a standstill but Peter's emotional attempt to speak, betrayed the sentiment of his soul.

"By Jupiter! Are you in love with this young squaw?" asked the captain.

Peter's eyes stared at the captain as the boy stood motionless for a moment while his head began to droop.

Poor boy! If ever there were a conflict between love and duty, it was being waged right here within Peter's heart. Silence continued to reign within the royal wigwam as if all had been struck speechless, but the thoughts that flashed through the captain's mind during those moments would have filled volumes, if put into writing.

What could he do or what could he say? Should he leave the lad with the "Skrelings"? That would have been criminal in his judgment, and to order the cabin boy to go aboard the ship seemed to be beyond the captain's power and command, at the moment.

The captain was still a young man himself. He had just consummated his courtship by marriage with a flaxen haired Dutch maid and counted the days when he could return to his beloved wife.

To him nothing in the world seemed so cruel as time and duty which separate two loving hearts and make long absences unbearable. He had tasted the bitterness of separation. Should he now nip the bud of love's first sweet blossom within Peter's bosom or should he trust in God's own wisdom by leaving Love unshackled in this untrodden wilderness?

Being a conscientious man, and like most Dutchmen good natured and jovial, the captain showed that within his breast a tempest heaved billows of

emotion. Here he was forced to render judgment in a case which tugged his heart and strained his nerves.

Wunnee's mother broke the silent spell. She uttered a few words to an Indian man who stood at the entrance of the wigwam. Of these words the captain understood only two, "wehkom sachimo" (call the sachem), and quickly signalled to the mother that he had understood and also wished the sachem be called.

Wunnee left the wigwam and followed the Indian man to the home of Arraramet, the Grand Sachem. The captain, embracing Peter, said:

"Peter, I understand it all, but you see I am held responsible not only for your material welfare but also for your soul. When your parents died in Holland and you were indentured to serve me until you had reached the age of manhood, I pledged my word of honor under oath, that I would fulfill my obligations. True, your time of servitude has practically expired but still I feel bound to guide you regardless of vows or signatures, for there is a moral responsibility from which there is no escape.

"You not only served me for seven years but also were a companion to me as we sailed over many seas, and I regard you as my own son. Do you want to leave me now and remain among these wild people? I admit the beauty of this young girl; her lovely form is one of Nature's works of perfection. Her manners and deportment parallels those of a highly cultured European maiden. Her modesty, like that of all Skreling maidens, excels by far the highest type of European modesty. Yet, under-

neath her beauty and stately manners, is the dusky Skreling—the Indian.

You are a white man, a member of a superior race, and a Christian. She, though a princess in the wilderness of America, belongs to a race which has not yet outlived the Stone Age and paganism. I apprehend your future. Were you to remain here permanently, you would—”

Here the captain hesitated for a moment, then removing his cap and running his hand over the top of his head, he continued:

“Let me see, coming to think of it, it would be to our mutual advantage if you were to learn their language and remain till next summer when I shall return on my next trip.

“What a blessing it would be to have an interpreter and thus enable us traders to extend our fur trade. Furthermore, your experience among the “Skrelings” would cure you of lovesickness and you would gladly think of your friends in Holland in preference to “Skrelings.”

“My friends in Holland? I know of none, Captain; who are they?” inquired Peter.

“Why, every inhabitant there is a preferred friend to these red-skinned pagans,” said the Captain.

Just then, Wunnee returned and informed her mother the sachem was on his way. All stepped out of the wigwam and soon the old grand sachem approached escorted by a score of men, who remained in the background while Arraramet stepped up to greet the captain.

The sachem spent considerable time and effort to

convey his thoughts by gestures and signs but the captain at last shrugged his shoulders in despair. The Indians talked among themselves which seemed to indicate suggestions to use other methods to serve as a medium of communication.

It was Wunnee’s mother who seemed to have the ability to use proper signs which could be understood. She gestured to the captain and Peter to be seated and wait a little while. Then the sachem sat next to the captain, and, pointing to the men who had just left, signalled that they would return soon.

“I have no idea what their plans are,” said the captain. “But this embarrassment encourages me to leave you here to study and learn their language,” said he to Peter.

“There is an enormous volume of profitable business before us, but it is hard to see how traders can continue and thrive unless they procure a knowledge of the native tongue. Our ships can sail up navigable rivers and their presence is understood by the river tribes, but in order to reach inland tribes we must instruct these people to formulate a system under which we can extend our trade into every direction, by inducing the inland tribes to transport their furs over the trails to the river. We can make them understand that our ships will appear annually at a certain time of the year. With the peltry gathered to the banks of the river we shall increase our trade each year enormously.”

Wunnee, who sat next to Peter, suddenly pointed with her forefinger and exclaimed: “Nahoh, nahoh” (they are coming) as she rose to her feet and

eagerly watched the Indian men who were returning with large bundles of fur.

They placed them before the sachem who handed some pieces to the captain for inspection. There were the finest tanned beaver, mink and otter skins the captain had ever seen. The sachem gestured that the skins were his own and that he would present them to the captain if the latter would permit Peter to remain with them.

Now the captain could see that the wise old sachem was anxious that his people should get acquainted with the white men and their language, as the captain himself was for a knowledge about the Indians and their language.

Since the captain had already partially decided to let Peter remain, the bargain was quickly closed and the skins were accepted and put on board the ship.

The captain gestured in signs of satisfaction and of friendship as all walked toward the place where the dory had been fastened.

There were tears in Peter's eyes when the captain gave him fatherly advice, wishing him luck and bidding him farewell. His last words from the deck of the ship as she had already begun to move downstream were: "Take good care of yourself until I return next spring. Do what you can to accumulate furs from other tribes and don't forget the teachings you have received in dear old Holland. Waasail, Peter, Waasail."

Peter, waving his hands, shouted: "Aye, aye, sir, Waasail, waasail!"

Within a short time the ship had rounded past

the mouth of the Podunk River, but Peter and Wunnee with many others of the village watched until the topsail disappeared from sight.

DOWN THE RIVER

The very first thing Peter did when he realized he was the only white person in a wilderness extending, according to Indian description, "from the sea to the setting of the sun," was to count the months that would elapse till the captain would return.

He had, besides his clothes and other personal things which the crew had brought ashore, an old unused ledger which the captain had left for him to use as a journal and also for the purpose of recording a vocabulary of the Indian language. This he used for both purposes later but first of all he drew a crude calendar. Daily he checked off time as it passed.

When he had his calendar finished he glanced over the many days that must pass until next spring, and if he had recorded his inner thoughts he would have written into his journal for many days after: "A lonesome feeling still hovers around me."

According to Indian custom, Peter was "adopted" by the Podunks and taken into the family by Chief Tantonimoh. Here he lived in the royal wigwam, the home of Wunnee-neetunah, taking the place of a son or brother.

During the rest of the summer he often travelled with Tantonimoh whose principal occupation seemed to be to consult the sachems of other Connecticut River tribes regarding Mohawk attacks. Constantly scouts were stationed in various parts of the country, keeping vigil, and would send a runner to report suspicious movements of Mohawk warriors.

Sometimes a band of Mohawks would attack the river Indian scouts and Peter witnessed such battles which Tantonimoh always led. These overland journeys gave Peter a thorough knowledge of the country. He had, with Podunk men, paddled up the river several days to induce the northern tribes to bring down next spring furs which they planned to procure during the winter.

The summer had slipped by and the crops had been harvested by the women. The corn had been husked and stored and the hunting season had begun. The entire tribe removed from the summer village eastward into thick wooded valleys and separated into several bands. There in the deep forest, where firewood was easily obtained and where they were protected and sheltered by mighty oaks, pine and hemlock trees, they passed the winter. During the early part of the season the men "drove" the woods for their winter's supply of meat. They gathered grapes, acorns, nuts, herbs and roots and, when the weather permitted, continued their still-hunts and trapping circuits. Thus Peter became familiar with every part of the forest in the Podunk country. When, during extreme cold weather, the men of the tribe remained at home, he took ad-

vantage of the leisure hours and wrote his Indian-Dutch dictionary and vocabulary which was greatly appreciated later by the white traders.

During the mid-winter the only outdoor work for men was the gathering of firewood and occasionally the catching of fish through the ice.

Thus the Indians spent the winter and remained in winter quarters until after "waban-pauzshad," the windmoon (March) which, they said, was the period of the year when the Wind-spirit dried out the ground, making it fit again for travel. The removal took place suddenly and was accomplished in one day. The men removed the wigwam coverings, pulled the stakes, while the women and children carried to the summer village, the packs of ground meat and smoked lamprey, salmon and other fish which they had preserved by packing them carefully in woodashes. The following day Peter found the whole tribe occupying the same site, on the high meadow bank, where they had lived the previous year.

