

# CULTIVATING THE PAST

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*Essays on the History of  
Hadley, Massachusetts*

EDITED BY

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*University of Massachusetts Press*

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# 1

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*Alice Nash's interest in the history of Hadley is both personal and professional: she descends from the Nash family that helped launch the seventeenth-century colonial town of Hadley, and herself moved to the Pioneer Valley in 1999, when she joined the faculty at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Among other things, she found here opportunities to extend her long-standing interest in the Native Americans of New England to the town of her ancestors. The community of scholars engaged in Native American studies around the university is substantial and thriving, and Nash's essay is closely related to the two that follow: Siobhan Hart, Elizabeth Chilton, and Chris Donta's survey of the pre-contact era, and Ed Hood and Rita Reinke's report on the town's fortifications. As all of these authors note, they are indebted to archaeologist Dena Dincauze, whose research has influenced many scholars in the region.*

*Like many of the essays in this volume, Nash's begins with a moment of pastkeeping, when longtime local historian Dorothy Russell introduced her to an iconic document in Hadley's history, one that immediately engaged her curiosity. Her study of Quanquan's mortgage contributes to a larger conversation in the study of that first period of contact between English and Dutch migrants and the Native communities already settled in the area. Historians have focused attention on competing conceptions of property ownership and land use; Nash's close attention to the language of the document reveals a far more complex exchange than popular historical imagination, and even some scholarly inquiries, generally admit, and opens a view on those early, tentative encounters between two very different peoples.*

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## *Quanquan's Mortgage of 1663*

Alice Nash

SOMETIME IN THE FALL OF 1999 I sat drinking tea in the home of Dorothy Russell of Hadley, an old family friend and the locally acknowledged expert on all aspects of Hadley history. Dot, as I knew her, was pleased to hear that I had recently been hired as a faculty member in the History Department at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. In a sense, I was coming home to a place where I had never actually lived. The Nashes, like the Russells, go back to

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the original settlement of Hadley. Although I hated history in school, whenever I visited Hadley I loved digging through the attic of the old family homestead on Mt. Warner Road, where my paternal grandfather, Herman B. Nash, was born and where his younger sister, my great-aunt Helen E. Nash, lived until the mid-1980s. Aunt Helen's attic shaped my abiding belief that the stuff of history persists in private hands as much as in museums and archives. But even I was surprised by what came out of Dorothy Russell's closet.

After dispensing with family news, I talked about my interest in seventeenth-century Indian deeds. These documents from early New England are a rich source of information on the process through which English colonists acquired land and the indigenous inhabitants lost title in the English sense, although many continued to live on and around their original homelands. Because they record the names of the men and women who signed away land and the relationships between them, and they include careful descriptions of physical landmarks that often use Native terms and place-names, Indian deeds open up a window through which we can glimpse a world in the midst of far-reaching change. Dot listened and asked a few questions, then said, "You might be interested in seeing this." She went to a closet, rummaged around, and brought out something framed under glass. I gasped. It appeared to be a genuine seventeenth-century deed, complete with a red wax seal. On closer inspection it turned out to be a mortgage, not a deed per se—a significant detail that will be discussed below—dating from 1663. It recorded a transaction in which Quanquan, one of the sachems of the land that came to be known as Hadley, mortgaged the place he called Mattabaoug to Zachariah Field for the sum of twenty-two pounds. This debt, secured by the land, was to be repaid in a period of time variously noted in the document as either thirty or three hundred years. Quanquan's mortgage now resides in the vault of the Hadley Historical Society.<sup>1</sup>

The document (shown in figure 1.1) is difficult to read in several ways. The handwriting is unfamiliar to modern eyes, as is the spelling. Curlicues and flourishes abound, and words are abbreviated with superscripted letters. A number of corrections have been added, with crossed-out text amended by tiny script squeezed in between the lines. Beyond these technical matters, however, the content and context of the mortgage require a certain amount of explanation.

Let us begin by reading the text in its entirety. The following is lightly edited for easier reading: abbreviations are spelled out in full, spelling is modernized, and minimal punctuation has been added.

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This present testifies that I, Quanquan, being the true, right and proper owner of a place and piece of land commonly called and named by the





Indians Mattabaoug, being a piece of land that was excepted and reserved by him for his use as his own property and his proper right and use and to be in his power to make use of and to dispose of [if] he please, this piece of land was reserved and excepted when Mr. John Pynchon purchased the land for Hadley men. This parcel of land is thus bounded lying against the great river westerly lying against a hill that is Hadlies men somewhat like a half moon easterly running into a river called by the Indians *Won nac eag comasuck* northerly lying against a piece of meadow southerly. Which parcel of land with all the appurtenances thereunto belonging the aforesaid Quanquan for himself and heirs and successors doth engage, mortgage and make over unto Zachariah Field, Senior, of Hadley in the County of Hampshire in the Colony of this Massachusetts Bay for his heirs, executors and assigns for the time and term of ~~three hundred years~~ thirty years, to be fully & completely ended and expired for the sum, value and worth to be paid in good beaver or such current pay as is equivalent to it of twenty-two pounds. I, the said Quanquan, acknowledge the receipt and payment thereof. In witness to the said promises the said Quanquan hath hereunto set his hand and seal the third day of July Anno Domini 1663. So it is agreed that at the end of the aforesaid three hundred years the heirs and successors of the said Quanquan are to pay to the heirs and assigns of the said Zachary Field the sum of twenty-two pounds. Witness my hand and seal this day and year above written.

