“Take due notice of us for the future”
Native Americans and Williams College

On view in the Chapin Gallery, February-May 2017

The Log, a Williams campus gathering space, reopened after renovations in the Fall of 2015. With the reopening came scrutiny to a mural prominently featured on its walls. The mural, painted by Stanley Rowland, depicts Colonel Ephraim Williams Jr. and Mohawk leader Hendrick Peters Theyanoguin on the day they were killed in a 1755 battle of the French and Indian War – a day that is closely tied to the founding of the college almost four decades later. The campus community examined and criticized the mural for its depiction of Hendrick and his fellow Mohawks, and his relationship to Colonel Williams. Some considered the representation of Native people in the mural to be stereotypical and inaccurate, creating an alienating environment for a diverse student body. In this exhibit, Library Special Collections contributes to the campus-wide dialog sparked by the Log mural, and brings this historic context to the relationship between “Eph” and Hendrick, and between Williams College and Native peoples. Library collections reveal the presence of Native Americans in eighteenth-century real estate transactions with Mohicans, in the cornerstones of the college’s rare book collection, and in the persistent tradition of “playing Indian.” By displaying documentation of the many ways in which Native Americans are represented at Williams, we invite viewers to “take due notice” of Native history and of Native presence (and absence) in the campus community today.

The exhibit title is excerpted from an address given by Hendrick Peters Theyanoguin to colonial governors at the Albany Congress of 1754. Hendrick, engaging in a dialog with James De Lancey, Governor of the Province of New York, regarding responses to disputes over colonial occupation of Mohawk land, states “we are much obliged to [Governor De Lancey] for his promise to direct [the Commissioners of Indian Affairs] to take due notice of us for the future, that he will try them of one year longer, and for giving us leave to acquaint this Government, if they do not treat us as Brethren.”

Who are the Mohicans?
When the college was founded in 1793, local Native Americans had experienced over a century and a half of interactions with colonial Europeans. Economic changes due to trade, the reverberations of war and the transmission of disease resulted in massive demographic changes and migrations as refugee communities relocated, rebuilt, and endured. The terminology used over the centuries to refer to Indian people of the Hudson and Housatonic regions is various and sometimes reflects a lack of understanding of the complicated relationships among rapidly-changing villages and tribes. Today’s Williamstown is located on Mohican land, and the Mohican people have been variously referred to as Mahikanak, [Hudson] River Indians, Housatonic Indians, Mahicans, or (incorrectly conflating them with a Connecticut tribe) Mohegans. Today, the Mohicans are a federally-recognized tribe in Wisconsin, having been removed from Stockbridge to Oneida, NY, in 1785, and from there to Wisconsin in the 1820s. The Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohicans established a Historic Preservation office in Troy, NY, in 2015, protecting Mohican cultural sites in their homeland of the Hudson Valley and Western Massachusetts. More information can be found at www.mohican.com.

Lisa Conathan, Head of Special Collections
West Hoosac town plan, 1751
College Archives: Gift of R. H. W. Dwight.

This plan from 1751 identifies Ephraim Williams Jr. as the owner of two adjacent lots (numbers 8 and 10). The lots were sold by the Provincial government of Massachusetts via a lottery in 1752, though many of the initial purchasers traded or sold their lots shortly thereafter. The founding of the town of West Hoosac, later known as Williamstown, was planned as part of a commission by the Massachusetts General Court, motivated to assert their claim to the area by Dutch colonial settlement (actual and potential) encroaching from New York. In 1739 Thomas Wells of Deerfield submitted a memorial to the Massachusetts General Court regarding such encroachment, and encouraged the Court to commission a survey. Ephraim Williams Sr. carried out the initial survey with Wells, though the plan on display resulted from a second survey that followed shortly after.

Stockbridge real estate contract, 1767
Chapin Library: Gift of Mr. & Mrs. A. Douglas Spicer, 2004.

A contract between five Mohicans and two English colonists demonstrates the complexity of eighteenth-century American land transactions. In the deal documented here, the Mohicans accept a sum of ten pounds in New York currency on the condition that they will pursue a legal claim to a parcel of land that is in disputed territory, and will then sell the land to the English signatories if they are successful in their claim. The tract of land covered by this agreement is bounded by the border with Connecticut to the south, and the Hudson River on the west, the town of “Kukonnuck” on the east, and “Ranslers patten” on the north. Documents such as these reveal the many layers of legal agreements that resulted in the transfer of land ownership from Mohicans to English colonists.