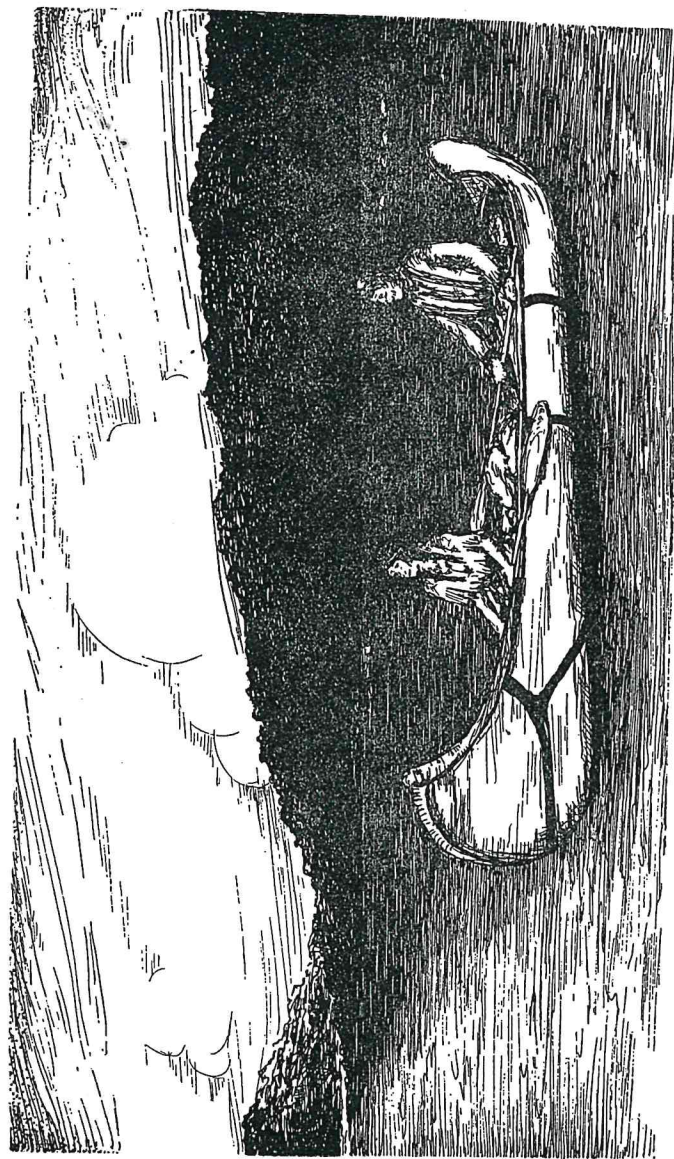
The freshet had turned the meadows into a sea. The young men became engaged in catching alewives with which they fertilized their fields when they planted their crops later. The days in Peter's calendar still unchecked told Peter that another moon would pass before he could expect the return of his dear friend the captain. Peter could no longer conceal his anxiety. How often he gazed downstream in hope of seeing the topsail of the ship over the brush covered point below the mouth of the Podunk River, we do not know, but he now realized that he had much news for the captain who, it seemed to

Peter, must be on his way up the Connecticut River. A year had practically slipped by, but now each day seemed longer than the year. Nothing of the tribal affairs interested him. His thoughts were constantly occupied now about matters and information which would delight the captain.

One night there was a commotion in the wigwam of Sachem Tantonimoh. Peter was heard shouting; the dogs of the village gathered and their long, deep baying had awakened every one in the village from the papooses to the warriors. Needless to say that within a moment's time the young men had gathered and surrounded the royal wigwam, suspecting trouble.

However, the sachem soon appeared and explained that Peter had been dreaming and crying aloud in his sleep. He had dreamed that he and Wunnee were on Fort Hill and looking down the river saw the sails of the captain's ship slowly moving northward. Peter could not sleep. He arose and sat outside of the wigwam. The family had heard him arise and the mother called to Wunnee to see about him. She found Peter sitting near the entrance and tried to calm his nerves by telling him that she had a scheme which would please him very much. She urged him to go back to his couch and to sleep.

This Peter did just to please her, but he could not sleep. At last the grey of the morning appeared and both Peter and Wunnee were seen walking toward Fort Hill. Seated there they strained their eyes looking downstream. Peter asked Wunnee to explain her scheme, which she did, and which



Down stream to meet Captain May.

delighted Peter. Wunnee believed in dreams, like all her people. Peter's dream was a premonition that the captain and his ship were not far away, but that some obstruction or mishap prevented their arrival.

"I have asked my father," said she, "for permission to use one of the canoes and paddle downstream to meet the captain."

After the boy and girl ate a little, Wunnee's mother prepared a pack of food which the two should take along on their trip. This she brought to the bank while Peter and Wunnee were getting ready to go. Her father came down, too, and wished them luck as they paddled away. In a few moments they had reached the Connecticut River and the fast flowing current, with both paddling, soon brought them within sight of the next village—Saukiauk (Hartford). They passed on and came to Wangunk, the great bend where the water whirled around Pyquag, (Wethersfield), in eddies which sometimes threatened to upset the light birch bark canoe.

Peter, as a sailor boy, had had experience with such dangers and Wunnee lacked no knowledge in controlling a canoe. Both were familiar with the course of the river for they had paddled their way down to the sea before. In a few hours they had reached Mattabesec (Middletown) but had not seen or heard of any ship. They had the intention of keeping right on going but Wunnee observed some of the inhabitants of the village signaling "danger ahead" and to pull ashore, which they did.

When they had reached the shore they were in-

formed that the current at the Narrows was too dangerous for them to undertake to paddle through with a light canoe. They were also told that the great ship which had been here last summer had been anchored below the Narrows for several days waiting for a favorable wind to carry it through the strong current.

"The captain, Captain May!" cried Peter, throwing his arms about as if he wanted to fly or swim away.

Wunnee, who was always calm and composed, yet happy because Peter was so joyous, said: "I hope it is Captain May, but there were other ships which came up the river during the last few years." A description of the ship was given in detail by Indian men who had seen her. This information assured Peter that it was the new "Fortune" which Captain Cornelius May had sailed on her maiden trip last year. The "Fortune II" was the last word in ship building and her skipper, though still young in years, had sailed the seven seas since he had been promoted from mate on the Half Moon, under Henry Hudson, to higher duties on other ships.

Wunnee suggested taking the path which followed the west bank of the river. They carried their canoe on high ground and without further delay started. They had not gone far when they saw the old Grand Sachem Sequin, who had already heard the news of the visitors. He, like all other sachems, was anxious to continue the fur trade with the white men who came up the river in such great ships and whose merchandise and articles of trade were so wonderful.

Sequin was greeted by Wunnee and Peter but he had come, he said, to talk to them. Pointing to the position of the sun, the venerable sachem addressed them as follows: "My children, see the sun is low. It will be dark before you can arrive at Wompi-ompsk-ut (White Rock Mt.). The great ship, our men say, lies off this point. You cannot approach the river bank in darkness while the water is high. If you go, you cannot do more there in the night than here. The white men on the ship have been ashore hunting today and are tired and need rest. Tarry with us tonight and tomorrow before the day breaks you may go. The ship is waiting for the wind and there will be no wind tonight and tomorrow the weather will again be calm, I think. I offer you the comfort of my home."

Peter and Wunnee thanked the sachem for his kindness and consideration as the three slowly walked to Sequin's royal wigwam where they sat down to eat.

During that evening Sequin conversed at length with Wunnee about her people and their attitude toward the Pequot attempt to dominate the river tribes. Wunnee, a true Podunk, was so deeply interested in what the sachem had to say that she did not notice Peter's leaving the large wigwam. Unexpectedly he returned with the pack of provisions they had carried with them; he feared that some wild beast might devour them during the night. In a little while all retired excepting an elderly squaw who, in the light of a small camp fire, busied herself making "jonne-cakes" or journey-cakes and

preparing a large bowl of hominy for an early breakfast the following day.

The next morning when the mourning doves with their plaintive cooing were announcing the approach of a new day and ere the whip-poor-will had sent out its last nightly call, the elderly squaw had already prepared the morning meal. The old sachem was pacing back and forth in his moccasined feet, walking the full length of the wigwam and apparently anxious and nervous. Soon the two guests and the sachem, squatted near the little fire which illuminated the place, were eating a good hearty meal.

Leaving their pack with the sachem, Peter and Wunnee, after thanking all for the hospitality they had received, bid them "hawunshuch," goodbye.

The path followed the general course of the river and at certain places a good view could be seen downstream. They continued their journey, sometimes stepping off the path to gaze down the river until they came within sight of the ship. At first sight Peter recognized the Fortune and shouted with joy. They stepped livelier until they had reached a point just opposite the ship.

There were men on deck and Peter shouted to them: "Is Captain May aboard?"

"Yes," came back the answer.

"Tell him Peter Hager is here and wants to come aboard," cried Peter.

Several men who knew Peter at once began to greet him with wild shouts of joy. One of the seamen was seen rushing to the galley and in another moment there was Captain May at the railing. An

exchange of salutations followed. They saw two seamen step into the dory and start for shore to get them.

This was no easy task; for here at this time of the year the current flows fast and only experienced hands can safely manage a dory, in crossing over. The white sailors pulled upstream bearing toward the west bank until close to shore. They had intended to swerve about and reach shore by traveling with the current, and were about to turn when they saw Peter and Wunnee running toward them. The sailors pulled straight in and landed at a high bank. Without delaying they assisted Wunnee into the boat while Peter helped the seamen push the dory loose from shore. It required little or no effort to steer the dory back to the side of the ship.

Every member of the crew was on deck and the captain's broad and smiling face told Peter his soul was on fire. Shouts of welcome came from every throat as Peter and Wunnee stepped on deck and were warmly received by the captain.

We are impelled to omit further description of the reception of Peter and Wunnee by the captain and the crew, for when souls act with sincerity in life's drama, words utterly fail to convey a true picture of such a scene.