Subscribed, sealed and recorded

in the presence of

William Jeanes

the mark of Richard Weller

Joshua Carter

the mark of Quanquan

the mark of Chickwallop<sup>2</sup>

the mark of Soxus

May 8, 1663

To summarize: this document is a mortgage, not an outright sale of land. Quanquan is the “true, right and proper owner” of a place called Mattabaoug that he held back when he sold the rest of his land on the east side of the Connecticut River to John Pynchon “for Hadley men,” that is, for the town of Hadley. He is borrowing or receiving credit from Zachariah Field, Senior, of Hadley to the value of twenty-two pounds, which he promises to pay “in good beaver” or other currency equal to that amount. The loan period is unclear. The first mention of a repayment period says “three hundred years,” which is crossed out and amended to thirty years. The second mention specifies that “at the end of the aforesaid three hundred years,” the heirs and successors (that is, descendants) of Quanquan will pay the sum of twenty-two pounds to the heirs and successors of

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Zachariah Field. Quanquan placed his mark on the document. On the original, it looks like an EKG line, zigzagging in an echo of script. Curiously, there is no mark or signature for Field. The transaction is witnessed by William Jeanes and Joshua Carter, who sign, and by Richard Weller, Chickwallop, and Soxus, who make their marks.

The documents known as Indian deeds are English legal forms adapted to a New World context.<sup>3</sup> They mark the uneasy recognition by New England colonists that imperial assertions of land ownership had little meaning to the people who already lived there. European nations such as England, France, and Spain based their claims to colonial empires in the New World on the Doctrine of Discovery, a legacy of the Crusades, which held that vacant lands could be claimed by the Christian nations that discovered them. Significantly, “vacant” encompassed all lands inhabited by non-Christian peoples. Other recognized ways to acquire territory were by purchase, by conquest, and by cession. Colonists in New England quickly realized, however, that they needed to stay on friendly terms with the local inhabitants, and that waving a piece of paper from the king of England was not a convincing argument. On April 17, 1629, the New England Company sent these instructions to the governor and council of Massachusetts Bay: “If any of the salvages pretend right of inheritance to all or any part of the lands granted in our patten, we pray you endeavor to purchase their tittle, that wee may avoyde the least scruple of intrusion.”<sup>4</sup> Five years later, the General Court at Boston modified that statement, requiring that the purchase of Indian lands be approved by the Court and that every town (and later, every county) keep a record book. In the *Nolwottog* (accent on the second syllable) homeland, John Pynchon and his agents were the ones authorized to negotiate the purchase of land from local sachems.

The historian Francis Jennings dubbed these efforts to establish legal title to lands in New England “the deed game,” a great swindle in which hapless indigenous people were systematically deprived of land, subsistence, and sovereignty.<sup>5</sup> Jennings made the important point that English colonists were more concerned with a performance of legitimate title that would be respected by both English neighbors and other European nations than with justice in the sense of fairness. More recently, scholars such as Emerson W. Baker, Peter A. Thomas, and Jean M. O’Brien have added important clarifications to Jennings’s insight. Baker, who studied Indian deeds in early Maine, argued persuasively that deeds are a critical source of ethnohistoric data because they document a face-to-face negotiation between the parties and illuminate how each understood the terms of the resulting agreement.<sup>6</sup> While the indigenous peoples of New England did not have the same conception of property ownership as the English, they quickly

figured out what the English meant. This is reflected in the many deeds both in Maine and in the Connecticut River Valley in which the Indian sellers retain the right to hunt, fish, gather nuts, plant corn, and even erect their wigwams on the lands being sold. In Baker's capable hands, deeds become a window into seventeenth-century social relations, political and physical landscapes, the dynamics of family leadership, and gender relations. The Indian grantors named in them are people recognized by the tribe or family group as having a right to speak for others. To avoid later problems, the deeds were often witnessed by siblings who shared a claim in the land, or by neighboring sachems or sagamores whose territories bordered on the land being sold, to signify their approval and consent.

It is clear from the work of Peter A. Thomas that several factors affected the willingness of indigenous peoples to sell land. In some cases epidemics, such as the smallpox that swept through the Connecticut River Valley in 1635, had a devastating effect. The extremely high mortality rate meant that there was more room for newcomers.<sup>7</sup> The people of Agawam (Springfield), Woronoco (Westfield), and Nolwottog welcomed the English as allies against their enemies and as a direct source of trade goods. The fur trade flourished from the 1630s to about 1660, and Native leaders enhanced their prestige by acquiring and redistributing items such as cloth, metal pots and tools, and wampum. All too soon, however, it became clear that the English were coming in increasing numbers, and that land sales meant imminent if not immediate dispossession for themselves and for future generations. The beaver population declined after 1660, making it harder to pay off debts. Pynchon and his agents circumvented the laws regulating land purchases by issuing credit, secured by a deed of mortgage, then claiming the land as a just forfeit. Jean M. O'Brien's study of Natick, in eastern Massachusetts, makes it clear that this pattern was common across New England.<sup>8</sup> There is a qualitative difference between the early deeds based on relative equality and the later deeds that represent forced sales by Native peoples drawn into a burgeoning global market. Quanquan's mortgage of 1663 is a good example of the link between the fur trade and land loss. To understand it more fully, however, it is important to know a bit more about what it meant for Quanquan to be described as a sachem of Nolwottog.

