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BRONSON MUSEUM

This is the Society's museum, 5th Floor of the 8 North Main Street Building, Attleboro, Mass. — Museum hours are from 9:30 to 4:30, Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. For special arrangements to visit on other days, contact the Director, Maurice Robbins, or the Curator, William S. Fowler by mail at the Society Office, Bronson Museum, Attleboro, Mass.

The Museum includes exhibits of artifacts and seven dioramas portraying man's prehistoric occupation of New England. The displays are arranged so as to show man's development through four culture stages, from early post glacial times.

The most recent diorama extends 15 feet across the front of the museum. It depicts an Archaic village of seven large and unique wigwams as indicated by their foundations, excavated at Assowampsett Lake by the Cohannet Chapter. Human figures to scale make the scene come alive and help create what unquestionably is an outstanding addition to our ever growing museum displays.

MICAH RAFE — INDIAN MAN

17

Last Full Blood on Lower Cape Cod

W. SEARS NICKERSON

FOREWORD

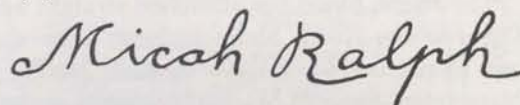
It is with mingled feelings of reverence and hesitation that I attempt the story of Micah Rafe, the last full blooded Indian on Lower Cape Cod; reverence, because he stands alone at the journey's end of his people; hesitation, because all we have learned about any Cape Cod Indian is, at best, but fragmentary and incomplete. The Indians kept no written records; and it is only from old deeds, old court records, and probate files that it is possible to fit their blood ties together. With this apology I offer what little I know about him so it will not be lost forever to lovers of things Indian and Cape Cod.

Following the old custom I define the Lower Cape as stretching easterly from Bass River to the tip of the Cape. Bass River has from time immemorial been a natural landmark dividing Cape Cod into the Upper and Lower Cape in the geography of the natives.

First let me set down what I learned by word of mouth from my grandfather Nickerson who could remember Micah Rafe. He told me time and again that Micah was the last full blooded Indian in the town of Harwich. Whether or not he heard this directly from the lips of the old Indian himself I cannot say, but he, his father and grandfather had every opportunity to know since all were born and grew up beside Micah in the little village of East Harwich. My grandmother too—her mother was a Wixon said to have been part Indian—as well as her grandfather, who kept a record of his dealings with Micah Rafe over a period of years, must have believed the same thing or she never would have let my father and grandfather pass it along to me so positively.

What was common knowledge to them, my people, came to me first hand along with great-grandfather's little hand-made account book in which he reckoned his debts and credits with Micah Rafe. Since that time I have devoted years of research into the lives of Lower Cape Indians and have never yet turned up anything among the ancient records to contradict what they told me. It is therefore my considered opinion that Micah Rafe was not only the last full blooded Indian in the town of Harwich, as my grandfather told me, but the last full blood on all of Lower Cape Cod as well.

His real name was Micah Ralph. That is the way he signed it himself, frequently adding "Indian Man" as if to let the world know he was not a half-breed. Among my treasured heirlooms is a document signed by him in 1780 when he was in the prime of life. His signature is a good one, the bold assured hand of a man accustomed to the use of ink and quill. Side by side with that of the white man who signed with him, Micah's needs no apology (1).



He pronounced his surname Rafe, spoken to rhyme with safe. That is the way I learned it from the people who lived beside him and heard it from his own lips. It was always difficult for the Indians to get their tongues around the sound of the English L, as Edward Winslow found out soon after the *Mayflower* arrived. Even the great Massasoit himself called him Winsnow(2). Ralph became Raf and then degenerated into Rafe. Ralph's Pond, which lay within the lands of Micah Rafe's grandfather, became Rafe's Pond and then in turn was corrupted into Race Pond which was easier to say. Thus it remains to this day with very few people knowing why.(3).

In this Paper I shall call him Micah Rafe because it is easier for me to think and speak of him in my mother tongue, and besides it will serve to distinguish him from his father whose name was also Micah Ralph.

Micah Rafe and his squaw Hosey lived in a little house at Askaonkton on the north bank of old Monomoyick River in East Harwich(4). My people, who also lived near, always called it Long Cove, which I suspect may have been a literal

- (1) A true copy of Micah Rafe's signature.
- (2) *Good News from New England*. Edward Winslow.
- (3) In 1798 "land -- at Ralph's Pond". Division deed heirs of Moses Higgins. Stanley W. Smith Collection.
- (4) "northerly of Monomoyick River". Deed March 25, 1696/7 John, Josephus, Samuel, and Joseph Quason to Captain Joshua Jeethro. Photostat my Collection from original in *Mass. State Archives* XXXIII-618/90. Site of Micah's house 100 years later, whose wife was granddaughter of Captain Jeethro.

translation of its Indian name. On today's maps it is entered as Muddy River, but whatever its name, it is and always has been a charming little stream. In connection with Micah Rafe I like to think of it by its easy flowing Indian name. The spot where his house stood and which my grandfather pointed out to me was on the still unalienated lands of the Monomoyicks although Micah himself was not a Monomoyick. It was through his marriage with Hosey Stephen, the great-great-granddaughter of old Sagamore Mattaquason and the last surviving heir to his lands⁽⁵⁾, that he came to end his days in the Monomoyick Country.

SOME OF MICAH'S ANCESTORS

The Ralph blood ties stretched straight across the Cape to the North Shore sachems who welcomed our immigrant forefathers to their lands—Sachem Napoyetan, Sachem Mashantampaine, perhaps even to Iyanno of Cummaquid himself, that pleasant young sachem of whom one Pilgrim wrote that he was "personable, gentle, courteous and fair conditioned, about twenty-six years of age, and indeed not a savage at all except in his attire."

A few years later Sachem Iyanno was implicated in an ill-fated plot to wipe out the whites and is said to have hidden in dismal swamps and died miserably of starvation when it failed. That an able bodied young Indian with the whole of North America open before him and not over twenty-five armed white men on the whole coast from Canada to Florida should go off and starve to death even if his tribesmen would let him is hard for me to believe. It seems more likely he simply dropped out of sight until the disturbance was over and then reappeared under another name, of which the Indians always had plenty.

Be that as it may, when the purchase for the new towns of Yarmouth and Barnstable were being made not long after, we find that Napoyetan had become the sachem at Iyanno's town; and the old records show that in giving title he distinctly stated that these lands were his "own proper inheritance"⁽⁶⁾. According to Cape Cod Indian custom "inheritance" came through heirship from the former sachem, and as Iyanno was the sachem before Napoyetan it is logical to conclude he was a son or brother.

Thirty-five years later, after Napoyetan had gone to the Happy Hunting Ground of his people⁽⁷⁾, his three daughters complained to the March Court of 1675 that John Wing the Quaker and Lieutenant

John Dillingham were squatting illegally on their lands. They brought suit in the names of their husbands, recorded as Ralph of Nobscusset, the husband of Mana-toto-mus-ke; Sampson of Nobscusset, Pe-nasa-mus-ke's husband; and Robin of Mattakeesit, whose wife was Aqua-netva.

This introduces us to the great-grandparents of Micah Rafe—Ralph of Nobscusset and his wife Manatotomuske, the daughter of Napoyetan. It goes without saying that in those early days Ralph must have been a scion of royalty to have been married to an Indian princess, the daughter of a sachem. Besides being brothers and marrying sisters he and Sampson were sons of old Sachem Mashantampaine of Nobscusset, who was getting very aged and turning the responsibilities of his sachemry over to his sons. According to Indian custom the older was recognized as higher in rank, and as early as 1657 Sampson appears as sachem of Nobscusset in renewing their treaty with Plymouth and again in 1671 and 1674⁽⁸⁾. Ralph name also often appears conjointly with that of his brother on the records.

Ralph is the first Indian with that name I have ever run across in the early records up to his day and one of the rare instances of an Indian family's replacing its name with one not found in the Bible. His wigwam undoubtedly stood near that of his father on the north side of Scargo Lake, then known as Nobscusset Pond, in the present Dennis on land the old sachem had reserved when the bounds of the original Yarmouth were run out by Mr. Edward Winslow, Captain Myles Standish, and Mr. Edmond Freeman⁽⁹⁾. Probably Ralph, Sampson, and their father are buried with their squaws in the little Indian graveyard there—one of the very few enclosed and preserved on the Cape.