Peter, who had served the captain as a cabin boy, seemed now a lost son who had returned; and Wunnee, who had been to the captain a dusky young squaw, now seemed his own child.

There was much leisure time on the becalmed ship. When the captain spoke of the good dinner the cook was preparing, mentioning that members

of the crew had been ashore with their fowling pieces and had brought in a number of geese and wild turkies, Peter said he had been informed of the hunting party by no less a person than Grand Sachem Sequin himself.

"What!" said the captain, "how did he know?"

Peter smiled and explained that Indians could tell if anyone encroaches upon their hunting ground even though no Indian is present at the time. He had lived with them for a year and had learned their keenness in detecting the presence of others. Peter also knew that a tribe considered it a criminal act to trespass upon the rights of others.

Upon hearing this the captain regretted he had sent his men ashore to hunt and decided that he would apologize to Sequin at his first opportunity. A dinner, fit for the king, was served.

Wunnee, who had never sat at a dining table before and who had never used a fork in her life, was modestly watching Peter. The captain came to her rescue and told her that he wanted her to eat, and not to imitate the customs of the Whites.

However, she did attempt to use the fork but soon found that her fingers served her better than the sharp pointed instrument.

After dinner, Wunnee found an opportunity to demonstrate her knowledge of Dutch. Peter had taught her a number of Dutch poems which she recited perfectly, to the great surprise of Captain May. Among them was "Jacob pas op" (Jacob, look out) which so pleased the captain that he asked her to repeat it again and again.

It amused him perhaps more than anything else

to hear his beloved "Dietsche woorden" (Dutch words) coming from the lips of a Skreling, as she endeavored to conceal the Indian gutturals with phonetic Dutch sounds. Then, too, she had learned to read Peter's "Staaten bibel" (Dutch Bible) and this prompted the captain to present her with a copy which she cherished to her dying day.

Up to now their conversations were all of a personal and friendly nature. Peter had told how the Podunks had treated him with unlimited kindness and that he not only loved Wunnee but all her people who also loved him. He expressed his desire to remain in America, travel to Plymouth with Wunnee to be married by the English there of whom a number had already called and visited Connecticut.

"For," said he, "I could never live apart from a people whose virtues are beyond those of any European people I have ever met."

The captain had listened to Peter with deep interest but the Dutch trader's heart within the captain led him off the subject as he visualized the future regarding a permanent commercial relationship between the Dutch and the Indians.

He reminded Peter that since the East India Company was succeeded by the West India Company, a colossal monopoly with imperial powers that were to last for twenty years, and which gave it the exclusive right to colonize and trade over the entire unoccupied coast of America from Newfoundland to the Straits of Magellan, Peter would be indispensable and would soon receive a commission from Holland which would repay him well.

"The company is ready to send as many ships as necessary," he said, "and all we need is a friendly relation with the Skrelings who will furnish the peltry."

While the captain and Peter were thus engaged in planning for future trade, Wunnee was shown by the seamen through all parts of the ship. It is not difficult to imagine the interest she showed, seeing the interior of so large a "canoe."

She was intensely interested in the cooking utensils which differed so much from those she had been accustomed to use. The iron pots, copper and brass kettles, polished like mirrors, the pewter dishes and platters, the steel knives and forks all seemed so wonderful to her, compared to the Indian earthen and soapstone pots and bowls and their bone flesh hooks.

When she returned to the captain's cabin, he had just finished entering a note in his private journal. When he saw her enter he called her to step over to his desk and pointing to the entry asked her if she could read it.

With her forefinger following the lines she read: "May 6, still lying below the Narrows waiting for favorable winds. Today I have as guests, my former cabin boy, Peter Hager, and Wunnee-nee-tunah, daughter of the Podunk sagamore Tantonimoh. Peter, as I recorded in my log book under date of May 28, 1620, remained, with my permission, with Skrelings since that date. He has learned the Indian language and also taught the Indian girl to speak, read and write Dutch amazingly well. Both came down the river partly by canoe and partly

over land to meet me. Our dinner for all on board consisted of wild turkey, goose, rice, prunes and fresh baked rye bread.

"Peter's report of the Skrelings and the country are very favorable and encouraging. There is a cargo of peltry awaiting me at Saukiauk and I am anxious to proceed there. Received from Peter his Dutch-Indian dictionary."

Her knowledge of reading was remarkable and the captain told Wunnee that Peter must have been a good teacher and she a willing pupil to accomplish so much in one year. He explained the purpose of this journal. It contains, said he, every detail of events throughout the many journeys to all parts of the world. Pointing to his log book, he explained that this was the property of his employers who would take possession of it when filled. His journal, he said, he would take with him when he retired from service and which would afford him much comfort in the later years of his life, while reading it over.

PETER'S AND WUNNEE'S STORY

The captain, Peter and Wunnee, were seated on deck and Peter continued to inform the captain of all he had heard and seen, reiterating the tender care he had received from Tantonimoh and his wife.

He pointed out that the native tribes were all peaceable people but that they were frequently at-

tacked by a fierce tribe from the western part of the country. These are called Mohawks. They first appeared some years ago and asked the river people here to join their confederacy which, they say, was founded by a great and wonderful man, Hiawatha, to check the progress of the white men. Their organization is called Iroquois.

"Oh, the Iroquois!" exclaimed the captain. "Why, I just received the news when we sailed into Manhattan that the West India Company had made a treaty of peace with the Iroquois of Five Nations, so we have nothing to fear from them."

"That's good news," said Peter, "but there is another tribe whose territory lies to the eastward who call themselves Mohicans but are known among the river people as Pequots which means destroyers of men. They invaded this country about forty or fifty years ago and the stories I have heard from the Podunks are pitiful.

"While the Mohawks came annually to collect tribute as a punishment for refusing to join the Iroquois League and attacking those who refused to pay tribute, these Pequots came down from the North, and cut their way through on the east side of the river till they encountered the Podunks. Many bloody battles were fought and finally the Podunks drove them eastward.

"Other tribes resisted them, so they turned southward again and cutting the Nehantic tribe in two, settled on the coast where they are today and where no tribe, so far, has had the courage to meddle with them. Up to now they did not interfere with other tribes, aside from pacing out a hunting ground for

themselves which they formed by taking lands which rightfully belonged to the Wangunks, Nehantics, Podunks and the Nipmucks.

"Since you told me of a peace treaty your company has made with the Iroquois, it is clear to me that the Pequots had already received the news, for recently they notified the river people that since the Pequots were members of the Iroquois League and had never collected anything as retribution for the losses sustained upon arrival, they now laid claim to the entire country by right of conquest.

"They said they intended to sell lands along the Connecticut River and advised these people to submit to this new power and authority or, should they fail to submit, bloodshed would follow.

"On the other hand, the river people claim that their forefathers had lived here for many generations. They said they were led here peaceably by the Great Spirit. They shed no blood because the land was unoccupied when they came. They call it Na-waushe, because it lies halfway between the eastern people and the western. Their land lies on both sides of the river which they call Conne-tic, from the sea northward three days' journey to the lands of the Pocumtucks, and one day's journey on the east side of the river to the lands of the Nehantics. On the west side of the river they claim their land originally extended to the setting of the sun, but since the Iroquois permitted the Mohicans to settle along the Hudson River, their land on the west now extends only about one day's journey from the river.

"This demand of the Pequots recently has caused much worry among all the river people.

"The river, I was told, is ten days' journey long. They call it two days to the sea and eighty days to its source.

"There are many tribes northward which are not affiliated with these people but by inter-marriage are related to them."

"Peter, how far have you been upstream?" interrupted the captain.

"About four days by canoe," replied Peter; "we went up, arranged with the Pocumtuck tribes for furs, and as soon as the river opened this spring, canoes laden with furs appeared daily. We directed all to bring them to Saukiauk where they are hidden beneath a rocky hill outside of the village. It was considered a safe place because Chief Sequassen of Saukiauk had paid the Mohawk tribute, therefore his people and their villages will not be molested. If any furs are found among other tribes, such as the Podunks, who have not paid their annual tribute, they would be taken in lieu of the wampum with which all Indians pay their debts."

"I see," said the captain; "that was wise precaution but the Mohawks will not come again, for, as I explained to you, the Iroquois League has signed a treaty of peace. However, Saukiauk would make a permanent post for our trading. We can erect a fort there and another at the mouth of the Long River and thus protect our trade."

Just then a seaman shouted: "Skrelings astern!"

A large dugout canoe with about twenty Indian men was seen approaching the ship. The Indians signalled signs of friendship, which were returned by the captain. Peter acted as interpreter. Their

mission is, they said, to inform the captain that the Pequot sachem wished to invite him to call at his headquarters at Mystic Bay concerning important matters of great interest to the Dutch. The sachem had sent men to Manhattan to bargain for the sale of land on the river and the Pequot men returned with favorable news.

The captain accepted the invitation and promised he would sail into Mystic Bay as soon as he had finished his trading on the river. The large dug-out was swung around and in another moment was seen traveling downstream at a speed never before witnessed by the captain.

Peter and Wunnee were conversing in a serious way when the captain looked about. Wunnee's serious look told that all was not well.

