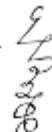


Native Tribes

The mark of
Kepaquamp



The mark of
Querrimus



The mark of
Mataneage



During the 1600s the natives of Connecticut were separated into numerous small tribes, speaking divergent dialects of the Algonquin language. They moved villages several times a year, usually returning to the same locations. Although outnumbering the colonists for a time, the tribes never united against them, coexisting with the Europeans in an uneasy atmosphere while looking for help against enemies. The lack of a permanent settlement in the Waterbury area was due in part to raids from the West by the more powerful Mohawks.

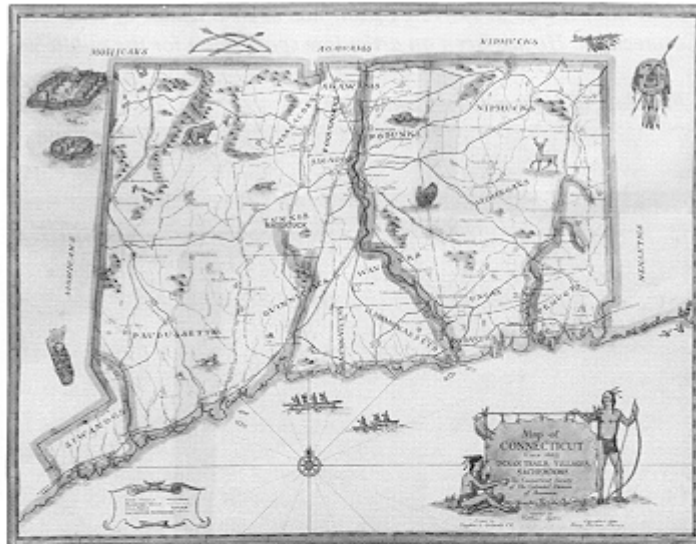
The four tribes that used Mattatuck for hunting grounds were the Tunxis, Paugusucks, (Paugussetts), Quinnipiacs and Pootatucks.

The Tunxis, consisting of about 400 members with 100 warriors, claimed all territory west of Simsbury to the Housatonic River. On February 8, 1657 they signed a deed stating: "This Witnesseth that Wee Kepaquamp and Querrimus and Mataneage have sould to William Lewis and Samuel Steele of Farmington A psel or A tract of Land called matetacoke that is to Say the hill from whence John Standley and John Andrews: brought the black lead and all the Land within eight mylle: of that hill: on every side." The hill was likely the southernmost point of present-day Harwinton. On August 26, 1674 Farmington residents bought, for 38 pounds, the "tract of land called by the name Mattatuck", 10 miles North and South, 6 miles East and West. The town size was nearly doubled with a deed signing of April 29, 1684 and in another transaction the 1674 lands were repurchased by the colonists on December 2, 1684.

The Paugussetts, totaling 300-400 members in the 1670s, claimed a large territory that extended from the southwestern coast of Connecticut, along both sides of the Housatonic River and continuing north to include Mattatuck. They signed a deed with the Farmington people on February 28, 1685 for 20 parcels of land for "6 pounds in hand received" that included the Mattatuck area and another on June 28, 1711 that increased Waterbury's southern boundaries. An examination of the names on all the Tunxis and Paugussetts deeds shows a relationship between the two tribes.

The Quinnipiacs from the New Haven area and the Pootatucks from the Pomperaug area claimed parts of Mattatuck but no deeds were signed with the Farmington colonists.

Sun Bear, a Chippewa leader, recently said, "probably no misunderstanding brought about so much ill feeling and bloodshed between Indians and whites as the difference in



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their concepts concerning ownership of land." The immense language barrier, the lack of written records by the natives and the differing worldviews of the two cultures led to much confusion. Natives called the land Mother Earth. It was part of their being. It did not belong to anyone, so it could not be sold. It appears the natives agreed to share the land with the colonists but the concept of possessing the land to sell it was not comprehensible to them. A Connecticut deed from 1636 might express their thought "that som English might come live amongst them."

The colonists continued to acquire property and encroach upon the homelands of the native tribes. By 1774 only 56 Tunxis remained in the area. Some moved to Oneida territory, others to Scatacock and from there to Stockbridge. Around 1850 people still remembered natives living in the Park Road section of Waterbury and, in 1883, when Henry Mossuch died, he was "perhaps the sole remnant of the Tunxis tribe." Some Paugussetts later moved inland to the lower Naugatuck Valley, others joined the Pootatucks or moved to Stockbridge. The Pootatucks and Quinnipiacs were extinct by the mid 1800s.

The state of Connecticut currently recognizes five tribes: the Golden Hill Paugussetts, the Mohegan, the Schaghticoke, the Paucatuck Eastern Pequot and the Mashantucket Pequot.

Commenting on his writings on native tribes in 1896, Joseph Anderson wrote, "it may be hoped that what is here given will serve to interest us in his character and render us wiser and kinder in our estimate." The native tribes have left a legacy of living their philosophy of life and of an intimate respect for the symbiotic relationship between nature and humans. Their flowing, descriptive words are still, fittingly, the names of forests, parks, towns, and rivers. The region known to them as "beside the long tidal river" continues to be called Quinnehtukut (Connecticut).