The Nolwottog homeland encompasses land on both sides of the Connecticut River. Ethnohistorian Gordon M. Day describes the region as a "linguistic and ethnographic no-man's-land" because of the scarcity of written source materials to document lifeways during the early contact period.<sup>9</sup> It stretches north from Springfield, its boundary roughly corresponding to the break between Hampden and Hampshire counties, and includes the present-day towns



of Northampton, Hadley, South Hadley, and Hatfield. The earliest Nolwottog deed, dated 1653, is for land on the west side of the river, purchased for Northampton. It is signed by three men described as sachems, or leaders: Nenessahalant, Nassicohe, and Chickwallop, who is also known as Wawhillowa. The first two names do not appear on later deeds, although it is possible that the same men may have signed under other names.<sup>10</sup> The third sachem, Chickwallop alias Wawhillowa, continues to appear on deeds, and I will say more about him below. Four other people are named as “proper owners,” that is, people with a claim to the land recognized by both the Indians and the English as legitimate, although they are not sachems. They are Kiunks, Paquahalant, and Assellaquompas, all men, and Awonunske, the wife of Wulluther. Awonunske herself is listed as an owner, rather than her husband; it is not clear whether she inherited this status from her mother or her father, as both situations appear in deeds from this region.

Nolwottog is also known in the literature as Norwottock and Nonotuck, with orthographic variations on the three names. The 1653 deed calls the place Nonotuck.<sup>11</sup> This is not a misspelling. The Algonkian languages spoken by indigenous peoples in New England have three major forms, or reflexes.<sup>12</sup> The most obvious difference to the nonspecialist is that one uses *n* where the others use *l* or *r*. John Eliot, the Protestant missionary, wrote, “We in [eastern] *Massachusetts* pronounce the N; the *Nipmuck* Indians pronounce L; and the *Northern* Indians pronounce R.”<sup>13</sup> Similarly, the endings *-ogg* or *-og*, *-ock*, and *-uck* are all variants of a locative ending, indicating that the word refers to a place. When documents were written by Englishmen who knew the land and its people well, such as John Pynchon and the fur traders who worked for him, they wrote *Nolwottogg*, because that was what they heard.<sup>14</sup> Nonotuck, the *n* form used in the 1653 deed, is an historical remnant, reflecting a kind of internal colonialism. When Englishmen such as John Pynchon and his father, William, first began to buy inland tracts in the Connecticut River Valley, they often hired the services of Native men from eastern Massachusetts as interpreters and to aid in the negotiations. The earliest interpreter, a Wampanoag man named William Ahhaton,<sup>15</sup> understood the dialect spoken by the people of Nolwottog, but he pronounced their name as Nonotuck. The name was written as Ahhaton pronounced it. Although John Pynchon later recorded the name as Nolwottog, the alternate spelling persists to this day. Ironically, the Nolwottog have been better known by what others called them than by what they called themselves.

In December 1658, “the Indians of Nolwottogg” sold a second large tract of land, this time on the east side of the Connecticut River, to John Pynchon, who was acting as agent for the inhabitants of Hadley. There is an obvious tension in the deed as Pynchon tried to reconcile the reality of collective ownership by

“the Indians of Nolwotogg” with the need to create a legal fiction of individual ownership, or of individuals with the authority to sell land on behalf of everyone else. He identified three men as sachems of Nolwottog, “ye sole and proper owners” of the land: Chickwallop alias Wawhillowa, Umpanchela alias Wonscom, and Quanquan alias Wompshaw, in that order. As payment, the deed specified that Pynchon gave them 220 fathoms of wampum, a large coat worth 8 fathoms of wampum for Chickwallop, and other gifts and considerations. The coat suggests that Chickwallop was the senior statesman in the group; heavy cloth coats in red or blue were sought-after markers of status among Algonkian leaders. The 1658 deed clearly says that Quanquan retains ownership of “one corne field about twelve, sixteene or twenty acres of Ground,” and gives a careful description of its location and boundaries.<sup>16</sup> Quanquan seems to be claiming this land as an individual, but Peter Thomas calculates that the reserved land would have supported sixty to a hundred people for eight to ten years.<sup>17</sup>

These terms suggest a more complex understanding of land and boundaries than one might expect, given the prevailing modern belief that Native people had no concept of individual land ownership at this time. Clearly, deeds such as the 1658 sale of Nolwottog land by three sachems speaking on behalf of a larger group exhibit the principle of collective ownership. But Algonkians also had a concept of individual property based on use. The land belonged to everyone, or, more accurately, everyone belonged to the land, but some people had a greater stake in one place over another because of their relationship to the land through use. This held true even if people were not living on the land at a particular moment. The Nolwottog, like other Algonkian peoples in the Northeast, followed a seasonal round of movements within a defined area. They might leave for a while, or even for a generation, after some kind of trauma, but other Native peoples knew that this did not constitute emigration in the European sense. Within the larger Nolwottog homeland, certain places were associated with particular people. The cornfields at Mattabaoug were one such place. Quanquan was also recognized as having a claim to land on the west side of the Connecticut River in present-day Hatfield (which was part of Hadley until 1670), bounded by lands belonging to Umpanchela and his people.