"That Pequot who spoke to you, captain," said she, "is the man who called at all the villages on the river and informed the people they must surrender their rights and lands. He is Cujep, a mean sagamore. There also were Wequash, Momoho and Catapaxet, whom I know and who are feared by all the river people. Our Grand Sachem, Ararramet, called a council and these men spoke and threatened to destroy my people if they interfered with Pequot authority.

"My people listened, then Chief Ararramet addressed the council and concluded with words which I shall never forget. He said: 'Behold me, I am like this oak which spreads its limbs over us. It was here under this tree the sachems of Podunk pledged their fidelity when they were made chiefs. Here I gave my word of honor to protect and rule

the Podunks as my forefathers did before me. I have ruled wisely and I have fought the Mohawks in many battles but never did Ararramet surrender. Now I am old and can no longer fight the enemies of my people. But, like this mighty oak which sends its limbs forth to shelter us, so is Ararramet still mighty in his old age. He sends his brave sagamores and warriors out to protect you, my people. They will fight our enemies; yes, they will die in defense of our rights and land, but never shall they surrender.'

"Then my father spoke and when he had hardly begun, Wequash and Momoho rushed forward and would have killed him if our men had not been on the alert.

"I also recall the concluding words as my father ended his speech. He said: 'Go, Pequots, tell your sachem that Tantonimoh reminds him the Podunks drove his forefathers eastward when they invaded our country but if he should make war against us, we shall send him westward this time whence he shall never return.'

"My father was followed by Wanamtam, the Powow, who predicted that troublesome days were before us. But, it was consoling to all when he said: 'These days will be few for I see Sassacus, that Pequot sachem, who was newly appointed, fleeing toward the West; I see him return no more. I see the Pequot stronghold—their fort—consumed in flames. I see their warriors, their women and children, running about through the fire. They are surrounded by a circle of white men who prevent escape. You Pequots who now threaten the peace

of a friendly people, shall lie about as charred logs following a forest fire.' ”

Then Wunnee related the whole story of the Pequot invasion as she had heard it from the old folks of her tribe.

“You see, captain,” said she, “when the Pequots marked out a hunting ground which extends from the sea northward two days’ journey and one day’s journey from east to west, all the tribes who had lost land believed that peace could only be established by agreeing to, and forgetting about, the loss of lands. After these many years they are breaking the pledge their fathers have made with our fathers.”

The captain had listened attentively to all that Peter and Wunnee had to say but remained silent. With his hands clasped behind his back he paced back and forth, his mind full of deep thoughts.

UPSTREAM

Something had suddenly caused a change in the attitude of the captain, and Peter and Wunnee had not long to wait to learn the reason.

Captain May was first of all one of those rare characters equally beloved by all who come in contact with them. His greatest fault, if we can call it that at all, was one which he had inherited from his ancestors and which made its appearance daily throughout his life. While he was gentle, mild tempered and friendly, he was above all an

adventurer and trader. Being in the employ of the wealthy and powerful Dutch West India Company, he had an ambition to succeed in the service and to expand trade which often assumed the appearance of a grievous fault. He, like other Dutch captains of that company, did not fail to carry a broom fastened to the masthead of his ship to indicate that the company’s ships were sweeping the ocean and ploughing through every known sea.

Captain May was a typical Dutchman. He cared little for the glory of discovering new lands and forming settlements, but cared more for the profits which might be gained from such discoveries. It was this spirit of duty and desire for wealth that displaced the solace within his soul, which had reigned there when he had learned of the love between Peter and his sweet flower of the wilderness. The captain of course did not know he was playing a part in Connecticut’s first historical courtship, nor that the story would be preserved for generations to come by the efforts of none other than himself.

Approaching Peter and Wunnee, he revealed his mind and said: “My good children, I am grieved to learn of the threatened dangers which seem inevitable. If these warlike Pequots who now claim the whole country by right of conquest, become oppressive and make war against the river people, the Pequots will destroy all opportunities for trade. There is only one thing to be done to save a tremendous business in peltry and that is: my company must purchase tracts of land at Pashesauke (Saybrook) which is at the mouth of the river, and at Saukiauk, which is at the head of navigation.

"There on these tracts the Dutch traders must erect forts and establish trading posts. It seems good policy to me to buy the tracts and pay the Pequots in order to keep them quiet. Then, once we are established, we can protect the river people whenever danger threatens, or act as mediators and preserve peace. The river people must be protected, for in them lies our only hope for future trade."

Wunnee was delighted to hear the captain's suggestions and assured him she would inform her people who would spread the news to other tribes.

There was a sudden atmospheric change noticeable. A mild southwest wind swept the deck. Calling the mate, the captain expressed a desire to attempt to pass through the Narrows. The mate, as anxious as the captain and knowing how the crew was wearisome of lying around in idleness, suggested that such an attempt, even though it might prove unsuccessful, would give exercise to the men.

In a moment, orders were given to set sail and shortly the Fortune was tacking a course upstream. Hours passed as the ship tacked one way, then another. Finally she passed through that narrow, winding and fast flowing current of water and reached the wide river above, just as darkness started.

Peter and Wunnee were at the very bow of the ship watching for landmarks along the banks which would indicate their approaching Mattabesec. Not many tacks were made when Wunnee suddenly shouted: "Nootow, nootow, Peter!"

The captain rushed forward and before he could

inquire the meaning of Wunnee's cry, she exclaimed in Dutch as she pointed to the west bank: "hel, lickt," (a light). It was the glow of a campfire at Mattabesec.

The sails were trimmed and slowly the vessel approached the bank which soon seemed alive with men, women and children, who had watched the ship coming up the river. The anchor was dropped and before the crew had time to man the dory to go ashore with the captain, the Indian men had paddled out to the ship in canoes, bringing the old sachem and several sagamores with them.

The grand sachem was dressed in his finest clothes. His head dress was a large bow of feathers; his mantle, leggings and moccasins were beautifully embroidered with beadwork and he wore a broad belt, covered with the finest of blue wampum. Bowing to the captain and the crew and with many signs of friendship, he stepped upon the deck of the ship assisted by his sagamores.

Wunnee, acting as interpreter, welcomed the sachem and explained that it was the captain's wish for them to go in the cabin. Here, Sequin presented the captain with several fine beaver skins. The captain reciprocated by presenting the sachem and his sagamores with a number of trinkets and a brass kettle.

The sachem came, he said, to ask that their friendship be continued "as long as the sun rises and sets"; and, that trading might flourish in the future as it has during the last number of years.

He loved the strange white men that come up the river in mighty ships, he said, but he and his people

were unhappy because of the Pequots. He related the same account which Wunnee had already given the captain.

The captain told the sachem about the Pequots who had come up the river with an invitation from their newly appointed sachem, Sassacus, and how the invitation had been accepted and word sent that the captain would sail into Mystic Bay as soon as possible to visit Sassacus.

Wunnee, who already understood the captain's plan, explained it to the sachem, expressing her belief that all would be well in a little while.

Sequin said that his son, Sequassen, sachem of the Saukiauks, was favorably inclined to the proposition that some land should be sold to the Dutch traders and a trading post be established near his village, but was protesting against Pequot supremacy.

As for himself and his people, Sequin expressed hope the captain could arrange matters with the Pequots so as to enable the river people to live in peace and continue their trade with the Dutch.

Captain May assured the sachem such an arrangement could be made and that he and his company would do all within their power to bring about just such an agreement with the Pequots.

When Sequin and his sagamores were about to go ashore, the captain offered apology for sending his crew on a hunt in the Indian domain without asking permission. To this the sachem answered: "When the matter was reported to me and my men asked what they should do, I said, 'do nothing, for the white men do not know Indian law and customs and Indians do not know white men's ways.' Such

an act among Indians would have been cause for war. I accept your apology and give you permission to send your men to hunt if and whenever you are in need of venison, bear or fowl."

The captain thanked him and to reciprocate, presented Sequin with a tub of cheese and a keg of salted herrings.

Sequin bid them all farewell as he was assisted by his men into a canoe which soon disappeared in the darkness. Soon a chorus of many voices was heard from the bank: "Hawunsuch, hawunsuch—farewell!" In a little while all was quiet on board and the only sound heard from shore was the call of the whip-poor-will with an occasional "hoo-hoo" from the night owls.

The night passed and at daybreak after Wunnee's canoe had been put aboard, the *Fortune* proceeded upstream. The expanse of the water averted much tacking so that within a few hours the ship was within sight of Saukiauk. Again they were met by a swarm of birch bark canoes. In one of these was Sachem Sequassen who saluted and asked to be permitted to step aboard.

Peter informed Sequassen the captain wished to proceed to Podunk and take advantage of the fair breeze, and that if Sequassen's canoe was brought up to the leeward side he could step aboard while the vessel was in motion. This was done and the sachem, a middle aged man, swung himself aboard in a graceful manner and greeted the captain with the usual signs of friendship.

Sequassen's mission was substantially the same as that of Sequin, his father, excepting to report a

large quantity of furs which had been placed in his care for barter by northern tribes, besides those which belonged to his people.

Sequassen apologized because he had come to greet the white men without regalia. He said a runner had come over the river path and reported the coming of the ship, whereupon all hands commenced to transport the peltry to the river bank.

The captain, pleased to hear that the fur was brought to the bank, told Sequassen the ship would sail to Podunk to bring back Wunnee, but would not delay there.

The sachem called his men, who had followed the ship in their canoe, to return to Saukiauk as he intended to remain and return with the ship.

