

## The Ghosts of Wampum

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**Lesson Overview:** Students will compare and contrast the representation of wampum in different types of historical sources to analyze the gap in understanding of reciprocity between the settler colonists and the Conestoga people from different historical perspectives.

Although wampum has often been portrayed as a form of Native American decoration, it played an integral role in colonial diplomacy. Wampum signified “the importance or the authority of the message associated with it. As such, treaties and other such agreements would have a large amount of wampum that had been loomed into a ‘belt’ for them” (*Ganondagan*).

The 1763 Paxton massacres occurred in the context of rising tensions between those who sought accommodation, associated with the exchange of wampum belts, and those who sought ethnic cleansing, articulated in printed materials that conflated wampum with disregard for settler colonists in the borderlands.

### Lesson Objectives:

- Students will evaluate visual primary and secondary sources, including a contemporary graphic novel and an eighteenth-century political cartoon.
- Students will learn how contemporary historians are working to integrate previously underrepresented voices and stories.
- Students will use their background knowledge to evaluate sources and create an argument about the symbolism of wampum.
- Students will compare and contrast arguments using a structured academic controversy.
- Students will revise arguments and select appropriate evidence.
- Students will reinterpret the Paxton massacre and about settler colonialism.

### Essential Questions:

- What role does reciprocity play in relationships between different peoples?
- How and why do relationships between groups of people change over time?
- How do symbols embody change or continuity in relationships?
- What did Native peoples in colonial Pennsylvania expect from their relationships with the settler colonists? How do we know?
- What did the settler colonists expect from their relationships with the Native peoples? How do we know?

**Grade Level:** Grade 11

**Standards:**

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WH.6-8.1:** Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.8:** Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9:** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

**Historical Background:**

- Historians use a wide range of artifacts, including wampum belts, to explore Native American history (which has limited, extant written primary source records).
- Native peoples' understanding of reciprocity was enacted through the exchange of wampum.
- Wampum belts are connected and represent a relationship, whereas individual wampum beads are a form of currency. For example, the Treaty of Shackamaxon wampum belt given to William Penn in 1682 (featured in *Ghost River*), which is on exhibit at the Philadelphia History Museum, "was said to be given to William Penn by the Lenape tribe at the time of the 1682 treaty. The belt, donated in 1857 to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania by a great-grandson of Penn, is made of white wampum with darker accent beads and depicts two figures holding hands, often interpreted as a sign of friendship and peace."
- The tension between the settler colonists (and their increasing desire to move away from accommodation to thorough occupation of the land) and London's continued desire for reciprocity and accommodation was reflected in the pamphlet war, both during and after the Paxton massacre.

**Materials:**

## Reading packet:

- Excerpts from Daniel Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013. pp. 201-206.
- Excerpts from *Ghost River: The Fall and Rise of the Conestoga*
- James Claypoole, *An Indian Squaw King Wampum Spies*. Digital Paxton.
- Penn Wampum Belt (1682 Shackamoxon treaty). Digital Paxton.
- Guiding questions (printed or projected on smartboard)

## Background readings:

- Ganondagan
- Haudenosaunee Guide for Educators (pp. 6 & 7)
- NativeTech: Native American Technology & Art

## Optional readings:

- Lee Francis, Weshoyot Alvitre, and Will Fenton. *Ghost River: The Fall and Rise of the Conestoga*. Albuquerque: Red Planet Books and Comics, 2019.
- Digital Paxton
- Author, Artist, and Editor bios

**Procedure:**

**Pre-work:** Have students read the homework packet on wampum and the Paxton massacres.

**Classroom Activities** (75 minutes)

1. Play this excerpt from the musical *Chicago* as students come in:

*Ask any of the chickies in my pen  
 They'll tell you I'm the biggest mother hen  
 I love them all and all of them love me -  
 Because the system works;  
 the system called reciprocity!*

*Got a little motto  
 Always sees me through  
 When you're good to Mama  
 Mama's good to you!*

2. Ask students to free write on “reciprocate.” Students may write a list, letter, scene, poem, or draw a sketch that they associate with the word.
3. Students talk in pairs: what did you write or draw, and why?
4. As a class, generate a working definition for “reciprocate” and write it on the board.
5. Class or small-group discussion: why is it important to reciprocate in relationships? Segue to thinking about ways of symbolizing reciprocity in relationships. How do I communicate my relationships with people or organizations? (e.g. a wedding ring shows marital status).
6. Homework recap/ mini lecture on reciprocity, accommodation and wampum in the 1600s and 1700s. Ask students to retrieve/recall how wampum represented based on what they read for homework (ex. to Native people wampum belts represented reciprocity in treaties with the British. Wampum was not money or decoration).
7. Split students into two groups to examine the Reading Packet:
  - a. Group One examines *Ghost River* excerpts with Penn Wampum Belt.
  - b. Group Two examines *Ghost River* excerpts with Indian Squaw King.
8. Both groups address their respective guiding questions and draft a thesis statement about what wampum meant to the settler colonists and Conestoga people.