Why, then, did Quanquan agree to mortgage these cornfields to Zachariah Field in 1663, especially when he still owned a tract of land on the west side of the river that was not sold until after his death?<sup>18</sup> There is little data about Quanquan’s participation in the fur trade and how exactly he became indebted to Field, although we know that Field was active as one of Pynchon’s agents from 1661 to 1666. During this five-year period Field brought in 343 pounds of beaver pelts. Compare this to the 2,903 pounds of beaver brought

in by David Wilton over seven years (1663–1670), or the 3,662 pounds brought in by Joseph Parsons between 1654 and 1667.<sup>19</sup> Field was such a minor player that in lieu of purchasing a license he paid a fee of three shillings per skin.<sup>20</sup> Still, Field must have started with bigger dreams. In 1661 he was awarded seventeen pounds owed to him by John Webb of Northampton, probably for trade goods, as Webb was even less successful in the business.<sup>21</sup> There is no record of what goods Quanquan (and likely his relatives) bought in racking up his debt of twenty-two pounds. After Zachariah Field's death in 1660, the Probate Court tried to examine his account books, which were "Soe badly written, and the accounts therein Soe doubtfull," that they gave up.<sup>22</sup>

Other records shed light on how Quanquan might have acquired this debt and why he chose to mortgage the land to Field in particular. There were two ways for Indians to be trapped by debt during this period: to accept goods on credit in anticipation of a successful season of hunting and trapping, or to become enmeshed in the English legal system by breaking English laws, for which the punishment might include jail time, whipping, fines, or all three. For example, in 1636 Cuttonis, the "owner" of lands at Agawam (Springfield), together with his mother, Kewenusk, and others, sold land on both sides of the Connecticut River to William Pynchon, reserving for themselves the right to plant corn in their own fields, to hunt and fish, and to gather nuts. In exchange they received wampum, coats, hoes, hatchets, and knives—all in all a positive, reciprocal transaction. Cuttonis and his people continued to live in the area, but their situation changed as the English population increased. As we will see, in 1661 Cuttonis and five other men mortgaged their remaining land at Agawam to Samuel Marshfield in exchange for goods already received, but they could not produce the necessary goods on time and Marshfield took possession of their land.<sup>23</sup>

A second example hits even closer to home because it concerns Umpanchela, another sachem of Nolwottog. Umpanchela was a man who seemed comfortable with his new English neighbors. A deed shows that in July 1657 he, as an individual, sold a piece of land to the town of Northampton in exchange for the sum of thirty shillings, paid by John Webb. As noted above, Webb was one of the least successful agents working for Pynchon. A year later, in September 1658, "The Indian Sachem Umpanchela" complained to the court at Northampton that he had been cheated. He acknowledged making his mark on the deed but insisted that he understood the price to be fifty shillings, not the thirty-six he had actually received. The court decided in his favor.<sup>24</sup> This successful resolution may have encouraged Umpanchela to engage in further transactions with the English, as he was the first to sign the Hadley deed of December 1658.<sup>25</sup>

John Pynchon's account books tell us that during the fifteen-month period

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from September 1659 to December 1660 Umpanchela incurred substantial debts. On twenty occasions he bought cloth, mainly red shag cotton but some blue cloth as well as a single purchase of white. He also bought clothing: one pair of stockings, a blue waistcoat, two shirts, two pairs of breeches, and seventeen coats. Other purchases—all on credit—included a kettle, two guns, and seven knives. Umpanchela's account includes a small fine for drinking alcohol.<sup>26</sup> As a sachem, part of his status and prestige among his own people came from his ability to take care of others and to demonstrate his ability to act in the world. Trade goods allowed him to do that, whether he was wearing them, trading them, or giving them away.

On September 14, 1660, Pynchon made a notation in his account book that Umpanchela owed him three hundred fathoms of wampum for all of these goods received, and "So much I Ingaged to him for his land at Nalwotogg." This land on the west side of the Connecticut River was purchased for Hadley, and Pynchon immediately applied for reimbursement.<sup>27</sup> The actual transaction had taken place two months earlier, on July 10. The price paid for the land is given in the deed as "three Hunderd ffatham of Wampam in hand pd Besides severll other small gifts." Umpanchela specifically held back his planting ground, together with the right to hunt, fish, gather wood, and set wigwams on the commons. Pynchon was perhaps hoping to limit these rights to Umpanchela himself and not his people, for the deed specifies that all of the cornfields will belong to the English after Umpanchela's death, except that "ye Indians" will continue to enjoy the use of "ye old planted Ground in Wequetayyage and Down to ye Brook Cappowongseate alias Mattoolanick."<sup>28</sup> The last place-name, Mattoolanick, is intriguing because it is a variant of the word for a ritual specialist, imperfectly translated as "shaman," together with a locative ending. There may have been more than cornfields at stake. Further evidence that this was not solely an individual transaction for individual debts is the fact that the deed is cosigned by Umpanchela's brother, Etowomp, with a statement that he recognizes, approves, and witnesses the sale. The land did not belong to Umpanchela as an individual, even though his name was on the debt and the deed.