The Pequot question was brought up again and discussed as before. Sequassen, wishing to induce the Dutch to establish a trading post and build a fort, told the captain he would consent to the sale of a tract of land by the Pequots even though they were not the rightful owners; but, said he, his people would never submit to Pequot supremacy.

This, the captain thought, could be arranged by him when he came to Mystic to visit Sassacus.

The captain had instructed Wunnee to explain all matters to her people regarding the Pequots, including the reason why he did not stop to visit the Podunks. It was to their interest, he stressed, that an agreement should be made at once with their enemies to preserve peace and trade.

Peter had also received his instructions to extend the fur trade. He had received a sum of money from the captain to use as a medium of exchange among

the English at Plymouth and Boston, if the occasion should arise. His salary due him from the West India Company, the captain would deposit with Mrs. May in Holland, so that in case of the captain's death Peter need only to prove his identity to obtain the money.

They reached the mouth of the Podunk River and anchored. Rolls of cloth, both woolen and linen, were taken ashore as presents to be distributed among the people. A steel axe, clothing, a new musket and a generous supply of gun powder and ball for Peter; and one axe for Ararramet and one for Tontonimoh, Wunnee's father, were also among the presents. Wunnee received a large mirror and several pieces of bright-colored cloth for dresses and long strings of colored beads.

Then followed the scene which the human heart feels when souls must part, but is beyond the power of man to describe. Peter and Wunnee, their canoe filled with the presents, slowly began to paddle up the Podunk River, while the ship turned about to sail back to Saukiauk.

The captain leaned over the railing waving when he heard Wunnee calling out in his beloved Dutch: "Waaseil Kapitan, waaseil!" He did not know these were the last words he would hear uttered by Wunnee and that he would never see her alive again. Nor did he know that his eyes would never again behold the flaxen-haired lad, who as a cabin boy had won his fatherly heart.

He walked astern, still watching the two until the brush-fringed bank obstructed his view.

When they arrived at the Saukiauk village, the

Indian men and women greeted them with deepest respect. Bartering began and Sequassen and his sister, Warwarme, were the judges of all bargains and transactions. In a few hours a tremendous business, from a European point of view, was finished and the ship, laden with costly furs, was again ready to sail.

Sequassen and his sister, with several sagamores, dined on board ship while the inhabitants of the village patiently waited on the river bank for their return.

When the sails were set, the familiar shouting of "Hawunsuch" could be heard again and it was kept up until the ship had passed the bend.

TO MYSTICK

The weather was mild and clear. The captain had missed his afternoon nap the day before, so he informed the mate of his intention to make up for what sleep he had lost.

No stop was made and with a fair breeze and the fast current they reached the mouth of the Connecticut River before dark.

The captain was eating in his cabin when the lookout shouted: "Skrelings aopt!" The same type of dugout canoe which they had seen upstream the day previous, manned with about twenty men, came toward the ship. They came close enough to carry on a conversation.

A tall, powerful fellow stood up, and to the amazement of all on board addressed the captain in broken Dutch.

"We came," said he, "to guide you to Mystick. Soon it will be dark but the moon will shine so you can see our canoe. This will save you time. You can anchor in Mystic Bay till tomorrow morning. Our sachem will expect you to call on him when it is convenient for you."

Hours passed as they sailed easterly with the dugout leading them in the moonlight till they reached the bay. Here they anchored and the next morning they saw natives anxiously waiting. The captain was soon prepared to go to the fortified village on the hill where Sassacus lived. Three seamen were left on board; the rest, including the mate, escorted the captain to the royal wigwam.

A broad, well graded path led through the heavily wooded ravine just below the fort, winding upward to the brow of the hill. The fort was formed of trunks of trees planted into the ground and pointed at the top. It was in the form of a circle covering about one acre of ground. The entrance was made by overlapping the circle with the posts, thus forming an alley between them which allowed only one person to pass at a time.

Through this alley Captain May and his men were led, single file. When they had entered they noticed a straight and wide path leading directly to another entrance opposite. Wigwams covered the rest of the space and the royal wigwam was in the center. It was a large oblong structure entirely covered with sheets of bark, neatly matched and

fitted together. When the captain and his men arrived at its entrance, the Indian who spoke Dutch entered and announced the captain's arrival.

Another moment and the white men were bidden to enter. They found themselves in a large square room with a number of side chambers or compartments connecting with it.

About forty men stood, forming a crescent towards the other side. From the middle of the row stepped a tall, well formed man, raising both hands solemnly and bowing reverentially before the captain. It was Sassacus, the most powerful grand sachem in the vicinity. The men around him were his sagamores.

To the Dutch seafarers it seemed as if they were facing a king—which indeed Sassacus was. He wore a magnificently well made and beautiful head dress of pure white feathers and his deerskin clothing was splendidly designed with the finest blue wampum beads. The clothing of his sagamores were also elegantly wrought with bead work as were their leggings and moccasins. Their coarse dark hair was shining and was carefully braided.

The captain and his men were struck with awe at the sight their eyes beheld. They had visited other sachems before, but had never seen such an elaborate display of wealth and culture as was here.

Sassacus spoke and the interpreter conveyed his speech to the captain as follows:

"Wopigwooit, my father, who passed away a short time ago, regarded the white men who live on Manhattan as the friends of the Pequot people. We have traded with them a long time. We like brass

kettles, iron axes and hoes. Our women like the bright colored cloth which you bring, and we all want mirrors and tinkling bells. Your brothers on Manhattan made a treaty of peace with the Iroquois League on the Hudson River. The Pequots are members of the wolf clan which you call Mohicans. We shall not violate that treaty, because we belong to that great confederation, The Five Nations.

"My father, and his fathers before him, claimed the land called Connecticut in accordance with Indian law, for the loss of many warriors who lost their lives in battles with the river tribes. My forefathers came in peace to Connecticut after the Mohawks had failed in their effort to induce those people to join the Iroquois League. My fathers had heard the voice of Hiawatha, that great and wise councilor, the founder of the League, who called upon all nations to join against certain white strangers who settled in the Southlands and who cruelly slaughtered and robbed the natives. My fathers went forth to attend the great council fire at Onondago and were initiated by the venerable Chief Sachem, Oho-ta-da-ha. My fathers left their own people, the Leni Lenape, and were adopted by the Muckhaneeek or Mohican, wolve totem clan. They were sent here to ask the river people to unite in defense of their homes and lands, but they would not listen to my fathers.

"After much effort my fathers planned to settle here, believing that in time they could convince our neighbors, but they met with great resistance and

sustained great losses. After much blood had been spilled, my fathers fought their way to this coast and lived here and their children after them. Never did my fathers make war against the river tribes, because we were so weakened in man power by them. We claimed the country but actually never encroached upon their rights excepting the hunting ground which we paced out and marked by great heaps of stones. We lived close to them for a long time, in peace.

"Not many moons ago there arrived white men in Massachusetts whom we do not know and who do not speak your language. These have traveled to Connecticut and, unless we stop their progress, they will crowd you out of the river. We shall no longer enjoy your trade. My people decided to carry out my father's plan, to sell land to only Dutch people and prevent all others from settling by the "Long River." I had sent men to Manhattan where they were informed of your coming here and when my scouts reported that they saw your great ship, I sent a message to you and invited you here."

The captain had listened carefully as the interpreter, that giant in stature, had conveyed the speech of Sassacus in broken, yet intellectual Dutch.

"I shall sail down the hellagat (Long Island Sound) today and be at Manhattan tomorrow or the next day if there are fair winds. I shall report the importance of this matter to my company, who, I am certain, will purchase tracts of land from you to protect our fur trade on the river 'Conne-tic,'" replied Captain May.

"Very well," said Sassacus. "As for the river people, I shall not make war against them, if they keep out the English and sell no land to them."

A friendly conversation followed, presents were exchanged, the calumet was passed around, but as Captain May had not yet learned to smoke tobacco, he courteously refused.

EXILES

It was shortly after Captain May had sailed away, that a group of Dutch men erected a fort and trading post at Saukiauk, which they named "House of Hope." Tracts of lands on both sides of the river were bought from Sassacus and the fur trade continued.

On his return to Connecticut the following year, Captain May learned that the Podunks had been driven out of the country by the Pequots. The Podunks had protested against the sales of land which had been made. Battles were fought in which they were defeated and their exile followed.

They had removed several days' journey northward to Pocomtuck, while the other river tribes who also fought with the Podunks and against the Pequots, had scattered to various sections of the country, but were permitted to return a short time later.

While in exile, the Podunks called upon the English at Plymouth and Boston, asking them to migrate

to their country, in the hope of checking the progress of the Dutch who were now looked upon as friends of the Pequots. Tantonimoh, Wunnee's father, was the first to appeal to the English. He traveled to Boston and Plymouth and under an assumed name he pleaded that an English settlement be made in Connecticut. He described the fruitfulness of the land, the opportunities for trade and offered to give eighty beaver skins to those who would settle. When they asked him his name, he said: "Wahginacut," which translated means, "welcome to our land." In this way he concealed his identity, fearing Pequot vengeance.

Again another year had passed and the Fortune with Captain May appeared as in previous years. The English had settled at Mattinauk which they had named Windsor, and at Wangunk, near the Indian village of Pyquag, they had built a few huts. At Saukiauk, close to the fort, a small settlement was begun which they had named Hartford.