9. As a class, compare both groups' thesis statements.
10. Finish by examining the full cartoon (Indian Squaw King) and explaining the role of pamphlets in the aftermath of the Conestoga Massacres. Stress to the students that Native people were still engaging in centuries-old ideals of reciprocity, whereas the settler colonists were increasingly intent on acquiring more land. Settler colonists were also frustrated that the metropolis (Parliament in London) did not unconditionally support them.

“The Paxton crisis, as Thomas Penn predicted, was a war of words and images fought by Paxton critics and defenders who debated Pennsylvania's future by inflaming the passions and misleading the judgement of many in the colony. Yet, in a war sparked by violence against Indians, it is surprising how absent or misrepresented the Conestogas were in these discussions. Few texts acknowledged the Paxton murders. Instead, most works, including political cartoons, either denied the Conestogas' agency by portraying them as helpless dependents of the colony and its Quaker merchants, or by stereotyping them as either cunning, half-naked savages or hatchet-wielding warriors, images popularized during the Seven Years' War. With no native voices to argue on behalf of the Conestogas, the Paxton debates document the colonial narrative of the crisis. They also capture a turning point in the history of the Pennsylvanian colony, away from acknowledgement and negotiation and towards the whole scale displacement and dispossession of indigenous peoples” (Judith Ridner, *Passion, Politics, and Portrayal in the Paxton Debates*, Digital Paxton)

### **Assessment and Extensions:**

#### **Assessment:**

Write a thesis statement that addresses one or more of these questions. State what two pieces of evidence best support your thesis.

- What did Native peoples in colonial Pennsylvania expect from their relationships with the settler colonists? How do we know?
- What did the settler colonists expect from their relationships with the Native peoples? How do we know?

#### **Extension:**

What additional resources would you need to better understand the significance of wampum to different groups of people? What else do you know, need to know, or want to learn?

#### **Homework:**

Read and annotate *Ghost River*. Select one page you want to close-read and discuss in class.

## Reading Packet

Excerpts from Daniel Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 203. pp. 201-206.



While Pontiac regrouped on the Maumee, just east of the Susquehanna River at a place called Paxton a group of Scots-Irish Presbyterians nursed their own vision of racial exclusivity on a continent purged of their enemies. According to a horrified Heckewelder, these Pennsylvanians had believed throughout the region's bloody reciprocal massacres of the Seven Years' War "that the Indians were the Canaanites,

who by God's commandment were to be destroyed; and that this not having been done by them at that time, the present war might be considered as a just punishment from God for their disobedience."<sup>20</sup> Although such religious doctrines were frequently attributed to them by their Pennsylvania opponents, in their later public statements the Paxtonians offered a more secular, political, and strategic explanation of why Indians must not be permitted to share the land with Whites:

We have long been convinced from sufficient evidence that the Indians that lived as independent commonwealths among us or near our borders were our most dangerous enemies, both in the last and present war, although they still pretended to be our friends . . . as they murdered our inhabitants, led them into captivity, were guides to other Indians, reported our weak and defenseless state to the French together with all our motions and dispositions against them; and at the same time wearing the cloak of friendship, they could readily obtain provisions, ammunition, and warlike implements to convey to our enemies. Their well known claim to freedom and independency put it in their power to harbor spies and give intelligence. They have ever asserted and exercised the right of making war and peace as independent nations, never came under our laws, nor acknowledged subjection to our king and government; but they always governed themselves by their own customs, and exercised the power of life and death over their own people . . . Mournful experience has convinced us that no nation could be safe especially in a time of war, if another state or part of a state be allowed to live among them, free and independent, claiming and exercising within themselves all the powers of government, the powers of making war and peace, harboring and corresponding with the enemies of the state wherein they live, received their spies, given them intelligence, and furnishing them with the means of support and implements of war. No such privilege has been granted to any commonwealth in any civilized nation in the world. But this had been allowed to Indians amongst us, and we justly complain of it as the source of many of our calamities; as they have all proved perfidious.<sup>21</sup>