However much Umpanchela wanted to retain these planting grounds, he continued to accumulate debt in Pynchon's account books, which made his land vulnerable under English property law. Near the end of September 1660, Pynchon "trusted" Umpanchela for a fancy coat worth five fathoms of wampum, for which Umpanchela pledged "4 or 5 little Indian fields" or else "some of his old Indian Corne fields" from the land set aside. Two weeks later, and once again in December, Umpanchela incurred a debt for expensive coats, although this time Pynchon noted that the actual purchaser was Etowomp. The pressure mounted through

December as Umpanchela bought four more red coats, four knives, and a gun, and agreed to be responsible for two coats purchased on credit by “an Indian called Wuteallatssun.”<sup>29</sup> This was a period of tension between the Nolwottogs and their neighbors, the Mohawks to the west and the Narragansett and Mohegan to the south, and it may be that Umpanchela was engaged in diplomacy and needed these items as gifts. By the end of December, without even a minimal period allowed for possible repayment, Pynchon noted in his account book that he had purchased all of Umpanchela’s reserved land for Hadley.<sup>30</sup> The formal deed is dated January 17, 1660/1, and is signed by Umpanchela and Etowomp. With their title safely in hand, the inhabitants of Hadley agreed to give Umpanchela five acres of land within the boundaries of his formerly reserved lands. They also agreed to fence it and plow it if needed for the first year.<sup>31</sup>

Indians could get into debt even without buying trade goods by being fined for a wide range of behaviors if they were within the jurisdiction of an English town. This became an increasing problem after 1660. For example, in 1662 two men, Pagamunt of Pocomtuck and Awasshaws, were fined ten shillings each for being drunk, a behavior not criminalized in Native society.<sup>32</sup> In 1674 a man named Wellawas found himself in a similar situation. Since he was a “knowne Indian,” as opposed to being a stranger, the Court granted him the favor of eight days in which to pay the fine. If he defaulted, he would be whipped ten times.<sup>33</sup> Sachems sometimes took responsibility for these debts. In 1674 Nowattassome and Wepuck were arrested for stealing a trap from Timothy Cooper. John Pynchon ordered them to return the trap and pay a fine of twelve fathoms of wampum. Three men, including Wequagen alias Wulluther, the husband of Awonunske of Nolwottog, came forward to guarantee that this would be done, and the men were released.<sup>34</sup> By 1663, when Quanquan mortgaged his cornfield, he must have known that owing money to the English, and especially to John Pynchon, could lead to the loss of his land under English law. Perhaps he hoped to do better when he chose to do business with Zachariah Field.

Zachariah or Zechariah Field was born in Yorkshire, England, in 1596. He arrived in Boston in 1629 and lived for seven years in Dorchester. In 1636 he moved to Hartford, then a new town on the Connecticut River. He fought with other Hartford men against the Pequots in 1637. A few years later Field married Mary Stanley, and in 1659 they moved up the river to Northampton. There, according to one biographer, he “had a large trade with the Indians,” a doubtful statement given the evidence from Pynchon’s account books.<sup>35</sup> By 1663 he was living in Hatfield, then still part of Hadley.<sup>36</sup> There is nothing about his life, from what remains in the historical record, that suggests any reason why Field and Quanquan should have any type of relationship whatsoever, positive or

negative. Nothing sheds light on the strangest and most puzzling element in the 1663 mortgage: the clause that gives Quanquan and his descendents the right to redeem the mortgaged land by repaying the debt of twenty-two pounds in full within three hundred years. Even a period of thirty years, as corrected, is remarkable.

Other mortgages from this period specify limited repayment terms. For example, in September 1660 Amoakussen alias Nacogewallant of Woronoco mortgaged a parcel of land to Ensign Thomas Cooper of Springfield, one of Pynchon's top agents, as surety for his debts in the amount of twelve pounds. Amoakussen and his wife, who also put her mark on the document, agreed to repay the debt within twelve months or forfeit their land.<sup>37</sup> In April 1661 Samuel Marshfield, another of Pynchon's subtraders, acquired a mortgage from Cuttonis, Coo, Mattaquallanant, Menis, Wallny, and Tagnalloush of Springfield, who promised to repay their debts in beaver, if they could get it during the summer, or corn, or in wampum at a rate of six fathoms paid for every five fathoms owed. If these resources failed, they might pay him with moose, otter, or deer skins at a reasonable rate of exchange, or, as a last resort, he might keep their guns. They promised to repay the debt by "Michelmas next ensuing the date hereof," that is, by the end of September that same year. In May 1662 Joseph Parsons of Northampton acquired a mortgage on Hockanum, a part of Hadley, from Wequagon (also known as Wulluther), his wife Awonunske, and their son Squompe. They owed him eighty beaver skins in exchange for coats and wampum and other goods that they had already received and promised to pay the debt by September 5 or forfeit the land. In each of these cases, the Indians lost their land. When the mortgages became deeds of sale, the amount paid might be given in vague terms such as "for good & valluable considerations," as noted in Amoakussen's deed of 1664.

It is possible—just possible—that Zachariah Field and Quanquan negotiated the terms of this mortgage as a strategy to help Quanquan hold onto the land. We know that Quanquan also had land on the west side of the Connecticut River in present-day Hatfield, and they may have already known each other, even traded with each other. There is no evidence that Field made an effort to take the land, as did his peers Thomas Cooper, Samuel Marshfield, and Joseph Parsons in the cases cited above. In truth, Field could have used the income. He collected a debt of seventeen pounds owed to him by John Webb in 1661.<sup>38</sup> He sold land to William Olcott in 1661, to Richard Goodman in 1662, to James Pringridays in 1664, and to Goodman again in 1665.<sup>39</sup> Yet when he died on June 30, 1666, Field left so many debts that his creditors received only a portion of what they were owed and his widow, Mary, had to make do with "a bed & Some

other Small necessarys for her Livelyhood” valued at just under £10.<sup>40</sup> The largest creditor, John Pynchon, received the biggest portion because he held a mortgage signed by Field that gave him the house, barn, and homelot, as well as “severall other tracts of land,” worth about £178.<sup>41</sup>

The mortgage is also unusual among the group cited above for the 1660s because it is witnessed by Chickwallop, one of the other sachems of Nolwottog. As Baker has demonstrated for deeds from Maine, these additional signatures generally indicate that the person in question—in this case, Chickwallop—has some right or interest in the disposition of land. In some but not all cases this means that the signer is entitled to a portion of the payment.<sup>42</sup> Chickwallop's presence adds gravitas to this transaction.