The complaint brought against Wing and Dillingham by the daughters of Sachem Napoyetan occurred just at the time of King Philip's War and was non-suited, but it was shown that John Wing the Quaker had already built a house on land never sold by their father⁽¹⁰⁾. An amicable settlement was finally made, however, and Wing and Dilling-

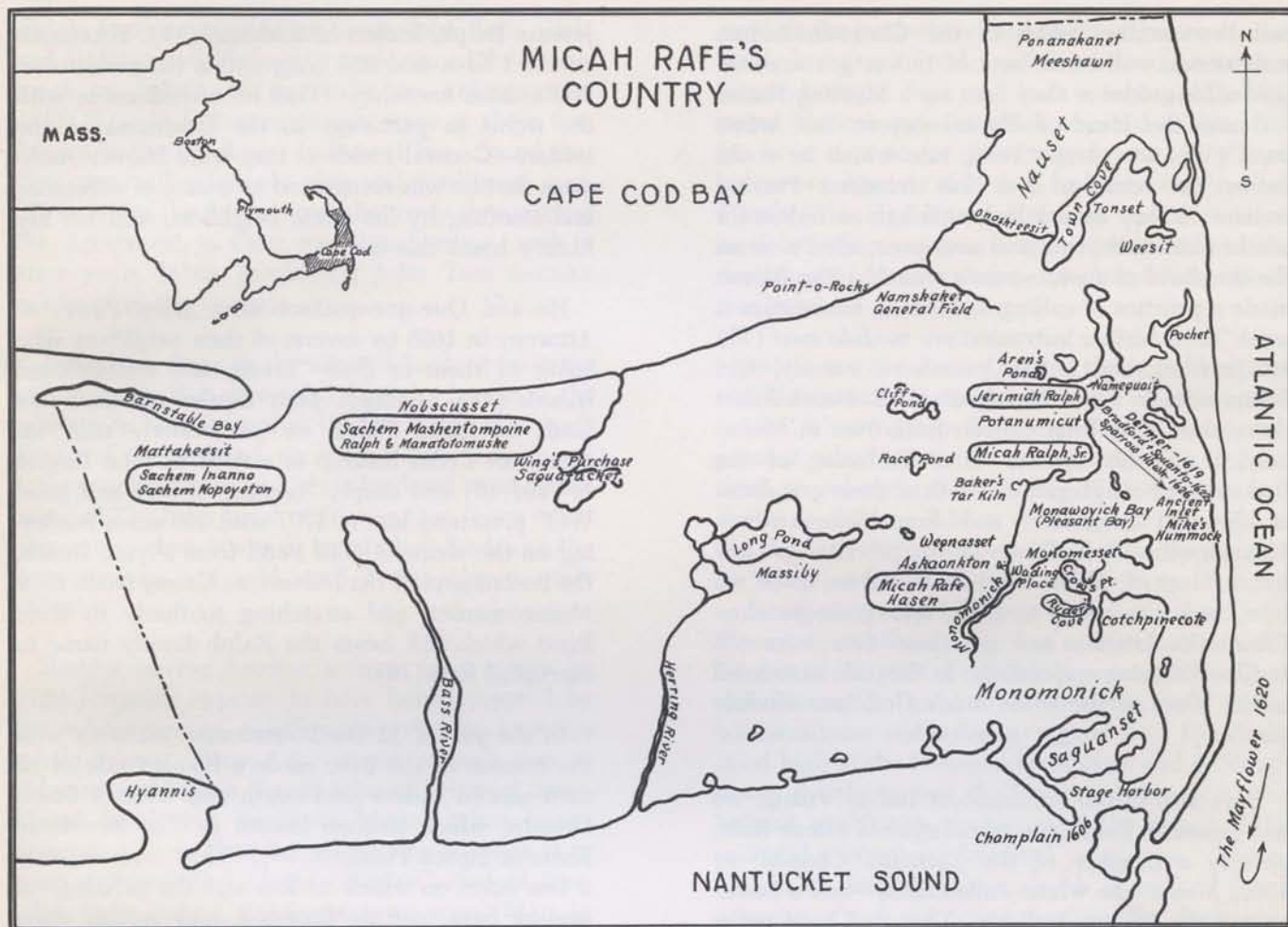
(5) *Mass. Archaeological Society Bulletin*. July 1958.

(6) *Freeman's Cape Cod*, 1-161.

(7) "Napoatan Indian Sachem, deceased," circa 1656. *Indian Wars of New England*. H. M. Sylvester.

(8) *Swift's Old Yarmouth*, 31. Also *Freeman's Cape Cod*, 1-158, 267, 278.

(9) *Swift's Old Yarmouth* 31. Also *Freeman's Cape Cod* 1-158.



ham acquired title to the disputed land by two deeds of like description, both dated the first of March, 1676. One deed ran from Robin of Mattakeesit and his wife Aquanetva, whose English name was Sarah; the other was from Ralph and Sampson of NobsCUSset and their wives Manatotomuske and Penasamuske. The old Sachem Mashantampaine gave his consent to this last deed showing that he was still alive. It was witnessed by Indian Hercules, the Sauquatucket Indian Justice(11).

This tract became known as Wing's Purchase, and the ranges were run out in the winter of 1678 by John and Thomas Freeman, two sons of Major John, together with Ralph and Sampson of NobsCUSset and Robin of Mattakeesit. They blazed the trees on its boundaries across the Cape and back again; and to end all future controversy and make the title clear, the Indians gave possession "by turf and twig" in the good old Saxon manner. Thus the record remains to this day on the books(12). The old Dillingham House in West Brewster still stands on the land the squatters liked so well.

JEREMIAH RALPH, MICAH'S GRANDFATHER

In the latter years of the sixteen hundreds the old town of Eastham embraced the neck of land in South Orleans stretching easterly between Arey's Pond on the north and the waters of Pleasant Bay on the south. At that period it was called Potanumi-cut by the Indians whose grandfathers had known it as Ata-cospa. John and Tom Sipson, sons of Quan-tocka-mon, the last hereditary sachems of the once powerful Nawset Tribe(13), were living on the south side of the river near the pond's outlet and were gathering around them the fast dwindling remnants of the Lower Cape Cod Indians into what was becoming known as the Potanumicut Tribe.

Through the excellent missionary work of Parson Samuel Treat of the Eastham parish, Potanumicut

(10) "John Wing hath built, fenced - lands of Naipotan - - not by him sold". *Indian Wars of New England*. H. M. Sylvester.

(11) *Mass. Superior Court of Judicature* 4784, 3491.

(12) *Plymouth Colony Deeds* 111-10.

(13) "Sons of Quantockamon", *Plymouth Colony Records* V-150.

had become the center of the Christian Indian activities as well as the seat of Indian government. Under his guidance they "sett up a Meeting House - - near the Head of Potanumaquitt Salt water pond"(14), now Arey's Pond, into which he could gather on occasion over five hundred Praying Indians, as they were called, although no Indian for another hundred years was ever persuaded to cross the threshold of a white man's church. The Parson made a practice of calling to his own house once a week "to be further instructed *pro modulo meo*"(15) his four regional Indian preachers; namely, Old Potanomatock from Meeshawn and Ponanaket down the Cape; John Cussen from over at Monomoyick and his brother Tom Coshanag of the Potanumicut congregation—both of them grandsons of the Old Sagamore; and from Sauquatucket, Manasses the Wolf Hunter, a sharpshooter in Gorham's Rangers. What a sight it would be, could we turn back the years to peek into great-grandma Elizabeth's kitchen and see those four wise old Indians listening respectfully, as they are instructed in the Word of the white man's God "*pro modulo meo*".

Here also in the Potanumicut Indian Village we find Jeremiah Ralph, the grandfather of Micah Rafe, already a member of the Sachem's Council—or Head Men as the whites called them—and a leader among the Praying Indians. Though I have never yet dug up a document saying in so many words he was the son of Ralph of Nobscusset, my knowledge of Indian customs and the history of his own life leave no doubt whatever in my mind. To the best of my knowledge, he was the first Indian bearing the name of Ralph mentioned in the Lower Cape records after Ralph of Nobscusset. Unquestionably he was named Jeremiah for his uncle Jeremy Robin, the well known Indian minister of Mattakeesit, the husband of Manatotomuske's sister Aquanetva. His birth occurred somewhere about 1670-1675, which was during the child-birth period of Manatotomuske's life. His wigwam stood next to that of Sachem John Sipson into whose family he had almost certainly married. According to the prevailing custom of that day this could not have happened unless he himself had been of royal Indian blood. Neither would he have been made one of the Sachem's Council and presented hundreds of acres of land in the Sipson sachemry simply because of "love and good will", as the records state.

In an old Town Book under date of January 27, 1694, may still be found "The mark of the cattle of

Jeremy Ralph, Indian of Eastham"(16), Potanumicut, as I have said still lying within the jurisdiction of Eastham township. That he owned cattle with the rights to pasturage in the Commons of the settlers—General Fields as they were known—indicates that he was recognized as a man of substance and standing by his white neighbors; and his life history bears this out.

He and Que-que-quanset were given Power of Attorney in 1698 by several of their neighbors who spoke of them as their "Trusty and well-beloved friends"(17). Sachem John Sipson mentions "ye lands of jerimi Ralph on ye westerly side" of Seanascot Cedar Swamp in a deed to John Rogers in 1704(18) and simply "because of love and good Will" presented him in 1707 with 100 acres bordering on the shore of Cliff Pond from Flying Beach, the Poconepoys of the Indians, to Grassy Nook their Mornoomanset, and stretching southerly to Race Pond which still bears the Ralph family name in corrupted form(19).

In the year 1711 the Potanumicut sachems with the consent of the tribe made a blanket sale of all their unsold Indian land south and west of South Orleans, which became known as The Seventeen Share or Sipson Purchase(20). They reserved only a few acres on which to live and the privilege of peeling bark, cutting firewood, and certain other rights of value to the Indians. When the sachems a year later, without consulting the tribe at all, deeded these reserved privileges to the white proprietors, an immediate protest arose from the Head Men of the Potanumicuts(21).