Ephraim Williams Jr. will, 1748 version
College Archives.

This early version of Ephraim Williams Jr.’s will conveyed all of his Stockbridge real estate to his brother Thomas (whom he designated executor) on the condition that he provide an annual sum for “promoting & propagating Christian knowledge amongst the Indians at Stockbridge.” The Williams family was intimately associated with the Stockbridge mission and was one of the principal English landowning families of the town, which was founded with the purpose of integrating Indians into English colonial life. This early version of Ephraim’s will was superseded by the later version of 1755, in which he abandoned plans to support the Stockbridge mission school and instead provided for the “Support and maintenance of a free school in a township west of Fort Massachusetts.” His support of the school was contingent upon the town being named Williamstown, and remaining within the jurisdiction of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, reflecting the anxiety of the time about finalizing the border between Massachusetts and New York.

Letter from Ephraim Williams, Jr. to Israel Williams, 1755 July 21
College Archives: Gift of R. H. W. Dwight.

A letter from Ephraim Williams Jr. to his brother Israel shortly before Ephraim’s death in 1755 reveals his concern for the “Stockbridge Indians in which my honored father [Ephraim Williams Sr.] was left in charge.” He assumes a level of responsibility for the fate of the Stockbridge Indians, viewing them as charges of his father. “By no means let them be wronged in any way,” he implores his brother. His concern may seem to be at odds with the fact that revisions to his will removed a provision to support an Indian missionary school. This change of plans to focus instead on a school in West Hoosac likely reflects political conflict with Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), minister at Stockbridge from 1751 to 1758. Edwards and the Williams family clashed over
many aspects of local governance in Stockbridge, and Williams would not have wanted his support to go to a school overseen by Edwards.

**Items belonging to Colonel Ephraim Williams, 1755**
*College Archives: Gift of R. H. W. Dwight.*

An inventory of the belongings Colonel Ephraim Williams kept with him while traveling, conducted shortly after his death on September 15, 1755, in Lake George, includes a “pair of Indian shoes beaded.” Whether he wore these shoes is unknown but given the fact that he took care to travel to battle with them, we can surmise they were of significant use or value to him. Other items in his chest included a beaded belt (possibly also of Indian manufacture), a French bearskin coat with white metal buttons, and a book of psalms.

### Rowlandson, Mary, 1635-1711
*A true history of the captivity & restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson…*
*London, sold by Joseph Poole: 1682*  
*Chapin Library: Gift of Alfred Clark Chapin.*

### Williams, John, 1664-1725
*The redeemed captive returning to Zion*  
*Boston, printed and sold by John Boyle: 1774*  
*Chapin Library: Gift of Alfred Clark Chapin.*

American captivity narratives of the eighteenth century comprise a distinct literary and ethnographic genre that reveals colonial views of Native people, often as savage and alien. These narratives were widely read in the Colonies and in Europe, and contributed to the popular understanding of Native culture, as they purported to offer an intimate view of Native people. The first of these to become a sensational best seller was the memoir of Mary Rowlandson, who was taken captive with her three children during King Philip’s War in 1675.

John Williams’s captivity narrative, originally published in Boston in 1707, provided an account of his capture by the Mohawks after the Deerfield massacre of 1704 in which several members of his family perished. Williams was held with dozens of other captives in Quebec for over two years. When he returned to Massachusetts with four of his children, his daughter Eunice stayed in Quebec, having been adopted by a Mohawk family. Eunice later converted to Catholicism, took a Mohawk name and lived the remainder of her life in the village of Kahnawake with her Mohawk husband and their children, causing immense pain to her English family. *Redeemed captive* made John Williams famous in colonial Massachusetts and was reprinted many times. The story of the Williams family of Deerfield, including the fear of capture by Indians and the extraordinary efforts at redemption, would have been a familiar and frequent topic of conversation for Ephraim Williams Jr. and his family.