Just as Neolin and Pontiac envisioned an Indian country purged of the British, these “Paxton Boys” (or, as they referred to themselves, “Hickory Boys”) envisioned a Euro-American country purged of Indians, who, as a race were by definition their enemies. But like the Delawares and Shawnees, who often directed their bloody campaign against specific, personal targets, the Paxton Boys had their reasons for choosing particular victims on which to vent their generalized racial hatreds. Some of the Paxton militia had been the ones who discovered the tortured bodies of the Susquehanna Company squatters at Wyoming, and they were out for revenge. Much of their rage focused on a man known variously as Toshetaquah, Will Sock, or Bill Soc, a onetime Native diplomatic envoy for the British who, the Paxtonians were convinced, not only duplicitously consorted with enemy Indians but had himself killed and captured Pennsylvanians, if not at Wyoming then elsewhere. Whether any of this was true is doubtful; Toshetaquah may have been guilty of nothing more than holding his head high, speaking disrespectfully to his Euro-American neighbors, and maintaining communications with kin who lived in Indian country during what was, after all, a decade-long period of vengeance killings on both sides.<sup>22</sup>

Whatever the case, Will Sock lived near Lancaster at Conestoga Manor, in a village whose twenty or so inhabitants of mixed Indian ancestry—most of them had Christian names—carefully preserved a document and wampum belts recording a treaty with William Penn in 1701. One of them, an elderly Seneca named Sheehays, may even have been present himself on that long-ago occasion. As the Paxtonians saw it, however, such pretensions to ancient amity were only cause for further suspicion. “Knowing that the little commonwealth of Indians at Conestoga that pretended to be our friends, had done us much mischief, and were in reality our most dangerous enemies,” they explained, “a number of persons living amongst us, who had seen their houses in flames, their parents and relatives butchered in the most inhuman manner determined to root out this nest of perfidious enemies; and accordingly cut them off.” In mid-December 1763 Matthew Smith and several other men from Paxton reported that they had seen dozens of armed Indians at Conestoga. Before dawn on the fourteenth the Paxtonians, their numbers reinforced to

about fifty, burned the town to the ground and killed all six people they found sleeping there. Sheehays was among them, but not Toshetaquah, who, with his wife Kanianquas, two other adult couples, and eight children, had been away from home during the attack. To protect these fourteen survivors, local officials rounded them up and lodged them in the Lancaster workhouse. On the twenty-seventh a well-organized lynch mob from Paxton broke in—no Lancasterian offered much resistance or claimed to know who they were—and slaughtered them all, hacking off hands and feet, smashing skulls, lifting scalps.<sup>23</sup>

Next the Paxtonians set their sights on Philadelphia and another group of Indians who had supposedly consorted with the province's enemies. These were some 127 Delaware and other Indians who had formerly resided in the Moravian mission communities of Nain and Wequetank; they had been moved to the city either for their own protection or because they were under suspicion for harboring the province's enemies—it depended on whom one asked. Most were Delawares, and so, like Tosehtaquah, no doubt communicated with kin who had participated in raids against Pennsylvanians, but their main crimes seem to have been simply that they were Indians and that they lived prosperously within the province's boundaries. When word arrived of the events at Lancaster, the Moravian Indians proposed that they be sent from the City of Brotherly Love to perhaps the only safe haven they could imagine—the British Isles. Shipped off toward New York instead, they were turned back by authorities of both that province and New Jersey, and wound up back in Philadelphia in late January 1764. Several hundred men subsequently marched from Paxton to deal with them, gathering additional recruits along the way. Benjamin Franklin and Governor John Penn (normally political foes) hastily mobilized a thousand Philadelphia residents, many of them Quakers, to oppose the marchers. Many thousands more—perhaps three-quarters of the city's population—probably sympathized with the westerners, however. Amid these tensions, Franklin and several other prominent Philadelphians negotiated with the Paxton leaders at Germantown, a few miles outside the capital, and got them to turn back in exchange for an agreement to publish their grievances and place them before the provincial assembly.<sup>24</sup>