For an Indian to attempt the recovery of something already in the possession of a white man was no simple undertaking. This group, nevertheless, while agreeing that the sachems had made the original sale with the full consent of the tribe, claimed that it had never consented to the sale of the reserved rights and privileges. When the proprietors were finally forced to return 100 acres to the Indians in lieu of the reserved privileges, Jeremiah

(14) *Eastham Town Records*, no paging, 1648-1770.

(15) In a letter from him to the Rev. Cotton Mather.

(16) *Eastham Records* 1648-1770, no paging.

(17) *History of Harwich* 402. Paine.

(18) Original deed 26 April 1704. Stanley W. Smith Collection V-9.

(19) Photostat of deed 25 October 1707. Mrs. Hodges Papers, Stanley W. Smith Collection.

(20) *Mass. Superior Court of Judicature* 8331. Harwich Proprietors Records.

(21) *Ibid. Court* 18544, *ibid.* Records.

Ralph, together with Jabez Jacob, John Tom, Richard Attamon and Thomas Quanset signed the Agreement on behalf of the tribe on February 28, 1715⁽²²⁾. In following out the lives of these five, known as the Privileged Indians, I have found that they were all extremely able and intelligent men. Three out of the five, even at that early date, signed the Agreement in their own handwriting, and in after years Jabez Jacob and John Tom became ministers of the Gospel.

Jeremiah's share in the allotted land, at least the greater part of it, never fell into the hands of the white men until long after the last Ralph was dead. Some of it bordered on what later became my father's cow pasture and in my boyhood went by the name of The Injin Land. Old men then living could remember when it was in fact Indian land, and the property was not sold until I was eleven years old⁽²³⁾.

Besides having become a large land owner by 1720 Jeremiah appears to have been accepted by the white men as a full partner in the lucrative whale fishery. Among the names of such men as Edward and Joshua Bangs, John and Samuel Sears, David Smith and Benjamin Myrick when laying claim to a "larg whail fish which was on shore at or near a place called Green's Harbor", that of Jeremiah Rafe, Indian, stands out as an equal⁽²⁴⁾. In 1723 he was chosen to serve on the Coroner's Jury at the drowning of Israel Moses in Eastham⁽²⁵⁾. An interesting old account against "jerima raf", kept by Samuel Mayo between 1723 and 1725, lists powder and shot, shoes, even a house, and some wood. By December 31, 1725, he had nearly squared the debt, for we read "I Jermiah Ralph Reconed with Samuel Mayo and to balance between us there remains due from me to sd Mayo fifteen shillings and three pence"⁽²⁶⁾. But as late as 1737 he is occasionally mentioned as though still alive and until 1738 his son Jeremiah continued to be referred to as Junior⁽²⁷⁾. On April 3, 1738, a court paper concerning a Hallett family row over Yarmouth lands speaks of Jeremiah the younger without the title for the first time⁽²⁸⁾. It is quite likely his father had passed away not long before that date.

MICAH RAPE'S FATHER, MICAH RALPH

From testimony given in a Kenrick-Mayo boundary dispute we learn that Joshua and Jeremiah Ralph, Jr. were brothers, the sons of Jeremiah, Sr., Micah Rafe's grandfather. Joshua testified that he

lived on the land where his father's wigwam stood—just below Arey's Pond—and that he and his brother Jeremiah dug a ditch and built a fence on the disputed fourteen acre lot which adjoined it⁽²⁹⁾. But we have to wait for Jeremiah, Jr., to kill a man before we discover that they had a brother named Micah⁽³⁰⁾. Had Jeremiah, Jr., set one more fence on debatable ground or fought another duel to the death we might now have a complete family tree of the Ralphs.

Joshua married Betty Quason, the granddaughter of Old Sagamore Mattaquason, and died before Apr. 5, 1748, when William Bourne of Barnstable was appointed administrator of his estate⁽³¹⁾. If Jeremiah, Jr., who was of age before 1719⁽³²⁾, ever had a wife or children, I have never seen a record of it. On the 11th of November, 1732, when he brought his whaleboat in to the Point-o'-Rocks in Brewster and hauled her up for the winter just below John Freeman's warehouse, he was a boatsteerer in the employ of Captain Edmond Freeman⁽³³⁾. Captain Freeman's boatsteerers were the pick of the whaleboatmen and sailed on a good lay. His credit stood high at the Freeman warehouse and although it was strictly against the law to sell liquor to the Indians, prohibition worked much the same in 1732 as it did a couple of hundred years later. Before he and his two shipmates, Jacob Jacob and Isaac Attaman, struck out across the Cape for Potanumicut and home, young Jeremiah bought a quart or more of rum; and as that rum was the immediate cause of putting on record the identity of Micah Ralph, Sr., Micah Rafe's father, here is a brief digest of the events which followed, taken directly from the Court records⁽³⁴⁾.

As the Indians journeyed they drank, and according to Attaman—the only eye-witness—Jeremiah

(22) *Ibid.* Court 15050. Agreement Seventeen Share Proprietors with the Privileged Indians.

(23) Sold by Act of the *Mass. State Legislature* of 1891.

(24) Testimony of Edward Winslow May 11, 1720. *Mass. Superior Court of Judicature* 14094.

(25) *Ibid.* Court 15727. Israel Moses inquest February 2, 1723.

(26) Stanley W. Smith Collection, Samuel Mayo Papers.

(27) *History of Harwich* 406. Paine.

(28) "Jeremiah Ralph of full age". *Mass. Superior Court of Judicature* 46037.

(29) Joshua Ralph's testimony. *Ibid.* Court 18384.

(30) Micah testified "my brother Jeremiah Ralph Jr." *Ibid.* Court 35145.

(31) *Barnstable Probate Records* 111-507.

(32) "being of full age". *Mass. Superior Court of Judicature* 163481.

(33) *Ibid.* Court testimony 34431, 35145.

(34) *Mass. Superior Court of Judicature*. Most of the testimony and proceedings in 34431 and 35145.

commenced to get quarrelsome, arguing angrily with Jacob about a loan he claimed to have made him. When they reached Flying Beach at the east end of Cliff Pond, they went down on the white sands to fight it out and "jeremiah struck—Jacob down, who commenced to make a choking sound in his throat—and tried to crawl away". When Isaac remonstrated Jeremiah turned on him and beat him until he could scarcely stand, but he managed to drag Jacob off the beach and rushed to a neighboring house to "fech fire" as the record quaintly states. By the light of the fire they could see Jacob's "clothes was exceeding bloody", and Jeremiah, sobered by the enormity of his act, said "he would go and call help to get Jacob home for he was afraid Jacob wold dy and he shold be hanged." Attaman said he too was afraid "Jacob wold dy before anybody came back—he bled so much". It was "neer day" before help came; and then into the little circle of firelight rode Micah Ralph, Sr., on horseback. After they failed to get him onto the horse because "he was too weak and faint and full of pain", Micah went back for more help and long after daylight "many Indians came with him and carried Jacob away."

Poor Jacob lingered on for only a few days. A Coroner's Jury, four of whom were Indians, decided that he came to his death "by a stab—in ye left side of his Brest a little belo his collar bone." It began to look as if Jeremiah's fear of being hanged might indeed come true. When the jury returned a verdict of manslaughter, his attorney, James Otis, moved that his client be given the benefit of clergy. The Good Book was placed in his hands, he read his "clergy" and was "branded on the brawn of his right thumb", after which by paying the costs of the court he was set free. In 1744 he enlisted in Captain Elisha Doane's Company for the siege of Louisburg, from which he never returned.

Micah Ralph, Sr., testified "that about eleven of the clock in the night after the eleventh day of November, 1732," his brother Jeremiah Ralph, Jr., came to his house and told him about the fight. Thus we learn without question that Micah Ralph, Sr., was the brother of Jeremiah Ralph, Jr., and therefore the son of the first Jeremiah Ralph. His wigwam stood a short distance north of Baker's Tar Kiln Meadow in South Orleans near the Second Potanumicut Indian Meeting House, which was on the little knoll where the residence of the late Arthur Sparrow now stands. Both were on part of his father Jeremiah's share of the Privileged Indians'

lands. His house is definitely pinpointed in a deed from Edward Kenrick to his son Jonathan in 1739(35).

After the active part Micah Ralph, Sr., took in bringing home his brother's victim and his straightforward testimony in the trial which followed I have not found him mentioned again in the records except for the reference to his house until the year 1745. That was during the War of the Austrian Succession in Europe and the bloody hostilities which flared up as a result between the New England settlers and the French and Indians of Canada. Our Indians had always fought on the side of the New Englanders in these old wars with the French-Canadians and they now flocked to the colors in greater numbers than usual owing to the increasing difficulty of getting a living in the old Indian way. Micah Ralph, Sr., enlisted for service in the forces of Brigadier Waldo and was mustered into Gorham's Rangers, a company of Indian and white Cape Cod whaleboatmen, one of whom was my great-great-grandfather Stephen Nickerson. They were as tough a bunch of fighting men afloat or ashore as our modern Marines and had always been under the command of a Gorham since the days of King Philip's War in 1675.

Whether he was killed in action or died of camp fever, which was very prevalent among the troops, I have never learned; but his name appears next in 1748 on the Barnstable County Records which are fairly glutted with the accounts of army wages due the estates of Indians who had given their lives under the English flag. From Potanumicut alone, now a part of Old Harwich, besides that of Micah Ralph, Sr., were listed the names of Nathan Quoy, William Ned, Isaac James, Jr., Eben Cowett, David Moses, and the two other Ralphs, Samuel and Joseph.