They had ignored Pequot authority and had purchased all lands from the river people, whom they recognized as the rightful owners of all the land in Connecticut. The English brought back the sachems of the river tribes and restored their sachemdoms, to the chagrin of Sassacus, the Pequot sachem.

When Captain May learned of the Podunks having been returned to their former villages, he went at once to inquire about Peter and Wunnee.

STERN JUSTICE

The captain learned how Peter and Wunnee had gone to Boston to be married shortly after he had left them at Podunk a few years ago. Wunnee's mother had accompanied them. As a pretense they took with them packs of furs, in case any suspicion should arouse the white people of their coming.

There they were told that a law had been enacted which forbade intermarriage between whites and Indians. They had encamped near the village of Boston where they intended to sell their furs before returning to Connecticut.

It was on a Sunday and Peter was seen gathering kindling wood while white folks were going to the Sabbath meeting. He was arrested, found guilty of desecrating the Sabbath law and sentenced to be whipped on each lecture day; to be placed in the pillory and exposed to public disgrace, and to be confined in prison for one month.

Wunnee and her mother witnessed the first whipping as Peter was tied to the tail of an oxcart and later placed in the pillory where he was to remain till sunset. The crowd had dwindled away, the bailiff in charge had gone to the nearby tavern, when Wunnee crept cautiously toward the pillory, drove back the wedges and released the man she loved.

As she did this she whispered to Peter to flee, over the Connecticut path, over which they had come, and that she and her mother would meet him at the black rocky place.

Peter fled, and reaching the black rocks, waited.

When he saw Wunnee and her mother coming along the path, he noticed they were being bothered by two rough looking white men, one carrying a musket. Knowing that Peter was hiding somewhere behind the rocks, Wunnee continuously cried out: "Waw-wah-utto, wawana-wat" which Peter knew was a cry of alarm.

Suddenly Peter sprang from behind a rock and attacked the man with the musket. A fierce struggle ensued and the other ruffian rushed in to assist his companion.

During the fracas, Wunnee stole up closely and managed to run off with the musket which had fallen to the ground. She could not use it, for the men fought so desperately that had she fired there was no telling which of the three would be the victim.

Fortunately, during the scuffle, one of the strangers tripped over a stone when Peter's heavy blows forced him to step backward. The man's head struck on sharp pointed stones which perforated his skull. He died on the spot. The other fellow sprang forward and fought with such dexterity now, that it seemed imminent he would prevail over Peter whose strength was exhausted.

Just at this time Wunnee's mother approached with the musket. Wunnee attacked Peter's antagonist in real Indian fashion, taking holding of him by the hair with one hand and pounding him with a stone she held in the other. At this moment Peter freed himself from the clutches of his opponent, ran aside and grabbed the musket which Wunnee's mother reached out to him.

With this weapon in hand he threatened to shoot

the fellow, who quickly ran behind a rock for shelter. Peter ordered him to move on without delay if the man wished to save his own life. This he did and was soon mending his course towards Boston, where he reported the affair, claiming Peter had killed his companion in an attack by the wayside.

A reward was offered for the capture of Peter, dead or alive, for it was believed he had killed the man as reported.

Taking the musket and the dead man's powder horn with them, Peter, Wunnee and her mother, started on their westward journey. Wunnee's mother knew the way, and when they reached Wabaquaset, they left the Connecticut path and followed a path leading to Scanticook. They knew it would not be wise to go to Podunk, therefore planned that Peter and Wunnee remain at Scanticook.

Now, the inhabitants of this village belonged to the Podunk tribe, but their Sachem Poxen was not on friendly terms with Ararramet, the grand sachem, because of a Pequot who had been defeated in a battle with his chief, Sassacus, and had taken refuge with Poxen (who was also called Foxon). The village of the Scanticooks was located on a promontory on the north bank of the Scantic River, just above the "cook" (i.e. falls), and within sight of the Connecticut River, where Wonochoke ruled as sachem in another Podunk village called Nameaug.

This Pequot prince, whose name was Uncas, had a considerable number of followers who had left their original tribe, the Pequots, and had set up their camp on the Thames River, near Massapeag. He

had aspired to become chieftain at the death of Wopigooit, but lost in the election. His plan was to favor the English and oppose the Dutch and in order to outwit the Pequots, he proposed that the Podunks should join him in his undertaking.

Poxen was known near and far as the wisest councilor and through his influence the Podunk sagamores, excepting Ararramet, favored the plan.

When the first tract of land "Nawashe" was sold to the English, Ararramet, Natawanute and the venerable sachem Morheag and others, signed the deed but only Poxen, Wonochoke and Tantonimoh signed as "Mohegans," by which name Uncas' new tribe was known.

Soon, however, Tantonimoh, Wunnee's father, learned the truth about the scheme of Uncas whose only desire was to establish an Indian kingdom with himself as grand sachem, contemporary with an English government, and subdue all river tribes.

When Tantonimoh withdrew from Uncas' confederacy, Uncas hated him.

Uncas had visited the Narragansetts and laid his plans before them, but they would not listen to him. After many unsuccessful attempts to stir up a war party against the Pequots, he returned to Scanticook, where he found Wunnee, the daughter of his enemy, Tantonimoh, and Peter, her "pale face" sweetheart, whom he knew had been an outcast and for whom the Whites had offered a reward for his capture.

"Full-Moon-day" had come and Peter and Wunnee were married according to Indian custom by the Powow, who, it is said, after the ceremony made

a long speech of which only a few words were recorded.

The closing remark of the Powow was: "Wunnee, fair daughter of the bravest Sagamore, life shall be to you as pleasing as the eating of sweet fruit, but the fruit shall turn into bitterness before your years are many. Comfort will come again to you and will continue until your eyes close in eternal sleep."

In the meantime Uncas had received permission to return to his people, from Sassacus, and Poxen joined his tribe, bringing with him ninety Scanticook warriors and their families. This increase made Uncas more restless, proud and treacherous. He had promised Sassacus, on his return, to humble himself to the latter's authority. He knew he had received permission to return to his own country on condition of submission and good behavior. Yet the sly and treacherous Uncas planned the destruction of his own people, the Pequots.

As sachem of the Mohegans, he endeavored, first, to organize other tribes and destroy the Pequots. When this scheme failed his only hope was the friendship of the English. His first act to gain that friendship was to report secretly to them the hiding place of Peter at Scanticook, there still being a remnant of the tribe at this village who had refused to join Uncas.

Bailiffs were sent from Boston to bring in Peter Hager dead or alive. But, these officers of the law were obliged to pass through villages along the trail through the dense forest and their stern de-

meanor and many questions concerning Peter, aroused suspicion among the Indians.

An Indian runner brought the news to Peter before the Bailiffs arrived. This gave him time to escape with his Indian bride. Where they fled to and where they spent many years, could not be learned. It is assumed that they lived somewhere nearby and that Wunnee was in close touch with her mother constantly. Tantomimoh now lived at Hockanum, while Ararramet had his royal wigwam rebuilt on the same sandy knoll at Podunk where he and his forefathers had lived in the past.

There was a deserted village on a steep hill on the Hockanum River, in the wilderness eastward of the Podunk fort. The land had not yet been sold to the Whites and to this place the couple removed and lived unmolested for several years. Peter knew he was regarded by the English settlers as an outlaw and thus was in constant danger, so consequently he armed himself. The Indians furnished him with powder and ball which they managed to obtain from the Whites despite the law that forbade selling firearms to Indians.

One day white men were seen by Peter looking over the timber land and while they passed on apparently without noticing the wigwam on the opposite side of the hill, Wunnee thought it advisable to move to another place. A short distance eastward just off the main trail to Boston is a deep ravine, through which flows a brook which tumbles over a rocky cliff. Here they set up their home. Fish and lamprey were easily procured in attempts



The Squaw Cave, the home of Peter Hager and Wunnee-neetunah, at Bolton Notch, Conn.

to scale the falls. Deer came daily to drink, so the food supply never failed.

Here, too, were several sparkling fountains which supplied the purest water. The place was well known among the Podunks as a fishing place, where they caught, dressed and smoked salmon and lamprey every spring.

The news came that Uncas and his Mohegans were at war with the Wangunks, Saukiauks and the Tunxis, but that he had made a treaty of peace with Ararramet at Podunk.

A band of Wangunks appeared in the ravine and informed Peter the Mohegans were on their way to Podunk, with their families, and that the Wangunks wished to attack them at this place.

Peter and Wunnee had no choice in the matter; they quickly left and when they returned that evening they found that a fierce battle had taken place. They learned later how twenty squaws and children were killed during the battle, besides the many warriors slain on both sides.

During that night the couple removed their belongings farther east to a cave on the south side of a rocky mountain known as Wiashqua-ompsk-ut, and where their "Love's sweet Dream" ended.

Sad news was brought frequently from the Podunks. Uncas was soon friendly again with the Wangunks and had broken his treaty with the Podunks by making war with them. The Mohegans appeared on the opposite side of the Hockanum fort, where Tantonimoh was in charge. The Podunks defied them to cross the river and fight, but the sly Uncas saw that the Podunks were equally as

numerous as his own party, and so did not dare to attack but slunk away with his warriors.

The saddest news came to Wunnee when she was told how her dear mother had passed away and that a little while later her noble father, Chief Tantonimoh, had also entered into the Happy Hunting Ground.