"A Declaration and Remonstrance of the Distressed and Bleeding Frontier Inhabitants," which Smith and his associate James Gibson drafted,

stands both as a mirror image of Pontiac's vision of racial separatism and as a stinging critique of people like Franklin and Penn who believed that there was such a thing as a friendly Indian with whom a mutually beneficial accommodation could be reached. The Moravian refugees were "known to be firmly connected in friendship with our openly avowed embittered enemies; and some . . . have, by several oaths, been proved to be murderers," the "Declaration" alleged. "We saw [them] with indignation cherished and caressed as dearest friends—but this, alas! is but a part, a small part, of that excessive regard manifested to Indians, beyond his majesty's loyal subjects, whereof we complain." Provincial officials had acted "as tributaries to savages," lavishing gifts on these and other Indians, lending them every benefit of the doubt, "while, at the same time, hundreds of poor distressed families of his majesty's subjects, obliged to abandon their possessions, and flee for their lives at least, are left, except a small relief at first, in the most distressing circumstances, to starve neglected, save what the friendly hand of private donations has contributed to their support." The Pennsylvania assembly, dominated by Quakers who were not only pacifists but had "a most violent attachment to Indians," had done nothing to support Bouquet's campaign against Fort Pitt or any other military expeditions, and even refused to pay a bounty for Indian scalps as "encouragement to excite volunteers to go forth against them." In stark contrast, the Paxtonians charged, when the Conestogas had been righteously "struck by a distressed, bereft, injured frontier," the government had inexplicably offered "a liberal reward . . . for apprehending the perpetrators of that horrible crime of killing his majesty's cloaked enemies."<sup>25</sup>

Was it any wonder "that a scene of such treatment as this, and the now adding, in this critical juncture to all our former distresses, that disagreeable burden of supporting, in the very heart of the province, at so great an expense, between one and two hundred savages, to the great disquietude of the majority of the good inhabitants of this province, should awaken the resentment of a people grossly abused, unrighteously burdened, and made dupes and slaves to Indians"? Smith and Gibson closed their declaration with a ritualistic "God save the King," but it was clear that neither monarch nor subjects who favored Indians were worthy of divine protection. Just as implacably as Pontiac imagined his Master of Life to pronounce that "this land where ye dwell I have made for you and

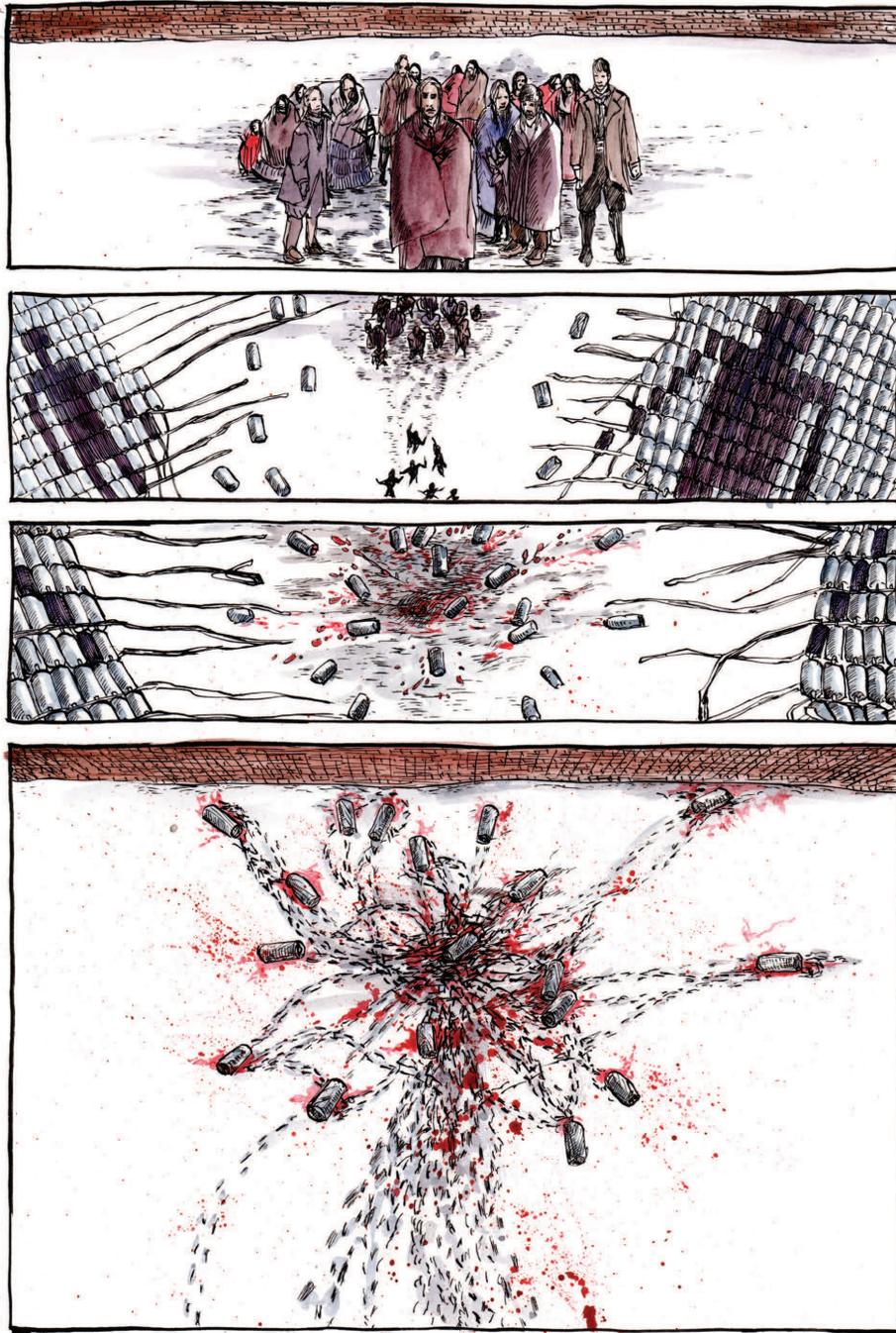
not for others," the Paxtonians imagined their Presbyterian God to declare that only "dupes and slaves to Indians" could tolerate a savage presence "in the very heart of the province."<sup>26</sup>