Letters of Administration and Power of Attorney were issued by the Court to Mr. Samuel Knowles on the 23rd of July, 1748, empowering him to collect and distribute the wages of Micah Ralph, Sr., and his buddies who failed to return. It would seem from the records that Mr. Knowles took good care of himself and his Court friends in the distribution. He charged five pounds apiece for his own "time and trouble in Gitting" every dead soldiers wages,

(35) "neer Micah Ralph's house", deed Edward Kenrick to son Jonathan 2 April 1739, also quit-claim from brothers Solomon and Thomas 23 October 1743/4. Stanley W. Smith Collection, Kenrick Papers.

Micah Rafe's Ancestors

1595 - 1816

¹
SACHEM IYANNO of Mattakeese, now Yarmouth. Born circa 1595. Wife unknown. Welcomed Pilgrims to his village in 1621 when 26 years old. May have been forefather of Micah Rafe. Said to have died in Indian uprising in 1623, which I doubt.

²
SACHEM NEPOYETAN of Mattakeese. Born circa 1620? Wife unknown. In 1639 he was sachem over Iyanno's lands, "as his own proper inheritance", hence may have been son or brother. Dead before 1676.

³
MANATOTOMUSKE their daughter. Born before 1655. Of legal age by 1676. Married Ralph of NobsCUSset. Died after 1680.

⁴⁻³
JEREMIAH RALPH of Potanumicut, now South Orleans, their son. Born circa 1670. I believe he married into the Sipson family of the Nawset sachemry. Distinguished as one of the tribal Head Men and of the Privileged Indians. Died circa 1735.

⁵⁻⁴
MICAH RALPH, Sr., of Potanumicut, their son. Born circa 1700. Wife unknown. Father of Micah Rafe. Soldier in Governor Shirley's War. Died or killed in the service. Estate settled 1748.

⁶⁻⁵
MICAH RAFE of Askaonkton, now part of East Harwich. Born circa 1730. Married Hosey Stephen. Lived and died just above the Wading Place, on north bank of old Monomoyick River. Last full blooded Indian on Lower Cape Cod. Left no descendants. Will probated 18 March 1816.

¹
SACHEM MASHANTAMPAINE of NobsCUSset, now Dennis. Born circa 1600? Wife unknown. Had two sons, Sampson and Ralph. Died after 1676.

²
RALPH of NobsCUSset their son. Born before 1650. Younger brother of Sampson who succeeded his father as sachem. Married Manatomuske. Died after 1680.

His Wife's Ancestors

1600 - 1800

¹
The OLD SAGAMORE, Mattaquason of Monomoyick, now Chatham and East Harwich. Born circa 1600. Wife unknown. Headquarters around Head of Pleasant Bay, Crow's Pond and Ryder's Cove. Died 1682/1683.

²
SARAH MASKUCK of Cotchpincut, now Old Harbor, Chatham, their daughter. Married Stephen, alias Maskuck before 1668. Both dead before 1689.

³
STEPHEN MORTAQUIT of Cotchpincut, their son. Born circa, 1668. Wife unknown. Of age by 1689. Dead before 1720.

⁴
STEPHEN STEPHEN of Askaonkton, their son. Born by 1695. Married Sarah Jethro about 1715. Left her a widow with 6 small children when he died in small pox epidemic 1730.

⁵⁻⁴
HOSEY STEPHEN of Askaonkton, their daughter. Born just before 1730. Married Micah Rafe 1753. Last descendant of The Old Sagamore on the Monomoyick tribal lands, and last full blooded Indian woman on the Lower Cape. Left no descendants. Will probated 29 March, 1800.

¹
SACHEM NICKANOOSE of Nantucket. Born by 1634. Wife unknown. The Great Sachem of Nantucket. Died circa 1677.

²
CAPTAIN JOSHUA JETHRO of Askaonkton. Born before 1654. I believe he married into the Quason family of the Monomoyick sachemry. Noted Indian captain in Gorham's Rangers under Maj. Benjamin Church. Died just before 17 May, 1722.

³
SARAH JETHRO of Askaonkton, their daughter. Born circa 1700. Married Stephen Stephen. Dead before 1755.

the Registrar was allowed three pounds five shillings for jotting down the few brief words required by law for each one, and the Honorable Judge one pound apiece for sitting to hear the returns. Micah's inventory showed "wages which was received from Brigadier Waldo" amounting to thirty-six pounds ten shillings. What was left, "the Ballance due ye Estate", namely, twenty-seven pounds, five shillings and seven pence, was finally allotted to the widow "to support herself and family and Small children" (36).

MICAH RAFE HIMSELF

One of these children was Micah Rafe, probably only a little papoose in his father's wigwam on the night his uncle Jeremiah came there for help after the fight at Cliff Pond. By the time of his father's death in 1748 he must have been a grown boy because on the 9th of July, 1753, he filed with the

(36) "Micah Ralph Indian Man of Harwich lately died intestate". *Barnstable Probate Records* VII-82 and VIII-452/3. Soldier under Brig. Waldo, and settlement of his estate.

Chatham Town Clerk his intentions of marriage to Hosey Stephen⁽³⁷⁾.

Before we take up the story of his own life, however, let us check back on his ancestry to see why there is every reason to believe he was a full blooded Indian. In the first place there can be no doubt at all that his great-great-grandparents, Napoyetan and Mashantampaine, and their squaws, as well as his great-grandparents, Ralph of Nobscusset and his wife Manatotomuske, were pure bloods. Of course that also certifies Jeremiah Ralph, his grandfather, and if, as I feel certain, Jeremiah married a daughter of the Sipson sachems before 1694, there can be little question of her descent, the Indians not having begun to cross with the Negroes until after that date. Micah himself would have known had there been the least taint in either his father or mother—or for that matter in that of his grandparents. Had they been of mixed blood, I am certain he would never have been so proud of himself as Indian Man nor have led my people, who knew him so well, to believe he was a full blood.

It may also be well to recall into what sort of Indian life he was born and in which he was destined to live. Since the death of Parson Treat the change in the Lower Cape Indians had been almost unbelievable. They loved and respected him so deeply that when he died during the Great Snow of 1717 they begged for the privilege of digging through the drifts and bearing his body to its grave. But with his restraining influence gone the sale of liquor increased by leaps and bounds, leading Governor Hinckley to comment that it "was a great obstruction in bringing them to civility" because of "their appetite for rum and the English selling it to them". The young women and the widows left by the inroads of rum and war intermarried more and more with the Negro slaves of the settlers. To distinguish them from the few remaining full blooded Indians their offspring became known locally as Negro-men and Negro-women, sometimes even as black-men or black-women⁽³⁸⁾.

The old tribal rule of the sachems, guided by the voice of the people as expressed through their Councils, had broken up long ago. The ancient villages were becoming mostly deserted except for a few degenerate and squalid halfbreed beggars, despised by the whites and even unable to produce their own kind. The best of the survivors had trickled westward to Mashpee or on to Gay Head where their descendants may be found to this day. With the death of John Ralph, the last Potanumicut

preacher, who I suspect was Micah's brother, Micah Rafe saw the closing forever of the last Indian Meeting House on Lower Cape Cod. In my boyhood its doorstone, worn smooth by the feet of hundreds of Praying Indians, was doing duty as the doorstep to Squire John Kenrick's South Orleans Post Office.

By 1770, after the last Indian had disappeared from Wellfleet, the town disposed of its remaining Indian land⁽³⁹⁾. Only one halfbreed family was left by 1792 in Truro where an old lady could remember when there were so many little Indian children in school that they used to "crow it" over the whites, as she put it⁽⁴⁰⁾. By 1800 the old Potanumicut village had dwindled to four half-breeds huddled in one wigwam and by the time of Micah's death in 1816 it could truly be said that the Lower Cape Indians had been wiped from the face of the earth.

Long before I ever saw a written record of either Micah Rafe or his wife Hosey I knew their names and where their house stood. She was remembered as very short of stature, industrious and hospitable, and noted for her cheerfulness and kindness by her neighbors. The Stephen family to which she belonged was the last of Old Sagamore Mattaquason's blood to cling to the Monomoyick Country, and she was the last of her family. The line of her descent is fully documented, thanks to the squabbles of the white men over Indian lands. The Old Sagamore's daughter Sarah who married Stephen, alias Maskuck, about 1670⁽⁴¹⁾ had three sons, one of whom named Stephen, alias Mortaquit, had a son Stephen Mortaquit, alias Stephen Stephen⁽⁴²⁾. Stephen Stephen married Sarah Jethrow, the daughter of Captain Joshua Jethrow, before 1722⁽⁴³⁾ and died in the Indian plague of 1730⁽⁴⁴⁾, leaving a number of small children, among whom was Hosey.

(37) "Mikiah Ralph and Hose Stephens". Chatham Records, *Mayflower Descendant* XII-28.

(38) Bess Tobey, granddaughter of Sachem John Sipson, was called "my Negro Woman" by Joshua Hopkins in his will, 1775.

(39) Swift's *Old Yarmouth* 171.

(40) Freeman's *Cape Cod* 1-558.

(41) John Cussens testified in 1720 that the Old Sagamore's daughter Sarah married "one Stephen about fifty years ago." *Mass. Superior Court of Judicature* 151919.