I have not been able to identify Soxus, the third Indian to sign the deed, although it is likely that he is somehow connected to the land. William Jeanes of Northampton, the first of the English signers, was a Clerk of the Court and therefore present in an official capacity.<sup>43</sup> Richard Weller, who signs with a mark, is a marginal figure from Windsor, Connecticut, who, like Field, made his way up the Connecticut River. They may have been friends. Weller and Field were both made freemen at Northampton on January 31, 1663.<sup>44</sup> The last signer, Joshua Carter, was engaged to Zachariah Field's oldest daughter, Mary. They were married in Northampton on October 6, 1663.<sup>45</sup>

Two absences among the signers are worth noting. The first is Zachariah Field himself. One can only speculate as to what this might mean. The second is that no one from Quanquan's family is mentioned. If Field had formally taken possession of the land, it is quite likely that others would have been brought in to add their confirmation and approval, as when Umpanchela's brother Etowomp added his mark to Umpanchela's individual land sales of 1660 and 1661.

We know of Quanquan's family because they came forward after his death to sell his remaining land in Hatfield. That deed, dated October 19, 1672, describes the sellers as “Sarah ye wife of Quanquan Sachem late deceased & Pocunohouse ye Son of Quanquan ye Indian Sachem & Mattabaug Squa & Majesett daughter of ye sd Sachem & Momecouse Indians.”<sup>46</sup> As is typical of this period, the document contains little punctuation, making it difficult to decipher the family relationships. In one reading, Quanquan leaves three children: a son, Pocunohouse, and two daughters, Mattabaug Squa and Majesett. The daughters may be the children of a second wife named Momecouse, or Momecouse may be a husband or other interested party. Another possible interpretation is that Quanquan had three *wives* rather than three children. In this reading, Sarah is recognized by the English as Quanquan's legal (legitimate) wife, perhaps because she is the oldest and presumably the first; she may have been a Christian,

— -1  
— 0  
— +1

or someone who had close relationships with the English and therefore used an English name. In this reading, Pocunohouse is the son of Quanquan and a woman named Mattabaug Squa. Majeset (also written as Muessett) is the daughter of Quanquan and Momecouse, also known as Memewatts. The existence of these three wives would of course have posed a dilemma for the English, who came from a legal tradition that emphasized the transmission of property through a man's "legitimate" heirs, defined through a specific legal paradigm of patrilineal inheritance and serial monogamy.

The possibility that Mattabaug Squa was Quanquan's wife rather than his daughter is heightened when we go back to the mortgage and see that the land in question is "commonly called and named by the Indians Mattabaoug." Allowing for differences in transliteration, this is the same word. *Squa* (\**skw*) is actually a suffix that indicates that a person is female. It is part of the name, which should be written as one word: Mattabaugesqua, or woman from Mattabaoug. She would have had other names for other contexts, but in this instance it suggests that she may be more closely tied to this particular piece of land than Quanquan, and that his status as "true, right and proper owner" of it is a result of their marital alliance. Algonkian-speaking peoples sometimes identify women by the name of their husband with the \**skw* suffix attached to the man's name. We see this at the end of the 1672 deed: Sarah makes her mark as Sarah Quanquan Squa (Quanquansqua), meaning "Sarah, Quanquan's wife" rather than "Sarah Quanquan, [a] squaw." This suffix is the origin of the English word *squaw*, meaning "woman" or "wife" in regard to Native women.<sup>47</sup> Writing her name in this way underscores Sarah's position as Quanquan's (legitimate, by English law) wife.

The confirmation of the deed offers further information. Hatfield paid fifty fathoms of wampum for Quanquan's land on October 19, 1672. About five weeks later, on November 25, Sarah "and her Son Pacanohouse" acknowledged the receipt of additional goods, mainly cotton cloth, equivalent to twenty-seven fathoms of wampum.<sup>48</sup> Although they are described as mother and son, it may be that this was a convenient fiction for either or both parties to the transaction. The English needed a wife and legitimate heir to complete the deal; Sarah and her family needed the goods or perhaps the goodwill that they gained from the sale. Where were they in 1663, when Quanquan signed his mortgage with Zachariah Field?

Whether or not Field intended to honor the terms of the mortgage, or whether he claimed the land but failed to register the deed, the executors of his estate counted the land as part of his worldly goods after his death in 1666. Hadley paid the estate of Zachariah Field ten pounds in 1667 for "ye land yt Zach. ffeild bought of ye Indians." This is the land mortgaged by Quanquan in 1663. Less than a



decade after Quanquan signed his first deed with the English, Hadley claimed it all. What did Hadley do with the land?