The Podunks realized upon the death of Chief Tantonimoh that they had lost their bravest leader and warrior. He had borne the loss of one eye. Many scars about his head and body were also mute witnesses of the battles he had fought in defense of freedom, home and country.

Peter had now lived about thirty years as an outlaw but those years of ecstasy, though often darkened by danger, were to both but a flicker of time. They lived for each other, though in exile because of miscarriage of justice, yet life was a sweet dream, destined to end shortly and abruptly. They had met as mere children, lived under the roof of her father's royal wigwam as brother and sister until Cupid aimed his darts and penetrated two hearts which never failed to beat for each other until that Tyrant Death pressed his finger cold upon the slowly pulsing and bleeding heart of Peter. Nothing, only death, could tear them asunder.

There was no escape from exile, for the marriage law was strictly enforced in those early days of settlement. Uncas, who always schemed as to how he could please the English settlers, was in his heyday of supremacy, and the glory of his power seemed to dazzle the white people.

Wunnee understood Uncas' character. She knew

that he hated the sacred ground in which rested the last remains of her beloved father and that she, being all that remained of that family, at the first opportunity would become the victim of his treacherous soul.

Her people were dwindling away to other parts as the Whites became more numerous. Often her friends would secretly advise her to join them, but such advice was like daggers piercing her heart. She loved her own race with all her heart but loved Peter above everything on earth. Her only reply was: "I have surrendered my heart and soul to Peter. I am not my own, for I belong to him and he to me. We are one and cannot be divided except by death."

News came that far northward, in a section yet untouched by civilization, where the white men had not yet entered and had no jurisdiction, Podunks had settled and desired to have Peter and Wunnee join their band.

This proposition seemed good to both Peter and Wunnee. They were about to prepare to make the journey, planning to pass through the settled sections by night. Wunnee had filled two packs with food and was on the opposite hillside, southwesterly of the cavern, picking berries when suddenly she heard the discharge of muskets. A flash of clairvoyant vision arose in her mind—she sensed the truth. Rushing down to the trail she saw the footprints of strangers and among them recognized the footprints of Peter, with here and there drops of blood.

Poor Wunnee! The enemy of her father had

performed another dastardly act. Uncas and his men, who had come into the possession of the Pequot country after the annihilation of that tribe, were tracing the bounds of that territory, which were marked by heaps of stones. They came to Wiashqua-ompsk-ut, where the Pequots and the Podunks had each placed a heap of stones, side by side, many years before.

Silently they had observed Peter and Wunnee whose cavern home was just below the stone heaps. Again Uncas reported to the Whites that he had found Peter, the outlaw, living with his Indian wife in the cave "where the main trail goes through the Notch in the mountain, on the east side of the Connecticut River."

The reward for the capture of Peter, dead or alive, issued over thirty years before, had never been rescinded but it was not this reward which urged Uncas to report Peter. It was a desire to satisfy his revengeful soul against Wunnee and to please the Whites, so that he could gain more and more through his friendship with them.

The bailiffs who had been sent did not know Peter. They had heard the rumor among all the settlers, of a white man who had married a squaw after he had murdered a man on the way leading to Boston, and who as an outlaw and refugee from justice, still roamed through the wilderness.

It is possible that more than one unsolved crime had been ascribed as the act of the white outlaw, during past years.

Because of the many unfounded rumors concerning Peter, the bailiffs fired at the first sight of him.

Though fatally wounded, Peter had reached and entered the cave, while the bailiffs remained outside, fearing that Peter would shoot if any one attempted to enter.

They saw Wunnee approaching and planned to get Peter by stratagem. They thought if they could induce the "squaw" to enter the cavern, Peter would discharge his musket, believing that the bailiffs were entering; after which they would lay hold of him.

The bailiffs, knowing how well Indians liked the white man's "fire water," offered her a bottle of rum if she would enter the cave. Wunnee at once accepted the offer and rushing into the mouth of the cave, cried out to Peter in Indian language that it was she.

Alas, there was no need of warning Peter. When she had reached his side he embraced her and within another moment she felt that the strength of his once powerful arms was weakening. She spoke to him softly but he answered not.

She gently called to him: "Peter! Peter, speak to me. Speak, if but a single word." She felt his head slowly moving in her arms as he whispered his last words. Their lips met,—it was the last kiss.

For several days the bailiffs guarded the entrance of the cave, for the "squaw" had not come out. At last they entered only to find the cave empty.

Wunnee had dragged the body of Peter through a narrow neck within, which led to a larger chamber and from thence to a secret alley opening on the other side of the mountain. Here she hid the body until friends assisted her in bringing it to Podunk

where Peter sleeps, in the royal burying ground with the father and mother of Wunnee, and all other sachems and their families of the Podunk tribe.

Love's dream was over, and Wunnee had tasted the bitter fruit of mortal life, as was predicted for her by the Powow on her wedding day.

THE END OF LIFE'S TRAIL

The story of the great love between a white man and an Indian woman had spread over the entire country and had caused many hearts to beat faster in sympathy with poor Wunnee.

The knowledge that she was a princess and heir to much land still remaining unsold to the white settlers, impelled many to extend their sympathy by offering her a home.

However, among the white settlers there lived at Windsor a couple whose hearts had been beating as one for more than 50 years. They possessed, besides material goods, a wealth with which only few mortals are blessed—the spiritual wealth of love and happiness.

This highly cultured old couple offered to Wunnee the comfort of their own large mansion, in a true spirit of love and charity and to mend if possible a heart that was broken.

Here Wunnee served as a maid in an atmosphere to which her soul was so acclimated, dreaming of

days that were and longing for the day to come when she would meet Peter in that great Hunting Ground somewhere in the Southwest, which Peter had called Heaven.

Again and again visions of the past arose before her. She saw Peter as a Dutch sailor boy. She saw him as a brother in her father's house and as a trembling supplicant when he revealed the contents of his heart to her. She saw him as he struggled with the men on the Boston path, defending her honor and that of her mother. She saw him beside her as a bridegroom when the Powow pronounced them man and wife.

The dreadful sound that reverberated through the forest when the leaden missile was sent on its way to Peter's heart, pierced her ears continuously. She saw him in her arms when his spirit fled. She heard his last words: "Waaseil, my Wunnee, waaseil." She felt his last embrace when she answered him for the last time: "Hawunsuch"—(farewell).

Time passed, and both her benefactors were laid to rest in the village churchyard. Her last act in so far as it is known is recorded in the Hartford Land Records. She, and two other Podunk women, Woarokiesquas and Seutaubrisk, sold all their land in Podunk to Richard Burnham, Jr., the son of Thomas, in the year 1673.

She had now passed the venerable milestone of three score and ten and her soul yearned more and more to pass on to that higher plane where sorrow is unknown.

To one highly respected and beloved by all, and who had gained the admiration of the white people because of her serene composure with which she bore her grief and recollections, the Summons came which released her lovely soul from its earthbound dwelling, to unite it with her people and her beloved Peter in eternal bliss—nevermore to part.

Mathew Grant, town clerk of the Town of Windsor, recorded her death with a few words.

We have seen that her royal name was Wunnee-neetunah and how it had been abbreviated to Wunnee. During the later years of her life she was known as Wunn and so the town clerk mistakenly wrote: "One Hager." *

She had left a small estate which was used to pay for her burial and with which funds her friends erected a tombstone over her grave.

The inscription on it read:

"Here lyes
One Hager, a squaw.
Podunk princess rest
While the Conne-tic-ut flows;
Thou shalt rise again
When Gabriel's trumpet blows."

* In Mathew Grant's "Old Church Records" of ancient Windsor we read: "May 23 [16]76. Account of persons that have died—to begin:" (there follow the names of those who died during the years 1640 to 1647). "On this [In these] 7 years above the persons died are 32." Mr. Grant actually records thirty-three names including "One Hager." Since Wunnee died in 1674, not in 1644 as it appears, it is obvious that the grand old recorder erred when he copied the original papers in 1676 and compiled his priceless volume which has been a source of much precious information since.

A STRANGER APPEARS

It was in the year 1674. The Dutch had relinquished their claims in Connecticut and New Amsterdam. In fact, the whole province of New Netherlands was ceded to England and Anthony Clove was Governor of New York, formerly called New Amsterdam.

John Winthrop was Governor of the Colony of Connecticut and Dutch traders were seen no more along the river and the coast. The English settlers had established an extensive trade with England and other countries. The little settlements had grown into towns and prosperity smiled upon the new colony.

In the summer of that year there arrived at Hartford an old man accompanied by his daughter, Mrs. Hunter. The white-haired old gentleman was none other than Captain May, who, after retiring as a seafaring man, had lived with his widowed daughter. She had married an Englishman and continued to live in England after the death of her husband.

She had listened to her father for many years as he told and retold his adventures in America, especially about Peter, his cabin boy, who had married an Indian girl.

Anxiously wondering what had taken place since last he had heard of Peter's having been ostracized into exile, Captain May proposed to cross the Atlantic once more.

He was nearing his ninetieth birthday but his rugged cheeks still reflected the strength of man-

hood which he had so conscientiously built up during his younger days.

Mrs. Hunter had never been farther away than England, and was not fond of making long voyages, but because of her father's advanced age, decided to escort him to America.