(42) Stephen Stephen, alias Stephen Mortaquit's own testimony, *Ibid. Court* 151919, 13717, 163529.

(43) Division of the Captain's estate. *Barnstable Probate Records* IV-51.

(44) Appointment of guardian for children. *Ibid. Records* IV-580/1/2.

Hosey's maternal grandfather, Captain Joshua Jethrow, better known to the whites as Cap'n Jeethro, a noted Indian captain in the early French and Indian Wars, was the son of Sachem Nickanoose of Nantucket. Between 1690 and 1696 he led an Indian group in Gorham's Rangers under Major Benjamin Church against the French-Canadians in the Canadian Provinces⁽⁴⁵⁾. It is likely he married into the Monomoyick Sachemry about this time because, when peace was declared we find that he was deeded land bordering the north bank of old Monomoyick River by the grandsons of Sagamore Mattaquason⁽⁴⁶⁾. Here he settled down for life, evidently becoming as good a farmer as fighter because the hundred acre tract on which his wigwam stood and where Micah Rafe and Hosey were to end their days soon came to be known as Cap'n Jeethro's Farm. In order to establish beyond question that Micah actually lived where my people said he did, I have traced the history of Cap'n Jeethro's Farm from the date he bought it in 1697 until the death of Micah himself in 1816.

Joseph Nickerson, son of the pioneer William who settled the town of Chatham, bought a large tract and built a home on the north shore of old Monomoyick River, the dividing line between Chatham and Harwich. On the east it abutted Cap'n Jeethro's Farm as is shown by a deed to his son in 1709⁽⁴⁷⁾. When the surviving heirs of the Old Sagamore sold what is practically now the whole town of Harwich to the sixteen white proprietors in 1711, they reserved out of it fifty acres adjoining "Joshua Jethros his land next to ye Wading Place"⁽⁴⁸⁾.

After the old warrior went to his final Hunting Ground in 1722, his farm fell to his three children: a son Joshua; a daughter, the wife of Samuel Crook; and Hosey's mother Sarah, the wife of Stephen Stephen. A division of the property in 1724 gave the northerly two-thirds to the two daughters and the southerly third to the son Joshua⁽⁴⁹⁾. Joshua's third embraced the spring and the gully where Micah Rafe's house later stood, undoubtedly the site of old Cap'n Jeethro's wigwam and his son Joshua's after him.

It is likely Hosey's mother died soon after Micah and Hosey were married in 1753 because in 1755 Micah wrote Judge Borne that he wished a division of the land on which he and Sam Crook lived—that is, the northerly two-thirds of the farm owned jointly by their wives. I have before me a copy of the reply the good Judge sent to Thomas Freeman,

Justice of the Peace for the Indians and a great-grandfather of mine. It says in part: "If Sam'l continues obstinate he will expose himself to great charge and trouble, pray tell him so from me, and that this is not merely to frition him to his duty but he shall soon feel as well as fear, if he chooses it." A postscript adds that in case he stands out, "to sue him and then Ralph will have his own half and Sam's half for the charge of the bill"⁽⁵⁰⁾.

When young Joshua Jethro's wife Esther died the 22nd of March, 1744, one of the Coroner's Jury at the inquest was Micah's uncle Jeremiah Ralph—the same Jeremiah whose hand had been branded for the killing at Cliff Pond twelve years earlier⁽⁵¹⁾. Joshua himself probably died not long after 1757 because that year he was whaling out of Billingsgate with his brother-in-law, Sam Crook⁽⁵²⁾ and the following year his wigwam site turns up in the possession of Elisha Linnell, who transferred it to Nathan Young on the 17th of July, 1758⁽⁵³⁾. On the 19th of November, 1760, he in turn deeded it to John Arey, from whom Micah Rafe bought it for twenty dollars March 13, 1769⁽⁵⁴⁾. It is my guess Joshua had given Linnell a deed to it as security for a debt and that Micah finally had it deeded back to him with a clear title. After 1769 Micah and Hosey made their home on this coveted riverside site.

In 1772 Micah filed a petition with the General Court seeking to get the rights inherent in the original deed of 1697 from the Monomoyick sachems to Cap'n Joshua Jeethro. He stated that his wife,

(45) Mentioned in letter from Lieut. Col. Jno. Gorham to Major Wally, Commissioner for War, dated April 8, 1697. *Mayflower Descendant* VI-184.

(46) Deed John, Joseph, Josephus and Samuel Quason to Captain Joshua Jethrow 25 March 1697, land at Askaonkton. Photostat my Collection from original *Mass. Archives* XXXIII-9.

(47) "easterly to Joshua Jeethro's land". Deed Joseph Nickerson to son William 5 Nov. 1709. *Mayflower Descendant* VIII-156.

(48) From Harwich Proprietors' Records. *Mass. Superior Court of Judicature* 144324.

(49) Division to Stephen Stephen and others. *Barnstable Probate Records* IV-51.

(50) Letter Judge Sylvanus Bourne to Justice Freeman. Original in Stanley W. Smith Collection, facsimile my Collection.

(51) Coroner's Inquest, *Mass. Superior Court of Judicature*.
(52) Petition of the whalemens. *Mass. State Archives* XXXIII-299.

(53) Deed Linnell to Young, *Mayflower Descendant* XVII-173/4.

(54) Deed Arey to Micah Rafe, Stanley W. Smith Collection IX-170.

"hosea", was the Cap'n's granddaughter and now the only living heir⁽⁵⁵⁾. The Courts' answer in 1774 was that Micah had rights to thirty acres, fifteen in his own name and fifteen in right of his wife and that "she hath in reversion a right to all of the said sixty acres"⁽⁵⁶⁾. This made them at last sole owners of the original Cap'n Jeethro's Farm on the old Monomoyick River at Askaonkton.

In Micah's day the mouth of the river lay open to Pleasant Bay, which once went by the same name as the river⁽⁵⁷⁾. The ancient Wading Place Path of the Indians from Cotchpinicut in North Chatham on its way to Nauset and down the Cape crossed on the sands at the mouth of the river at Askaonkton just below the present Harwich-Chatham causeway on Route 28⁽⁵⁸⁾. The causeway still goes by the name of Wading Place Bridge, a name I hope Cape Codders will never forget.

Then, as now, the river wound down between steep moss-covered banks, topped with wind-blown beach-plum trees and stippled with the bronze green of the savin. Lush sedges edged its shores save here and there where a sandy canoe-beach made a landing place. No earth-filled highway bridge shut out the flow of the harbor tides; since the days of the glacier the cold waters of the North Atlantic had poured in twice in every twenty-four hours to keep it sweet and clean.

The country roundabout Micah's house, stretching up river and over the hills around the Head of the Bay, was once the headquarters of the Monomoyick Tribe in the days when Hosey's great-great-grandfather Mattaquason was the Old Sagamore of all the Lower Cape Indians⁽⁵⁹⁾. Over around Crow's Pond and Ryder's Cove in Chathamport the kitchen middens where their wigwams once stood may still be traced except where they have been carted away for building roads or obliterated by the inexorable hand of the archaeologist. Until the coming of the white man this was a favorite region with the Indians. Fish filled the streams; clams, quahogs, and oysters crowded the sands, and mouldering deer bones in the shell heaps bear witness that venison was plentiful. Fruitful cornfields, rich with fertilizer from the spring herring-run, stretched back from tide-water and vied with the bean, the squash, and tobacco. Veritably this was a land flowing with Indian milk and honey.

Micah's house cuddled into the bank a short distance up stream from the Wading Place, where the

warmth of the winter's sun struck full upon it and the summer's sou'wester, called the Sowanisha by some Indians, swept cool across it down the valley of the Monomoyick. A boiling-spring of sweet water⁽⁶⁰⁾ bubbled up through the white sands at the foot of the bank, and a gully leading down to it from the housespot above still scores the face of the bank. Old deeds say that here "the creeturs" went down to drink, but countless generations of moccasined feet used that path long before the creatures of a white man ever saw it.

Many interesting Indian relics have been recovered from the site of his house. Skillfully wrought pottery work, implements of the chase, bones of the long extinct Great Auk, teeth of the bear, and bones of the deer and seal are mute reminders of a forgotten past. One of the most fascinating is an ancient bone comb something like those over which Spanish ladies draped their mantillas. About eight inches long by two wide and possibly an eighth of an inch thick, it was found buried six feet deep in ashes and charcoal⁽⁶¹⁾.

When my grandfather showed me this spot over sixty-five years ago—it is now 1960—it was marked simply by a slight dip in the ground perhaps ten feet across by three feet deep. This was before the archaeologists began their investigations. I was told Micah was no "wigwam Indian" but lived in an English-built house, framed, boarded, and shingled, with a smoke-hole in the roof. Probably he kept his fire Indian fashion on a hearth in the center of the floor under the smokehole. I never saw a scrap of brick, stone, or mortar there to indicate there was a chimney. The dip in the earth suggested that he may have had a little old round Cape Cod cellar laid up with logs.

The last "wigwam Indian" in these parts was Isaac James, better known to my people as Isaac *Jeems*, a cousin of Micah's wife Hosey, the son of

(55) Petition to General Court by "Micah Ralph a poor Indian of Harwich." *Mass. State Archives* XXXIII-622.

(56) The Court's answer. *Ibid.* Court XXX-624/626.