Be that as it may, the Paxton Boys' crusade, like that of Pontiac and his various counterparts, soon sputtered to an end. The Moravian Indians—or those who had survived an epidemic that killed more than fifty during their Philadelphia confinement—escaped the cleansers' fury and, in 1765, left the city for new homes in the same Susquehanna valley the Paxtonians sought to purge. Meantime, despite the pledges made at Germantown, the provincial assembly never really considered the demands made in the "Declaration" and a more detailed "Remonstrance" that Smith and Gibson subsequently drafted. Some funds were appropriated for frontier defense, and in the summer of 1764 legislation funding a scalp bounty passed. In defiance of Paxton racial principles and in contrast to the payments offered for all adult male Indian scalps during the Seven Years' War, however, the law specifically protected allied Indians, in particular the Moravians and the Six Nations Iroquois. After a long Philadelphia pamphlet war between defenders and opponents of the Paxton Boys, assembly elections in the fall of 1764 united a "New Ticket" of eastern and western Presbyterians, Lutheran and Reformed "church" Germans, and Anglicans in support of Governor Penn and stronger anti-Indian policies, in opposition to the Quaker Party (led by the distinctly un-Quaker Franklin) and its allies among German pacifist "sects." Because of electoral rules that favored eastern elites, however, Franklin's group retained control of the legislature, and thus were able to deflect any remaining challenge from the Paxton Boys' supporters. Devoting ever more of its energies to a campaign to replace the proprietorship of the Penn family with royal government, the Quaker Party tried to change the terms of the debate. Silenced but by no means satisfied, the Paxton Boys' crusade reached the same kind of stalemate at the ballot box as Pontiac's had reached on the battlefield.<sup>27</sup>

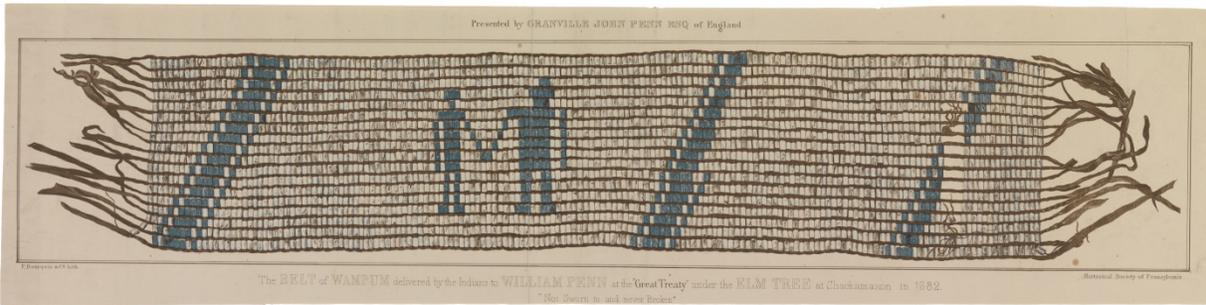
**Group One**

Lee Francis, Weshoyot Alvitre, and Will Fenton. *Ghost River: The Fall and Rise of the Conestoga*. Albuquerque: Red Planet Books and Comics, 2019.