They sailed from England to New York where he was amazed to see what had been a small settlement consisting of a few log cabins, changed into a flourishing town.

From New York he sailed to Hartford where he was equally astounded to see the progress which had been made. He recalled the old days when there was not a single building along the river and when the only indication of any habitation to be seen occasionally, was the smoke of an Indian wigwam.

Now much forest had been cleared away. Farm houses and an occasional church spire came into view as he gazed about. He at once inquired for Peter Hager and was soon informed at the courthouse of how Peter had been fatally wounded by bailiffs, according to information received from the Indians.

The matter was closed years ago, the judge said, so he could give no further information.

"There are," continued the judge, "a few old Indians still living in Podunk and these may give you the information you desire."

The captain hired a shallop and the service of two men to sail to Podunk. There he met Thomas Burnham, Jr., who owned much of the Podunk land. He went with Captain May to the wigwam of an old

Indian who remembered the captain. This Indian told Captain May all he wished to know.

Peter, the Podunk said, is buried a short distance down the road and Wunnee, who died only lately in Windsor, just across the river.

The Indian led the captain and his daughter to the royal Podunk burying ground and pointed out Peter's grave. There was a red sandstone neatly cut and inscribed: "Peter Hager."

The stone appeared new and when the captain mentioned this fact the Indian explained how Wunnee had sold her land just before she died and had the stone erected, paying for it when she had received the money.

For a while the three stood at the grave in silence. It was evident that inwardly the captain fought to suppress his emotion. Silently they stood until a tear flowing down his cheek betrayed his grief. His daughter took him by the arm gently and led him away.

The Indian related all he had learned about Peter and Wunnee as the group walked back to the shallop on the river bank. Captain May thanked the Indian and dismissed him, giving him as they stepped into the boat, a few silver coins for his kindly service and information.

When they arrived at Windsor, it seemed to the captain that everyone had known Wunn and all knew her grave. The captain was followed by a train of villagers as he proceeded to the village church-yard which was but a few minutes' walk away. This "God's acre," as the captain called it, is located on the north bank of the Farmington

River on the site of the palisade erected by the white settlers when they feared the Indians would avenge injustices done to them in all parts of New England.

Wunnee, like many of her people who had outlived their organized tribe and who had remained in the vicinity, was laid to rest in a Christian cemetery. Her grave was among negro slaves in a corner of the graveyard. Usually no records were kept regarding their nationality.

About these unmarked graves, Dr. Henry R. Stiles, in his history of "Ancient Windsor" says (Vol. 1, p. 488, edition of 1859): "In every New England village church, the darkies have a corner in the gallery, and another in the village graveyard, where ant hills and tangled vines and weeds struggle for the honor of bedecking their humble and un-honored graves."

An Indian slave was not as valuable in the slave market as a negro, because that proud spirit which (due to consciousness of being a native and former proprietor of all the land) could not be easily broken or subdued. Yet, both races were classified as "servants" or slaves, which classification brought about many mixed marriages between them. After death such couples were interred side by side, in a corner of the graveyard.

The Spartan soul within the old Dutch sea captain, as he stood motionless at Wunnee's grave, tempered by old age, could no longer keep his stoical mind under control. His heart sank and tears revealed the emotional struggle within.

Looking about, and seeing the crowd assembled

around the grave, the old man feelingly spoke as follows: "Would that future generations could see us as we are gathered here at this sacred shrine of Love. Soon the grave of Wunnee-neetunah and that of Peter Hager across the river shall be forgotten, but their love for each other, sown with seed of immortality, shall be remembered by mortals till the end of time. Their love shall never die. She was an Indian, he a white man, but true love knows not race or creed.

"Her people welcomed us white folks with open arms. They gave us a new world while they were passing from the stage to oblivion. Their gift to civilized man will always remain a priceless heritage to future generations. Their hospitality to the white foreigners who invaded their land, was repaid by injustice. It is this same hospitality and greatness of character in their dealings with the white race when they first appeared upon the scene, that will become their contribution to history and their legacy to the whole world.

"The days will come when humanity will honor the sacred memory of the Indian, and the white man will offer retribution for the many wrongs which resulted from a stern administration of justice practiced by his forefathers against the aboriginals of America.

"Future generations will recognize the virtues then common among the children of the forest, and an undying memory will bear testimony to the sacredness of their love to their fellowman.

"You see that I am an old man. I came to note down and preserve the details of the life of Peter

and Wunnee. I am as a link between an older and younger generation. Yes, I am a living witness to testify here before you of the many favors I received from the Indians.

"I came here when the bloom of youth was still upon my cheeks. I came for many years and traded with the river tribes. I traveled with them through the deep forest; I lived with them many days at a time, but in all that time I did not see a single wrong committed by any of them against me or my men. I treated them as I expected them to treat me. I was honest in my transactions; so were they in theirs. I kept my promises and they never failed in theirs. All our dealings were honorable.

"I have seen the reverence they have shown to the aged and the great affection they possessed for their children; their keen sense of justice and high notion of honor. I have seen them in sorrow while tears were flowing down the cheeks of warriors as well as of women as they all sat around the graves of their departed loved ones. I have heard their prayers to the Great Spirit daily and yet my people call them Skrelings, which is the equivalent to your English word savages.

"No, dear people, I could not rest until I returned to Connecticut so that, with the help of my daughter, I could in some way perpetuate the memory of my former cabin boy, Peter Hager, and the noble character of Wunnee-neetunah and her people."

Among the crowd were many who told how they had heard Wunnee relating her life's story, all of which details the captain's daughter carefully noted down.

Several very old persons who had lived near Podunk during the earliest days were interviewed by the captain. They had known Wunnee's father and mother and supplied much information.

After being entertained at the tavern, the captain and Mrs. Hunter walked down to where the highway forded the stream and where the shallop was anchored. In a few minutes they were on their way southward, headed for Hartford. There they soon embarked for New York where Captain May intended to look up old Dutch friends who had come over on his ship and settled on Manhattan Island.

CONCLUSION

No mention was made of any offspring of Wunnee-neetunah and Peter Hager, excepting statements by one elderly lady. She in later years claimed that Wunnee had had at least one son who had been brought up by Wunnee's mother. This son was said to have left with several hundred other Podunk warriors to join King Philip in his war against the white people. It was believed that none of these ever returned. The Podunk warriors were with King Philip's men at Turners Falls, Mass., when they were surprised by Captain Turner and John Mason and nearly annihilated in two engagements.

Wunnee never mentioned a son, so far as is

known. Perhaps she feared to mention him because the boy's father was considered an outlaw, and the son would be enslaved on that account. When King Philip's war whoop was heard reverberating throughout the forest, Wunnee had already passed away.

However, when she lived at Windsor, she was visited by Indians. Among them was one man who seemed devoted to her to the last. He came one day to visit her and when told she had passed away, he asked where she was buried. After being told, he was seen going to the graveyard where he was observed for several hours, as he sat by the grave. No one seemed to recognize any traces of mixed blood, but it is possible that this was the son of Peter and Wunnee, taking the Indian features from his mother and none of the fair complexion of his Dutch father.

History informs us what happened to King Philip's warriors who surrendered when the war ended. Many were shot, others were shipped out and sold into slavery. If Wunnee's son was living among other Indians, he could never reveal his identity as a Podunk, for he knew what would await him if found out.

We know nothing more about him, but among Eastern Nehantic Indians living in Rhode Island and among those who claim Indian ancestry in that vicinity, there are to this day families by the name of Hager. They know little or nothing concerning their genealogy, and have never undertaken the task of tracing their descent to find the progenitor of their family. Three hundred years have passed

and the ancient tombstones in the old village churchyard at Windsor lie crumbled in decay.

In East Hartford, at the junction of Main street and Ellington road, where King street (once the trail to Agawam) leads over "Pirate Hill," is the site of the royal Podunk burying place, where Peter Hager lies interred. Here nine skeletons were unearthed when excavations were made a few years ago. Each was over six feet in length. It is evident that they were the remains of Indian chiefs. The teeth in all were in excellent state of preservation and none showed decay.

It is possible that Peter's remains still lie undisturbed in that field over which the plowshare had passed each year since Indian days.

The tombstones were cleared away many years ago, so there is nothing remaining of this loving pair except the entry "One Hager" made by Mathew Grant in the vital records of the town of Windsor. There is also the sacred memory cherished by students of history and those who delve into Indian lore.

The cavern home of Peter and Wunnee-neetunah now faces a newly constructed highway at Bolton Notch and is still known as the squaw cave.

The name as it came down to us seems to substantiate the belief that few white folks, if any, ever knew that Peter lived there, for he was ever on the alert. His Indian wife was known by many of the white squatters who had settled in the vicinity on land, without any title and against the will of the original proprietors of Hartford.

The land on which the cave is located has been

purchased by the State of Connecticut and is now classed among the state parks.

The interior of the cave leads into a narrow neck which is now impassable. Tradition has it that this narrow channel once led into a large chamber from which a passage extended to an opening on the other side of the mountain, as we have already seen.

Many have attempted to reach the larger cavity but to date none has succeeded. Should future efforts result in success, our imagination can only picture the precious relics which would reward the finder.

The cave is visited by thousands of people annually. Among them are those who hear an inward voice calling for a halt in the constant misrepresentations about the Indians of New England in history. That voice calls for justice and pleads for full credit for the contribution made by the Indians to civilization in America.