(57) The Sparrow Hawk was wrecked "right before—Manamoyake Bay", Bradford's *History of "Plimoth Plantation"* 262, State edition.

(58) "Joshua Jettiros land next to the Wading Place". Quason Reserve deed 7 April, 1712. *Mass. Superior Court of Judicature* 63888.

(59) William Nickerson, my immigrant ancestor, built his cabin in 1664 near the wigwam of the Old Sagamore at "Monomoy". It was only a short distance south of where Micah's would stand 100 years later.

(60) Cape Codders always called their cool, bubbling springs "boiling springs".

(61) Cleon Crowell Collection, along with many other rare relics.

Wa-he-na-nun and her husband Little James. His wigwam stood at Wequasset in East Harwich on the west side of Round Cove just above the Town Landing. It was Quanset-hut-shaped with a smoke-hole in the roof, framed with bent saplings, covered and lined with flag mats, and thatched with peeled cedar bark and rushes. Early settlers remarked that but for the smoke which couldn't get out and the fleas that didn't want to, these Indian houses were snuggler and warmer than their own first cabins.

When Wahenanun, a granddaughter of The Old Sagamore, and her brothers made their blanket sale to the Harwich Proprietors in 1711, she reserved this campsite for herself and her heirs, together with the right to peel bark and gather flags and rushes from the neighboring cedar swamps⁽⁶²⁾. Isaac's only child, a son, was a casualty in the old French and Indian Wars⁽⁶³⁾ and the property fell to Micah and Hosey after Isaac's death. They later sold it to my great-grandfather⁽⁶⁴⁾, and the spot was still known as "Isaac Jeems's Wigwam" when I was born almost within a stone's throw of it.

Wahenanun, Isaac's mother, is one of the four Indian women on Lower Cape Cod of whom I have documentary proof as to what their menfolk called them in their native tongue around their own campfires. It is noteworthy that all four were closely linked with the life story of Micah Rafe: Manatotomuske, his great-grandmother; her two sisters, Penasamuske and Aquanetva, alias Sarah; and his wife's cousin Wahenanun⁽⁶⁵⁾. It seems a pity that out of the hundreds of sweet-sounding names of the Indian squaws and maidens only these four were saved in the records. Surely Indian Aquanetva sounds as well to the English ear as Hebrew Sarah.

From their doorway Micah and Hosey looked out on scenes rich in memories of their people. Tales of outstanding events in the lives of their forefathers had always been told and retold around the tribal campfires until they became unwritten Indian history, passed along by word of mouth from one generation to the next, just as my grandfather told me what he knew about Micah Rafe. I am sure these last Indians treasured in their hearts more Cape Cod Indian lore than we can ever learn from printed book and written record. Not far away over the hills lay Stage Harbor in Chatham, the Saquanset of the Indians, where the first blood of Hosey's people was spilled by the whites in 1606 when Champlain sailed away leaving half a dozen

Monomoyicks and two of his own men dead on the shore. Downstream below the Wading Place was The Bay where Captain Thomas Dermer, the first white man of record to set foot on its shores, made a landing at "Manamock" in 1619 and was nearly wiped out by the Monomoyick sachem and his men, very likely Hosey's great-great-grandfather, the Old Sagamore himself. The very next year Mattaquason undoubtedly watched from the top of his Monamesset—the Great Point of today in Chathamport—as the Pilgrim's *Mayflower* turned on her heel offshore and headed back for The Landing.

Two years later Squanto piloted Governor Bradford in over the Bars to "Manamoyack Bay" and up to the Monomoyick headquarters around its Head. Bradford tells us that the famous Indian fell sick and died there and was given a Christian burial, perhaps in the very burial ground in which Micah and Hosey sleep. When, in 1626, the little *Sparrow Hawk* pounded in over the Bars of the "blind harbour that lyes about the middle of Mana-moyake Bay", Bradford came down again, repaired the damages, bought corn for the half-starved passengers, and rounded up the seamen gone AWOL with the handsome Indian maidens. She was about ready to sail when another gale caught her and piled her up a total loss, directly across The Bay in sight of my boyhood home. She sanded up, the sedge grew over her, and the spot became known as The Old Ship Lot to the mowers. Eventually it fell into the possession of Micah Rafe and was known as Mike's Hummock.

There was no white settlement between Bass River and Eastham until 1664, when my immigrant ancestor William Nickerson came down over the Indian trail, later known as the Monomoyick Cartway, and built his cabin beside the wigwam of The Old Sagamore. Little could they have guessed that in so few years the house of the last Indian Man on the Lower Cape, just across the river to the north, would be standing alone among the homes of the

(62) Deed Quason heirs to the Sixteen Share Proprietors. *Barnstable County Records* VI-38.

(63) 1748 *Barnstable Probate Records* VII-82.

(64) Deed Micah Ralph to Elnathan Eldredge, Jr., and brother Samuel. *Barnstable Registry of Deeds* Book 1-120. My great-great-grandmother Dorothy (Freeman) Eldredge, great-grandfather Elnathan Eldredge, Jr., grandmother Jane (Eldredge) Nickerson, my father Warren J. Nickerson and I, were all born on land adjoining Isaac Jeems's Wigwam.

(65) My friend the late Wm. C. Smith in his *History of Chatham* mentioned that Wahenanun's mother, the wife of Sachem John Quason Towsowet, may have been named Bapanum, but gave no documentation.

English settlers. Among such surroundings Micah Rafe passed the evening of his life, a fit setting for the final days of the Last Indian.

Not long after Micah and Hosey were settled in their home on the old campsite by the river, Elnathan Eldredge married Dorothy Freeman and moved into his new house at Wequasset⁽⁶⁶⁾, built on land which was deeded to one of her forefathers to square a debt of two pounds five shillings owed his father Major John Freeman by "Jno Quason of Monomoy, Indian Sachem Deceased"⁽⁶⁷⁾. This was Sachem John Quason Towsowet, son of the Old Sagamore, the father of Wahenanun, and brother of Hosey's great-grandmother Sarah Maskuck. Incidentally, this piece of land has never been owned to this day except by an Indian or my people.

After Elnathan's father, Ebenezer, a miller in Chathamport, died, Elnathan moved the mill across The Bay and set it up anew on top of the high hill just to the northeast of Round Cove. As a boy I played among its rotting timbers over a hundred years later, but its nether millstone which once ground Micah's corn still does duty on the very same spot as a doorstep to Wequasset Inn.

Elnathan was as good at bookkeeping as at grinding his grist, and I am proud that his handmade account book in which he kept careful reckoning of his debts and credits with Micah Rafe was preserved and handed down to me, his great-great-grandson. From it we glean a little insight into the activities of the last old Indian: Elnathan, being a cobbler as well as a miller, made shoes for Micah and his household, together with leathern bands for his cattle which drank from the spring at the foot of the gully "where the creturs go down to drink", according to the old deeds. Among the other items noted we find such articles as homespun cloth for the Indians' shirts and dresses, which must have come from the spinning wheel of great-great-grandma Dorothy.

Little if any cash passed between them for all this traffic. Sometimes the bill ran as high as thirty-five dollars old tenor—a lot of money in those days—but it was always paid. Credits, such as "reping an acre of rie" or "squawing hay from the flats" were common—perhaps from Micah's own Mike's Hummock down The Bay⁽⁶⁸⁾. One account was squared by "One seduck which waid 3 pounds and a half" and another by "100 pomkings", showing that Cap'n Jeethro's farm was still living up to its name.

I can see them now: the dusty miller, blue-eyed, red-faced and huge of frame as were all the early Saxon Eldreds, one hand in the hopper and the other in the till, bartering with the shrewd, black-eyed old Indian who had learned long since to buy goods by the span of his own right hand rather than the short-thumbed span of the white man.

His family, besides Hosey and himself, consisted of Hannah Moses and her little boy Isaac born in their house, as both the Rafes were so careful to state in their wills. I am not certain Micah and his wife ever had any children of their own although the Rev. Mr. Stiles reported in 1762 that they may have had "perhaps two boys" living with them⁽⁶⁹⁾. If this was true and these were their own, then they probably died before little Isaac Moses was born, because he was the only youngster there after 1770. Perhaps that was why they loved him so dearly even though he had a taint of black Moses blood in his veins⁽⁷⁰⁾.

Micah Rafe owned several large tracts of land in the Harwiches, Orleans and Brewster. I have already mentioned the salt-marsh across The Bay from my boyhood home known as Mike's Hummock⁽⁷¹⁾. There was also a wood-lot near the head of Long Pond in East Harwich⁽⁷²⁾, four acres "in the head of Skaket general field" where his grandfather Jeremiah used to pasture his cattle⁽⁷³⁾, as well as his inherited rights in the Privileged Indian property, and through his wife all her reversionary rights to the remaining Monomoyick lands. After the death of Isaac James the Wequasset lot known as Isaac Jeems's Wigwam also fell to him along with Isaac's burial place.

Two moss-grown boulders beside the Wading Place Path, just over the hill to the northwest of the

(66) They were married Oct. 13, 1770. *Harwich Vital Records*.

(67) Original deed from Young John Quason, son of the sachem, to Thomas Freeman, Aug. 13, 1711. Stanley W. Smith Collection, E. F. Small Papers.

(68) "Squawing" was granther's way of spelling *scowing*. The salt hay from the tidal marshes was brought off on wooden flatbottomed scows to cure in the mainland hayfields.