*Penn Wampum Belt (1682 Shackamoxon treaty). Digital Paxton.*



“History tells us that during this "Treaty of Amity and Friendship" between Penn and the American Indians, that an exchange of Wampum Belts took place. One such Wampum Belt came into the possession of the Atwater Kent Museum. The Wampum Belt that Granville Penn presented to the Pennsylvania Historical Society in 1857 is described by one account as follows: It is a belt of the largest size, and made with the neatest workmanship, which is generally found in such as are known to have been used in Councils, or in making treaties with the Indians. Its length is twenty-six inches, its breadth is nine inches, and it consists of eighteen strings woven together; it is formed entirely of small beads strung in rows, and made from pieces of clam or mussel shells. These form an entirely white ground: in the center there is a rude but striking representation, worked in dark violet beads, of two men - the one, somewhat the stouter, wearing a hat; the other, rather thinner, having an uncovered head; they stand erect, with their hands clasped together; there are three bands, also worked in dark violet beads, one at either end, the other about one-third the distance from one end, which may have reference to the parties to the treaty, or to the rivers Delaware, Schuylkill, and Susquehanna.

The other Wampum Belt was kept by the American Indians. The Wampum Belts were to the American Indian what a written document would have been to the European. The Indians designated a tribal member to be responsible for remembering what treaties or agreements that they were signatories to. The Wampum Belt usually had some sort of imagery woven into it as a reminder of the specific agreement or treaty for the tribe.

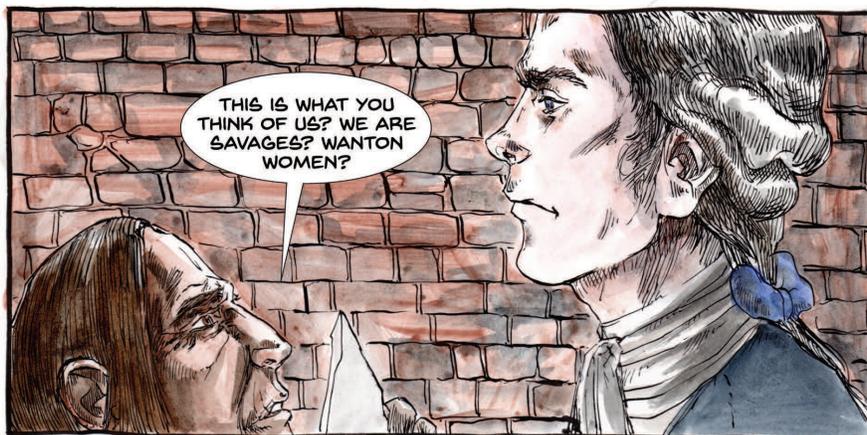
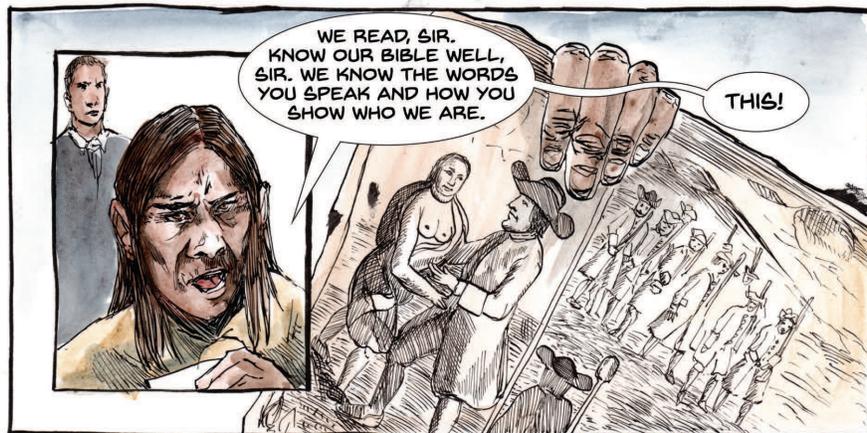
According to the historian C. Hale Sipe, the Great Treaty was preserved by the head chiefs of the Turtle Clan of Delawares for generations through the Wampum Belt that they kept. However, on March 24, 1782, Chief Killbuck is said to have lost the historic wampum containing the treaty that Tamanend and others had made with Penn a hundred years previously. The chief was forced to flee to Fort Pitt to escape death at the hands of some unruly Scotch-Irish settlers from Chartiers Creek, who attacked him and other friendly Delawares at Smoky Island, also called Killbuck’s Island, in the Ohio River, near Fort Pitt. Chief Killbuck apparently lost the Wampum Belt during his escape to the fort.” (Penn Treaty Museum)