### Hopkins, Samuel, 1721-1803
*Historical memoirs, relating to the Housatunnuk Indians*  
*Boston: 1753*  
*Chapin Library: Gift of Alfred Clark Chapin.*

*Diary and letter*  
*College Archives: Gift of the Hopkins Family*

Samuel Hopkins (1721-1803), great uncle of Mark Hopkins (Williams College President from 1836 to 1872) and abolitionist theologian prominent in the Second Great Awakening, wrote his memoir to relate the “Rise and Progress of Christianity” among the native people of the Stockbridge mission during the time when John Sergeant (brother in law of Ephraim Williams Jr.) was pastor. Hopkins’s work demonstrates the depth of commitment to Indian missions among the families of individuals who were formative in Williams College history. Hopkins’s diary and correspondence document his visits to Stockbridge, where he preached to Indians living in the mission town and visited with John Sergeant circa 1744.
Jonathan Edwards (1745-1801) spent the formative years of his childhood at the Stockbridge mission, where his father Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), the renowned theologian, was minister from 1751 to 1757. In this seminal publication of American linguistics, Edwards makes tentative comparisons between the Native languages of New England and Hebrew, an exploration meant to test the theory that Native Americans are “of Hebrew, or at least Asiatic extraction.”

Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute

Twenty two years’ work of Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute.
Hampton, Virginia: Normal School Press, 1893
College Archives: Gift of Samuel A. Scoville in memory of Louise Armstrong Scoville.

Start, Edwin A.

“General Armstrong and the Hampton Institute”
College Archives: Ex libris Gorham Dummer Gilman.

Photographs of Samuel Chapman Armstrong
College Archives: Gift of Margaret Howe and Samuel Scoville.

Samuel Chapman Armstrong (Williams 1862), with other leaders of the American Missionary Association, founded the Hampton Institute in 1868 to educate African American freedmen. A decade later the school established a program for Native American students, housing dozens of Indian children in their Hampton, Virginia, campus. Mary Antone, a ten-year-old girl from Oneida, Wisconsin, home of the refugee Mohican community, was among them. The report on Mary does not indicate whether she was Mohican, Oneida, or a member of another tribe. A later publication includes a photograph of Native students, who came to Hampton from all regions of the United States.

Photographs of Freshman Parade
College Archives: Gift of Howard E. Coe.

Candid photographs of freshman parades from the 1920s reveal a history of Williams students “playing Indian,” a persistent tradition in American culture that has its roots in the colonial era and continues today. Participants in the parade include “Eph Williams” walking side by side with an “Indian Maiden,” followed by several men dressed in Indian costume.

Williams Record, December 9, 1939
College Archives

The student-authored Record article from more than a decade later responds to media coverage that focuses on the Indian play elements of an event in which Williams and Bennington College students staged a reenactment of a 1746 attack on Fort Massachusetts. Newspapers routinely used racial slurs in their coverage of the incident – “Redskins and Cops Stage Second Fort Mass. Battle,” read a headline in the North Adams Transcript. The stereotypical Indian cultural elements used to frame the “raid” on Fort Massachusetts reveal that, though Mohican people were conspicuously absent from twentieth-century Williams, the idea of the Indian as a cultural icon was close at hand.

Portrait of Hendrick Peters Theyanoguin
College Archives: Fisher Howe Collection.

The Mohawk chief and warrior whose fate was tied to that of Ephraim Williams Jr. (they died in the same Battle of Lake George on September 8, 1755), was known by both his English name Hendrick Peters and his Mohawk name Theyanoguin. Though the caption was clearly posthumous (referring to his death in a battle with British General Sir William Johnson), it claims
that the drawing was “from life.” This depiction confirms contemporary observations that Hendrick wore European style clothing, in contrast to the depiction in the Stanley Rowland mural, which shows Hendrick wearing Native clothing.