(69) *History of Harwich*, Paine.

(70) The Moses Indian family crossed blood very early with the Negro slaves. See my *Lower Cape Cod Indians*, Book 2, *The Nawsets*.

(71) Original deed Micah Ralph to Ensign Nickerson 19 May 1815. Stanley W. Smith Collection, Osborn Nickerson Papers.

(72) Deed Isaac Moses to Benjamin Eldredge 27 July, 1838 "formerly land of Micah Rafe's". *Barnstable Registry of Deeds* 111-86.

(73) *Ibid. Registry* 1-24. Deed Micah Ralph to Henry Knowles 10 December 1814.

site of Isaac James's wigwam, marked his grave and undoubtedly that of his mother Wahenanun. In the top of the larger one were two curious cup-shaped holes which tradition said were the result of Indian squaws' pounding with pestles as they sat and grieved for their dead(74). On my way to school along this Wading Place Path I often added my irreverent bit to the holes on that boulder, which then stood among a dozen or more old fieldstones marking the graves of as many Indians, covered today by the fallen leaves of three-quarters of a century.

On the 12th of October, 1798, Hosey made her will, making Micah sole executor and signing by mark. She left to her "Beloved husband, Micah Ralph" during his natural life the improvement of her "Estate, in lands or in any otherwise belonging or coming" to her. Immediately after his decease "all and every part—in any name or nature" was to go to "our beloved friend (born in our house) Isaac Moses, son of Hannah Moses, now and for a long time resident in our house". The will did not come to probate until nearly a year and a half later, on the 29th of March, 1800, and it is probable she lived until not long before that date(75).

She was the last of The Old Sagamore's descendants to live on the Monomoyick lands and the last full-blooded Indian woman on the whole Lower Cape. Two other Indian women outlived her and are sometimes referred to by historical writers as the "last Indians", but a careful checking of the records shows that neither was a full blood. Beck Crook of Harwich, the last living heir to the ancient Sauquatucket tribal lands, is said to have deplored her black skin but trusted God to make her soul white(76). Bess Tobey, a direct descendant of the Nawset sachems, was named in the will of Joshua Hopkins in 1775 as "my Negro woman"(77).

Micah had already sold to Reuben Eldredge in 1793 his remaining nine acres in the old Ralph land in South Orleans where his father's wigwam and the last Potanumicut Indian Meeting House once stood(78). On the 15th of April, 1810, shortly after Hosey died, my great-grandfather Elnathan Eldredge, Jr., and his brother, sons of the miller, bought his two-acre "Isaac Jeems's Wigwam" lot at Round Cove in East Harwich, which had fallen to his wife by reversion on Isaac James' death(79). Isaac Moses witnessed Micah's signature to this deed and from this date all legal papers signed by the old Indian were attested to by him. It is

noticeable, however, that while Micah frequently signed as "Micah Rafe—Indian Man", Isaac Moses who had a streak of Negro blood never spoke of himself as an Indian. Isaac lived until after 1738, was an excellent penman, and a violinist of local repute. The fieldstone marking his grave and that of his wife Nancy alongside the Bay Road was still in place within my memory.

Micah Rafe was getting along in years and even though Hannah Moses and young Isaac made his last days as comfortable as they could, he missed Hosey, who had kept his hearth fire burning for nearly half a century. On the 7th of July, 1814, he made his will, bequeathing "unto Isaac Moses—born in my house—all real and personal Estate," with the request that he "support his mother Hannah Moses—during hir natural life"(80). On the 10th of December that same year he disposed of part of his Skaket General Field lot in Orleans to Henry Knowles(81). The last transaction of his life, so far as I know, was his sale on May 19, 1815, to Ensign Nickerson of his salt-marsh known as Mike's Hummock near the ancient entrance to Pleasant Bay, where the wreck of the Sparrow Hawk still lay(82).

Before another spring rolled around he too had gone the way of all his race. When on the 18th of March, 1816, Isaac Moses presented for probate the "Will of Micah Ralph, late of Harwich" the last chapter of a long life was closed(83). Judging from the date of his marriage and other circumstances connected with his life, we know he must have been between eighty and ninety years old.

Micah Rafe was laid away beside Hosey in the old Indian burying ground at Askaonkton on Cap'n Jeethro's Farm, on the west slope of the first hill on the north side of Bay Road going west from the

(74) Archaeologists tell me these were holes in which the Indians polished their stone sinkers.

(75) From Hosey's will. *Barnstable Probate Records* XXX-7 and XXII-25.

(76) *History of Harwich*. Paine.

(77) *My Lower Cape Cod Indians, Book 2. The Nawsets.*

(78) Original deed Micah Ralph to Reuben Eldredge 23 May 1793. Stanley W. Smith Collection X-35.

(79) Deed Micah Ralph to Elnathan Eldredge, Jr., and his brother Samuel. *Barnstable Registry of Deeds*, Harwich Book 1-120.

(80) Micah's will recorded, *Barnstable Probate Records* XXXII-7.

(81) Deed Micah Ralph to Henry Knowles et. als. *Barnstable Registry of Deeds*, Orleans Book 1-24.

(82) Original deed Micah Ralph to Ensign Nickerson. Stanley W. Smith Collection, Osborn Nickerson Papers.

(83) Micah's will presented, *Barnstable Probate Records* XXX-7.

Wading Place, not far from where they had lived so happily together. My brother Carroll's wife, Mrs. Emogene Nickerson, who was born and grew up almost within a stone's throw of both their house spot and burial place, could remember when their graves were mounded with fieldstones, among which, she said, the spring violets always grew larger and bluer

Thus the story of Micah Rafe—Indian man comes to a close with no apologies for its errors or incompleteness. It is much less than I would like

to give and infinitely less than he deserves. I offer it, however, as a small tribute to the memory of a fine old Red Man. It is my hope that some day my native town will feel moved to place a lasting marker on his moss-grown grave or at the site of his house at Askaonkton on the banks of the old Monomoyick.

It must be a solemn thought for a childless man to know that when his eyes close in death a chain of generations which began when man began is broken. How profoundly more so must it be to know, as Micah knew, that a race is dying with you.



FEATHERS

LAURENCE K. GAHAN

FOREWORD

One of the most exasperating things about the Indian language is the fact that a simple statement requires from a paragraph to a full page of explanation. For instance, a vowel or diphthong is liable to be any other vowel or diphthong. And then other irregularities occur, such as: w,m,n,r,l,h, and y are not only interchangeable, but are often omitted initially or slurred into a vowel sound between syllables; a number of the consonants form digraphs of which frequently only one letter is pronounced; certain related consonants are not well differentiated; and an infix "t" often becomes an "s" while a final "s" often becomes a "t". All of this resulted

from word of mouth transmission, when early colonial writers attempted to transcribe Indian syllables in English as they thought they heard them. Thus, an Indian word may have half a dozen spellings, and in dealing with names, variations are exceedingly numerous. Dr. Douglass-Lilithgow listed one hundred and thirty-six variations of "Winnepesauke" and probably did not get them all at that.

In the following article I have endeavored to use the best known forms of Indian names, even when they are a long way from the Indian original.

Indian names were chosen in about the same way that other primitive peoples chose theirs, from: a physical characteristic; an animal or bird; a complimentary title; a particular personal possession or ornament; or the name of some locality with which there was a connection. There has also been a suggestion that an individual's name may at times have been taken from his totem. For example, apparently, Samoset's name was derived in this manner: "woosamoseu," meaning "horned," suggests that his totem may have been "something with horns." A few Indian names may have belonged in this class.

last method, no doubt, was followed by the English scribes for the sake of exactness. In examining some of their work, it is interesting to note that "s" sometimes changing to "t" was used as a suffix to denote proper names, but this seems not to have been a hard and fast rule.

While some names were much abbreviated, others were written out with all component syllables. This

An Indian, especially a prominent one, generally acquired several names or titles during his lifetime, so that records of deeds appear signed by the same group of chiefs, many of whom used different names from time to time. For instance, the name "Massasoit" was really a title meaning "Great Chief". Fairly late in this chief's career he acquired the name of "Ousemaquin," which means "Yellow Feather."

Reference to a feather of some kind for a name seems to have been popular, as for example: Massasoit had a brother, Quadequina (K'htemaquin), whose name means "Big Feather;" the brother of Pessaucus was named Cauchauquant (Kussumaquins) meaning "Tall Feather;" a Massachusetts chief was called Cutshamoquen (Kuttis(a)maquin) meaning "Comorant Feather;" and there was Tispaquin (Wutis-apu-mequin), "The Black Sachem," whose name actually means "Black Upright Feather." Feathers also distinguished some of the women, for the daughter of Quaiapen was called Quenimiquet, which name is suggestive since "quens" means "Long Feather."

Our New England Indians may, like the Scotch, have considered feathers of certain types as badges of nobility, which would make this subject all the more significant. A hint that this may have been so is suggested by the name Anaweakin (Anamequin, Nipmuck dialect) meaning "No Feather." This man was a Christian chief at Hassenamesset, now Grafton. Perhaps, by cutting his hair short according to English custom, as was the habit of praying Indians, he did not have enough hair left to hold a feather, or perhaps he shunned feather-wearing as belonging to pagans, not Christians. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that his name was "No Feather," which suggests that the lack of a feather in his wearing apparel was noticeable enough to give him his title. Then there was Appanow (Epinow). He must have had plenty of feathers for his name means "The Winged One," although it is possible that this may be a totem name.

