

Wyandank

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North American

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From Brooklyn Heights, or Ihpetonga, “highplace of trees,” where the Canarsie Indians made wampum or sewant, and where they contemplated the Great Spirit in the setting of the sun across the meeting waters, to Montauk Point, Long Island has been swept by the wars of red men, and many are the tokens of their occupancy. A number of their graves were to be seen until within fifty years, as clearly marked as when the warriors were laid there in the hope of resurrection among the happy hunting grounds that lay to the west and south.

The casting of stones on the death-spots or graves of some revered or beloved Indians was long continued, and was undoubtedly for the purpose of raising monuments to them, though at Monument Mountain, Massachusetts, Sacrifice Rock, between Plymouth and Sandwich, Massachusetts, and some other places the cairns merely mark a trail. Even the temporary resting-place of Sachem Poggatacut, near Sag Harbor, was kept clear of weeds and leaves by Indians who passed it in the two centuries that lapsed between the death of the chief and the laying of the road across it in 1846. This spot is not far from Whooping Boy's Hollow, so named because of a boy who was killed by Indians, and because the rubbing of two trees there in a storm gave forth a noise like crying. An older legend has it that this noise is the angry voice of the magician who tried to slay Wyandank, the "Washington of the Montauks," who is buried on the east end of the island. Often he led his men into battle, sounding the warwhoop, copied from the scream of the eagle, so loudly that those who heard it said that the Montauks were crying for prey.

It was while killing an eagle on Block Island, that he might use the plumes for his hair, that this chief disclosed himself to the hostiles and brought on a fight in which every participant except himself was slain. He was secretly followed back to Long Island by a magician who had hopes of enlisting the evil ones of that region against him,—the giants that left their tracks in "Blood-stone Rock" and "Printed Rock," near Napeague, and such renegades as he who, having betrayed his people, was swallowed by the earth, his last agony being marked by a stamp of the foot that left its print on a slab near the Indian burial-ground at Kongonok.

Failing in these alliances the wizard hid among the hollows of the moors, and there worked spells of such malice that the chief's hand lost steadiness in the hunt and his voice was seldom heard in council. When the haunt of this evil one was made known, a number of young men undertook to trap him. They went to the hills by night, and moved stealthily through the shrubbery until they were almost upon him; but his familiars had warned him of their approach, though they had wakened him only to betray him for a cloud swept in from the sea, fell about the wretch, burst into flame, and rolled back toward the ocean, bearing him in the centre of its burning folds. Because of the cry he uttered the place long bore the name of Whooping Hollow, and it used to be said that the magician visited the scene of his ill-doing every winter, when his shrieks could be heard ringing over the hills.

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