When Dorothy Russell first showed me the Quanquan mortgage, she said that it was a deed for the land near her home on River Road in North Hadley, and that it was originally used to support Hopkins Academy, the public school in Hadley that was founded in 1664.<sup>49</sup> I began to look for more information and found that Sylvester Judd, in his *History of Hadley*, agreed. In his discussion of the 1658 Hadley deed he wrote: "The corn-field of 12, 16 or 20 acres, reserved in the foregoing deed, was sold to Hadley in a few years. It seems to have been a part of the upper School Meadow."<sup>50</sup> Indeed, on January 14, 1666/7, six months after Zachariah Field died, the land specified in Quanquan's mortgage became part of the "School Meadows," or land granted by the town of Hadley to support a grammar school. A note by Peter Tilton in the margin of the original record says: "These 2 meadows—one the round neck of land; and the little long meadow that was reserved by the Indians in the first sale, and afterwards purchased by itself."<sup>51</sup> In subsequent decades, part of the land was leased to the miller at Mill Brook and the remainder was leased or harvested for income to support the school. The corn mill on this site was burned by Indians in 1677, during King Philip's War.<sup>52</sup>

Over time, the land passed into private hands, although the site of the original corn mill still belonged to Hopkins Academy as of 1964, on the 300th anniversary of the school and the Hopkins Trust.<sup>53</sup> During the spring of 1904 Lyman P. Bullard, a farmer plowing his tobacco field in North Hadley, turned up some bones. Shortly thereafter the site was excavated by Charles Willoughby, archaeologist and director of the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, who found skeletons of two adults and a child of six or seven years old. Harris Hawthorne Wilder, a professor at Smith College in Northampton (discussed, together with other local archaeologists, in an essay by Hart, Chilton, and Donta in this volume), identified the site as the place where Quanquan had his cornfields and presumably a village. Wilder soon made his own arrangement with the owner of the field and spent two weeks in October 1904 digging up two more skeletons.<sup>54</sup> He returned in November 1915 to try his luck again. This time he used a new technique for excavating the skeletons, which were buried in fetal position rather than laid out on their backs. He cut into the earth around the skeletons and moved everything intact to his laboratory at Smith. He then carefully cleared the dirt and took photographs.<sup>55</sup> The remains of seven to eight Nolutwotog people excavated from Quanquan's land by Wilder were never returned to the earth. They were part of Wilder's collection at Smith College until

they were moved to the University of Massachusetts Amherst sometime between 1960 and 1980, where they remain in storage, classified as “Nonotuck.”<sup>56</sup>

Quanquan’s mortgage is a jewel in the collection of the Hadley Historical Society. It embodies, in a single page, the layered reality where history and the present intersect, reminding us that what we can see with our own eyes, dig up from our fields, or store in our closets and archives may be just the starting point for uncovering a much more complex history—one that began long ago and reverberates to this day. The document raises more questions than it answers. We learn that men like Quanquan and Zachariah Field participated in the fur trade, but neither got rich, and in fact both lost more than they gained. What brought them together and what did they hope to achieve? We see Quanquan as part of an extended family and community, but did he have one wife or three, and where did they go after selling their lands? Where is Quanquan buried? What responsibility do we, in the present, bear to the people whose bodies have been dug up from the lands we live on, and to their descent communities? Quanquan’s mortgage of 1663 reminds us that Hadley’s history begins, and continues, in Nolwottog.

## NOTES

1. Mortgage, Quanquan to Zachariah Field, 1663. Hadley Historical Society, Hadley, Mass.
2. The name is spelled “Chequallopp” in the manuscript but standardized herein as Chickwallop.
3. Roy Wright, “The Quanquan Deed as Artifact,” *Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies Newsletter*, Autumn 2003, 8.
4. Quoted in Harry Andrew Wright, ed., *Indian Deeds of Hampden County* (Springfield, Mass.: [n.p.], 1905), 7.
5. Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 128–45.
6. Emerson W. Baker, “‘A Scratch with a Bear’s Paw’: Anglo-Indian Land Deeds in Early Maine,” *Ethnohistory* 36 (1989): 235–56.
7. Peter A. Thomas, *In the Maelstrom of Change: The Indian Trade and Cultural Process in the Middle Connecticut River Valley, 1635–1665* (New York: Garland, 1990).
8. Jean M. O’Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees: Indian Land and Identity in Natick, Massachusetts, 1650–1790* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
9. Gordon M. Day, “Historical Notes on New England Languages,” in *In Search of New England’s Native Past: Selected Essays by Gordon M. Day*, ed. Michael K. Foster and William Cowan (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), 103.
10. The people of Nolwottog, like other Algonkian-speaking peoples in the region, were commonly referred to by multiple names during their lives. In some cases these are proper names, perhaps given to honor life passages or significant milestones. Others may be either nicknames or descriptive terms, such as “so-and-so’s wife” or “my son,” that denote personal relationships.