**Stevens, Arendt, 1702-**  
Letter to Governor George Clinton (retained copy), 1746.  
Chapin Library: Purchase, 2016.

Arendt Stevens, an interpreter of Mohawk and English heritage, writes to the Governor of New York George Clinton in 1746 regarding strategy for enlisting the aid of Mohawks in war against the French. Stevens refers to the opinion of “Henrick” i.e. Hendrick Peters Theyanoguin, who perished with Ephraim Williams Jr. in the battle of Lake George in 1755. Stevens’s own brother Jonathan was also killed in the same battle. Hendrick was a prominent Mohawk leader whose opinion would have held significant weight with Governor Clinton. Since there is no surviving documentation indicating that Chief Hendrick was literate, secondary clues such as are contained in this letter provide scarce contemporary evidence of Hendrick’s beliefs, as conveyed by Stevens.

**Blodget, Samuel, 1724-1807, artist**  
**Johnston, Thomas, engraver**  
*An Explanation of the prospective plan of the battle near Lake George.*  
Boston: Printed by Richard Draper, 1755.

Samuel Blodget (1724-1807), serving as sutler in William Johnson’s force, learned the particulars of Ephraim Jr.’s ambush from soldiers who had survived the battle. According to Blodget’s account, Hendrick “was dressed after the English manner. He only was on Horseback because he only could not well travel on Foot, being somewhat corpulent as well as old. He fell in this Fight, to the great Enragement of the Indians, and our loss; as he was a very good Friend to the English, and has most Influence to keep the Mohawks so.” When Blodget returned to Boston, he had his sketches of Ephraim Jr.’s engagement and the battle at Lake George engraved by Thomas Johnston, and his explanatory notes printed by Richard Draper. Blodget announced in the Boston Gazette, that the plan exhibited "to the eye a very lively as well as just representation" of the two engagements. Jefferys referred to the print as "the only piece that exhibits the American method of bush fighting."

**Canedy, Charles R.**  
*The trail of the Mohawk*  
College Archives.

The Mohawk Trail, a Massachusetts state highway that connects North Adams to Charlemont, opened in June 1914. Charles Canedy, photographer for the *North Adams Transcript*, was the first to drive a passenger car over the Mohawk trail, while it was still under construction. He and family members operated a souvenir gift shop along the mountain pass. Among his wares was presumably this locally printed guidebook that features an Indian clad in a loincloth and blanket smoking a pipe. Images such as this situated the highway in a narrative progressing from Indian wilderness to modern Anglo-American society in which the wilderness is enjoyed as a tourist experience.

**Rowland, Stanley J., 1891-1964**  
“Ephraim Williams before the battle at Lake George,” sketch. Circa 1942.  
College Archives.

**Photographs taken in the Log**  
College Archives.

Artist Stanley Rowland (born in Shelburne Falls, MA, 1891) painted a fictionalized account of Ephraim Williams, Hendrick Peters Theyanoguin, and others planning an assault on Lake George in
1755, that would come to be known as “The Bloody Morning Scout.” Both Theyanoguin and Williams perished in the battle. The mural was installed at a time when the United States was on the brink of entering the Second World War, in which many Williams students served. This sketch exhibits several notable differences from the final painting, including the manner in which the Native participants are dressed. In the final version of the mural more of their bodies is exposed, adhering to a common representation of Native bodies as naked in contrast to European ones. Candid photographs of a reception during Commencement in 1957, and of students drinking beer in the 1980s provide a sense of the atmosphere at the Log (previously known as the Alumni House).

Eliot, John, 1604-1690 (compiler)
Mamusse Wunneetupanatamwe Up-Biblum God
Cambridge Mass.: Printed by Samuel Green and Marmaduke Johnson, 1663
Chapin Library: Gift of Alfred Clark Chapin.

Claesse, Lawrence (compiler)
The morning and evening prayer

Claus, Christian Daniel, 1727-1787 (compiler)
A Primer, for the Use of the Mohawk Children
London: C. Buckton, 1786.
Chapin Library: Gift of Alfred Clark Chapin.