Feathers were not the only personal possession, which induced the naming of Indians, as for example: Caunbitant, who lived at Swansea, was named, "Quilled Quiver;" Shekanenoote means "Green Basket;" and Sagamore Sam, known also as Sho-Shineen (Shawsheen or Mass-ashim) means "Big Spring." This man must have carried a big club for that is the meaning of one of his names, Ustakuhgun (Masstomonkun).

Many names like Massasoit were titles, some, entirely complimentary. Ninnagret was called Ianeomo, meaning "The Warrior," as also was Iyanough, the sachem of Cummaquid. Miantonomoh, a Narragansett chief, carried a name which means "The War-maker." The meaning of Weetamoe, who was a squaw sachem, is "Companion" (concubine). However, she had another name, Nanumpum, mean-

ing "Ruler." Other forms of the same name of ruler, all used by different people are: Anawon, Nanentanoo, Wawaloam, and Wanalancet. It is interesting to note the resemblance of "Wanalancet" to Raleigh's "Werrowaunce." With our New England Indians, it seems that women could not only become heads of tribes, but could share their husbands' authority, as is suggested by Wawaloam, meaning "Ruler," who was the wife of Miantonomoh. King Philip, besides other names, was called Wawasowamuet, meaning "Ruler of Sowams." Then there was Passaconoway, which with but a little change becomes Pasuk-kenoonuaen, meaning "First (Prime) Counselor." Uncas, chief of the Mohegans, was sometimes called Poquiam, or "The Protector."

Physical traits were also in evidence. Take for instance, one, Wunemenadchuen, who with others signed deeds to territory near Assowomset. This name means "Crooked Left Hand," which might well have referred to Philip, whose left hand had been crippled by an accidental pistol discharge. Philip's brother, Alexander had a boyhood name, Manoonam, meaning "Darling." A female ruler was named Quaiapen, which means "Woman-boss," but she was also called Mantantuck (Mantentog), meaning "She-is-old." Another name was Accompoim, which means "Grey-haired."

Some names were derived from animals, as for example: Uncas was called Wonquis, "The Fox" while his son was called "The Moose;" and a certain Quinnebaug chief, who signed his name in a dozen ways, was sometimes called Allum, or "Dog;" while a prominent son of Chicotabut was Wampatuck, meaning "The Goose." Still another example is Crispus Attucks, a half-breed Indian-negro, who was killed in the Boston Massacre of 1770. On his father's side he was Indian and "Attucks" means "Deer."

Place names were also used as proper names of some chiefs. Of the Narragansett chiefs, Ninnigret's name seems to be a corruption of Nunnequennut, or "Landing-place." Philip's best known name is Pometacomet, or "Pawmet House" ("comet" means chief's house). As far as may be learned, the name Nannepanshemet has nothing whatever to do with the moon, but means "Dry-bank Spring." The name of Koskotop, uncle of Chicotabut, means "High Rock." The name sported by the Massachusetts chief, Chicotabut, means "Raging Water Place," not "House-on-fire." Another name sometimes used by Philip is Wagusoke (Wonquis-oke), or "Fox

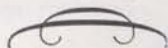
Place." Another place name derivation is of interest, as it pertains to Chief Alexander, Philip's brother, whose name was Wamsutta. This seems to be derived from "Assawomset" by the addition of an euphonious "a" as an ending.

So far, none of the names referred to show much of the vaunted Indian imagination, unless exception is made of the title, "The Warrior" given to Ninnigret, who, after all, was a pretty cautious man. However, more creative imagination is to be found in some female names, as might be expected. Take for example Awashonks, squaw sachem of the Sacconnet Indians and friend of Captain Church.

Her name means "Noble Queen." Then there was Quinnapen's favorite squaw, Onux (Anogqs), meaning "The Star." Another example is the wife of Awossamaug, whose name, Yawcoataw, means "The Merry One." But the best, yet, is the name of King Philip's wife, Woontonekansuke. Break this name down and see what appears: "wunnetan" (sweet); "ekan" (rose or blossom); "sook" (mouth); and it seems to the writer that "Sweet-blossom-mouth" would be a nice name for any woman.

Worcester, Mass.

August 1960



NEWS LETTER NO. 49

REPORT OF THE 1960 ANNUAL MEETING

The 22nd annual meeting of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society was held at the Bronson Museum, Attleboro, Mass., Saturday, October 8, 1960; thirty-seven members were present.

The meeting was called to order by the President, E. C. Winter, Jr., at 11 A.M., and after a few remarks by the President, the report of the Secretary was read, accepted, and placed on file.

The Treasurer's report was read, and, together with the Auditor's report, was approved and placed on file. It shows a working cash balance of \$1,202.34 with total cash assets of \$1,841.58.

Reports were then received from the Editor, Librarian, and the Board of Trustees, which were duly approved.

The Museum Director, Maurice Robbins, reported two additional ceramic pots have been restored by our Curator, and have been added to our exhibits. He extends an invitation to all Society members to make use of our facilities—open regularly Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday of each week, other days by appointment.

The President reported for Douglas Jordan, Research Chairman, and gave a brief review of the activities of the Research Council.

Chapter reports were read, which showed activities of the various State groups as follows:

Cohannet Chapter of the Taunton area has held regular monthly meetings with speakers on various subjects. During the summer months, members have continued excavations at Assowampsett Lake. This winter Dr. Robbins will hold lectures at the Bronson Museum on "Ancient Man In The Northeast."

South Shore Chapter of the Hingham area has held monthly meetings highlighted by a talk on "Cultures, Artifacts, and Peoples of New England" by Dr. William Fowler. Tests are being made in an effort to find a Chapter dig.

Sippican Chapter of Marion has been active with monthly meetings with good attendance. The Rochester site continues to be excavated by Chapter members.

W. Elmer Ekblaw Chapter of the Worcester area has held monthly meetings with various interesting topics of discussion, and has concluded excavation of the Millbury steatite quarry.

Massasoit Chapter of Plymouth has been active with monthly meetings, and has invited the Society to hold their April next meeting in Plymouth.

Northeastern Chapter has held monthly meetings at the Robert S. Peabody Museum in Andover, at which worthwhile discussions on archaeological topics have attracted good attendance. Excavations of small sites in the Wakefield-Saugus Breakheart Reservation have been undertaken by Chapter members with interesting results.

Maine Chapter of the State of Maine reports active participation in monthly meetings, and various trips to archaeological sites for excavation and exploration.

Dr. William S. Fowler offered remarks concerning activities of the Narragansett Archaeological Society of Rhode Island, and introduced John B. Hudson, first president of that organization.

Resolutions were offered, accepted, and spread upon the records concerning the deaths of Dr. Richard J. Lougee, Honorary Member, and Francis J. Valente and Ralph Nickerson, Cohannet Chapter members.

The budget for 1960-61, as follows, was voted approved:

\$1,200.00	4 Bulletins
150.00	Office Expense (Bulletin mailing expense included)
200.00	Museum Expense
200.00	Meeting Expense
47.50	Eastern States Federation dues

\$1,797.50 (Previous year's total was \$2,047.50)

Voted to hold our semi-annual April meeting in Plymouth for 1961, and in New Bedford in 1962.

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers for the ensuing year, and the Secretary was requested by vote to cast one ballot for the slate as follows: President, V. C. Petersen; 1st Vice President, A. C. Lord; 2nd Vice President, H. F. Nye; Secretary, M. Robbins; Treasurer, A. C. Staples; Editor, W. S. Fowler; Trustees to 1963, L. K. Gahan, R. Valyou.

Guy Mellgren spoke about work at his Goddard site in Maine, and of interference presumed to be by members of the Maine Chapter. After some dis-

ussion, it was voted to direct the Trustees to take appropriate action to safeguard Mellgren's excavation rights.

After a vote of appreciation was extended to our retiring President, Eugene C. Winter, Jr., the meeting adjourned at 12:00 Noon.

AFTERNOON SESSION

The afternoon session was called to order at 2:00 P.M., and the Hon. Cyril Brennan, Mayor of Attleboro, welcomed the members and guests to Attleboro.

In the absence of Douglas Jordan, his paper, entitled "Intrusive Iroquoian Pottery in Northeastern Massachusetts" was delivered by tape recording.

Eugene C. Winter, Jr. gave an interesting discussion entitled, "Recovering Information from the Soil."

Howard S. Russell followed with a paper, "Wake Up to Indian Agriculture." He presented an informative talk on primitive agriculture in Massachusetts and illustrated his remarks with mounted photographs.

An illustrated paper by William S. Fowler, entitled, "Movement of Prehistoric Peoples in the Northeast" presented new evidence to show how the Housatonic Valley of the Berkshires fits into the picture of early man's occupation.

The meeting closed with a paper by Maurice Robbins on "Evidence of Paleo at Wapanucket 8," which was illustrated with slides, showing fluted points and other ancient evidence now being excavated by the Cohannet Chapter.

EVENING SESSION

After a well served dinner at the Second Congregational Church, the group returned to the Bronson Museum, where a most interesting lecture on "Digging in the Maya Area" was given by our guest speaker, Tatiana Proskouriakoff, Research Fellow in Maya Art, Peabody Museum, Cambridge, Mass.