11. Wright, *Indian Deeds*, 26–28.
12. Ives Goddard, "Introduction," in *Languages*, ed. Ives Goddard, vol. 17 of *Handbook of North American Indians* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1996), 4.
13. John Pickering, ed., "A Dictionary of the Abenaki Language in North America," *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, n.s., 1 (1833): 571.
14. Harry Andrew Wright, "Some Vagaries in Connecticut Valley Indian Place-Names," *New England Quarterly* 12, no. 3 (September 1939): 536. In modernizing spelling, I write *Nolwottog* instead of *Nolwottogg*, as it is written in the 1663 document, because the *-ogg* ending is archaic (much as we would write *dog* today, even though Pynchon and his contemporaries would have written *dogg* or *dogge*).
15. Ahhaton, a Christianized Wampanoag Indian from southeastern Massachusetts, was the interpreter for the first Springfield deed of 1636. He is listed there as "Ahaughton an Indian of the Massachusetts [people]." Wright, *Indian Deeds*, 12.
16. *Ibid.*, 33–35.
17. Thomas, *In the Maelstrom of Change*, 322.
18. This land is mentioned as a boundary for land sold by Umpanchela in Hatfield in January 1661 (Wright, *Indian Deeds*, 44); it was sold by Quanquan's family in 1672 (*ibid.*, 76–77).
19. Thomas, *In the Maelstrom of Change*, 281–85.
20. Carl Bridenbaugh and Juliette Tomlinson, eds., *The Pynchon Papers*, vol. 2, *Selections from the Account Books of John Pynchon, 1651–1697*, Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, vol. 61 (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1985) 120.
21. Joseph H. Smith, ed., *Colonial Justice in Western Massachusetts, 1639–1702: The Pynchon Court Record* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), 249.
22. Hampshire County (Mass.) Probate Court Records (microfilm, Holyoke, Mass.: New England Archives Center for the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum), reel 1 (vols. 1–4, 1660–1780), 87.
23. Wright, *Indian Deeds*, 11–12, 46–47.
24. *Ibid.*, 31–32.
25. *Ibid.*, 34–35.
26. Bridenbaugh and Tomlinson, *Pynchon Account Books*, 283–88.
27. *Ibid.*, 286.
28. Wright, *Indian Deeds*, 37–38.
29. Bridenbaugh and Tomlinson, *Pynchon Account Books*, 286–88.
30. *Ibid.*, 288.
31. Wright, *Indian Deeds*, 44–45.
32. Smith, *Colonial Justice*, 263.
33. *Ibid.*, 281–82.
34. *Ibid.*, 282. During the time of King Philip's War (1675–76) the Indian resistance near Springfield was led by "their old sachem Wequogon (in whom as much confidence was put as in any of their Indians)," according to the Reverend John Russell of Hadley, quoted in Sylvester Judd, *History of Hadley, including the Early History of Hatfield, South Hadley, Amherst and Granby Massachusetts*, 2nd ed. (Springfield, Mass.: H. R. Huntting, 1905; repr., Camden, Maine: Picton Press, 1993, 1999), 144 (see also 143).
35. Frederick Clifton Pierce, *Field Genealogy, being the record of all the Field family in America, whose ancestors were in this country prior to 1700*, 2 vols. (Chicago: Hammond Press / W. B. Conkey Company: 1901), 1:97.
36. Lucius M. Boltwood, "Genealogies of Hadley Families, embracing the early settlers of the towns of Hatfield, South Hadley, Amherst and Granby," in Judd, *History of Hadley*, 50.
37. The examples in this paragraph are taken from Wright, *Indian Deeds*, 40–48.

38. Smith, *Colonial Justice*, 249.
39. Hampden County (Mass.) Registry of Deeds, Liber A, folios 16, 19, 29, and 57.
40. Date of Field's death: Pierce, *Field Genealogy*, 97. Field's estate was valued at some £320. He owed £322, of which more than half (£178) was claimed by Pynchon even before the estate was settled. Zechariah Field inventory, March 1667, Hampshire County Probate Court Records, vol. 1, 86–87.
41. Hampshire County Probate Court Records, vol. 1, 79–80.
42. Baker, "A Scratch with a Bear's Paw," 249–52.
43. Smith, *Colonial Justice*, 248.
44. *Ibid.*, 257; Linda Auwers Bissell, "From One Generation to Another: Mobility in Seventeenth-Century Windsor, Connecticut," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 31, no. 1 (January 1974): 83.
45. Pierce, *Field Genealogy*, 1:100.
46. Wright, *Indian Deeds*, 76.
47. For further discussion of the word *squaw*, see Marge Bruchac, "Reclaiming the Word 'Squaw' in the Name of the Ancestors," November 1999, [www.nativeweb.org/pages/legal/squaw.html](http://www.nativeweb.org/pages/legal/squaw.html) (accessed 28 July 2008).
48. Wright, *Indian Deeds*, 77.
49. For further information on Hadley schools see Judd, *History of Hadley*, 48–62. Margaret Clifford Dwyer, in her history of Hopkins Academy, seems unaware of the previous history of this land (*Hopkins Academy and the Hopkins Fund, 1664–1964* [Hadley, Mass.: The Trustees of Hopkins Academy, 1964], 53–55).
50. Judd, *History of Hadley*, 107.
51. Sylvester Judd Manuscripts, Forbes Library, Northampton, Mass., vol. 5 (Hadley), 44.
52. *Ibid.*, 44–45.
53. Dwyer, *Hopkins Academy*, 180.
54. Harris Hawthorne Wilder, "Excavation of Indian Graves in Western Massachusetts," *American Anthropologist*, n.s., 7, no. 2 (April–June 1905): 295–300.
55. Harris Hawthorne Wilder and Ralph Wheaton Whipple, "The Position of the Body in Aboriginal Interments in Western Massachusetts," *American Anthropologist*, n.s., 19, no. 3 (July–September 1917): 374.
56. A list of the human remains at the University of Massachusetts Amherst may be found online through the National NAGPRA Culturally Unidentifiable Native American Inventories Database maintained by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, at [64.241.25.6/CUI/index.cfm](http://64.241.25.6/CUI/index.cfm). At present, the Five College Repatriation Committee is working toward the reburial of these remains in consultation with several Native American communities in the region, both because these people should be buried in a culturally appropriate manner and to comply with the Federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990. See the chapter by Hart, Chilton, and Donta in this volume for further discussion of NAGPRA.