Works in native languages comprise a cornerstone of today’s Chapin Library collection. Alfred Clark Chapin acquired his first rare books after antiquarian bookseller James F. Drake showed him this presentation copy of the Eliot Bible in 1915. Chapin went on to acquire approximately 9000 rare books, donating them to the College to found the Chapin Library in 1923. The Eliot Bible is a monumental work compiled and translated by missionary John Eliot with Massachusetts Indians over the course of 14 years, and first printed in in 1661-1663. It was the first Bible printed in North America, and it was printed entirely in the Massachuset language. The Bible is a testament to a time when English missionaries needed to learn Native languages in order to preach to Indians. Only a few decades later, religious texts were more commonly produced in English or in bilingual editions. Today, Massachuset-speaking tribes are using the Eliot Bible and other seventeenth-century works to aid inreviving knowledge of their heritage language. Among Chapin’s other acquisitions, included in his founding gift to the Chapin Library, are religious texts in Mohawk and Montagnais (Innu-aimun). Christian Daniel Claus, a Commissioner of Indian Affairs and Loyalist during the American Revolution, was acquainted with Hendrick Peters Theyanoguin, and learned the Mohawk language from him, among others.

Adriaen van der Donck, circa 1618-1655
Beschryvinge van Nieuw-Nederlant
Amsterdam: Evert Nieuwenhof, 1656
Chapin Library: Gift of Alfred Clark Chapin.

Adriaen van der Donck (circa 1618-1655), a Dutch colonial lawyer and landowner, recorded the fullest seventeenth-century ethnographic account of Mohican and Mohawk Indians, A Description of New Netherland, first printed in 1655. Like many ethnographers, van der Donck assumed that Indian people and customs would soon disappear; he wrote “so that when the Christians shall have multiplied [in New Netherland], and the Indians melted away, we may not suffer the regret that their manners and customs have likewise passed from memory.” Colonists also used ethnographic observations to justify the seizure of land, claiming that Native concepts of land ownership were irrational in contrast to European ones. The Mohican territory that would become northwestern Connecticut and Berkshire county was not well known by European settlers at the time of van der Donck, as evidenced by the conflations of the Quinnipiac and Housatonic rivers in his map. The circular sign, located at the source of the Housatonic, represents a large Mohican village in the vicinity of present-day Stockbridge.
Wood, William, active 1629-1635
*New England's Prospect*
Chapin Library: Gift of Alfred Clark Chapin.

Josselyn, John, active 1630-1675
*New England's rarities discovered*
Chapin Library: Gift of Alfred Clark Chapin.

William Wood spent four years in New England (circa 1629-1633) observing the Puritan colonial endeavor. Wood’s account was generally positive, encouraging migrants to make the journey from England and settle in the New World. He included practical advice to prepare prospective settlers for the travel and labor of establishing themselves. The latter part of the book was devoted to the Indians of New England, including the Mohawks to the west, who are described as “cruell and bloody” cannibals, “sometimes eating on a man one part after another before his face, and while yet living.” He judges other groups, especially those to the east and south (with whom he was likely more familiar), to be less fearful.

John Josselyn wrote a second description of New England’s natural history almost four decades later. Like Wood, Josselyn placed description of New England’s Indians alongside its natural resources such as birds, beasts, fish, and medicinal plants. Josselyn reprints a “coppy of verses made sometime since upon the picture of a young and handsome Gypsie,” repurposing the ode as a tribute to a Native woman.

Cooper, James Fenimore, 1789-1851
*The Last of the Mohicans*
Gift of Clarence W. Bartow (Williams 1931).
College Archives.

James Fenimore Cooper’s famous novel drew inspiration from events that contextualize Williams College history. Set in 1757 during the French and Indian War (two years after the death of Ephraim Williams Jr. at the battle of Lake George), the novel featured a captivity narrative that drew upon John Williams’s *Redeemed captive*, among other eighteenth-century memoirs. This illustration depicts the capture of protagonists Duncan Heyward and Cora and Alice Munro, as they were “dragged from their shelter and borne into the day, where they stood surrounded by the whole band of the triumphant Hurons.” The novel’s portrayal of native people contributed to the popularization of the stereotyped stoic, noble Indian. Cooper’s conflation of the Mohicans of the Hudson Valley with the Mohegans of Connecticut (the title character’s name, Uncas, is Mohegan) contributed to popular confusion of these two tribes. *Last of the Mohicans*, in its title and narrative, reflected nineteenth-century views that Indians were remnants of the past and that their culture had given way to that of colonizing Europeans. In the words of Tamenund, a Delaware (Lenape) character inspired by a historic figure, “the pale-faces are masters of the earth, and the time of the red-men has not yet come again...."