### Guiding Questions: Penn Treaty Belt and *Ghost River*

- What kind of source do these pages come from?
- What is the origin of this source? How might the origin affect the content of the source?
- Who is the audience for these pages from this graphic novel? How can you tell?
- What is the artist trying to tell us about the relationships between the Conestoga and the British with these representations of discarded and broken wampum belts?
- Analyze each panel on the page depicting the massacre. What is the effect of portraying the massacre through the lens of the broken wampum belt?
- How does the information about Penn Treaty Belt help you to understand the symbolism of wampum in *Ghost River*?
- If you could write a letter to the creators of *Ghost River* about their artistic choices, what would you tell them and why?
- What questions does this cartoon raise for you about the relationship and reciprocity between the Conestoga, the Pennsylvania Quakers and the Scots-Irish settlers?
- What thesis statement can you write about what wampum meant to both the settler colonists and Conestoga, based on these sources?

Group Two

Lee Francis, Weshoyot Alvitre, and Will Fenton. *Ghost River: The Fall and Rise of the Conestoga*. Albuquerque: Red Planet Books and Comics, 2019.







James Claypoole, *An Indian Squaw King Wampum Spies*. Philadelphia, 1764. Digital Paxton.

**Verse:**

*King Wampum spies  
Which makes his lustful passions rise  
But while he doth a friendly Jobb  
She dives her Hand into his Fob  
And thence conveys as we are told  
His Watch whose Cases were of Gold*

**Description:**

“This print depicts political cartoon against the Quaker Government in light of the Paxton Massacre; King Wampum is Israel Pemberton, richest of Quaker Indian traders. “Israel Pemberton was a wealthy Quaker merchant who donated money to Moor's Indian Charity School on at least one occasion. After increasing his family's business empire in the 1730s and 1740s, Pemberton turned to philanthropy in the 1750s. In many ways, Moor's was an obvious target for Pemberton's philanthropic energies. His other interests included Quaker schools and Indian diplomacy (although Pemberton, like many Quakers, did not adhere to the stark delineation between savage and Christian that drove most Anglo-American missionaries). Pemberton was especially involved in distributing Quaker religious texts (he was a member of Benjamin Franklin's Library Company of Philadelphia” (Dartmouth).



*An Indian Squaw King Wampum spies  
Which makes his lustful passions rise.  
But while he doth a friendly Jobb.  
She dives her Hand into his Fob.  
And thence conveys as we are told.  
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James Claypoole, *An Indian Squaw King Wampum Spies*. Philadelphia, 1764. Digital Paxton.



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But while he doth a friendly Jobb  
She dives her Hand into his Fob.  
And thence conveys as we are told  
His Watch whose Cases were of Gold.

When Danger's threaten us mere Nonsense  
To talk of such a thing as Conscience  
To Arms to Arms with one Accord  
The Sword of Quakers and the Lord  
Fill Bumpers then of Rum or Arrack  
We'll drink Success to the new Barrack.

Fight Dog! fight Bear! you're all my Friends  
By you I shall attain my Ends.  
For I can never be content  
Till I have got the Government.  
But if from this Attempt I fall  
Then let the Devil take you all.

**Guiding Questions: *Indian Squaw King* and *Ghost River***

- What kind of source is this?
- What is the origin of this source? How might the origin affect the content of the source?
- What does “King Wampum” (Israel Pemberton) look like? What is he doing in the cartoon?
- What is the “Indian Squaw” doing? How can you tell?
- What inferences can you make about the message of the cartoon just from the visual details?
- How does the verse help you to understand the cartoon?
- What is the accusation implied? Who is King Wampum loyal to?
- Who was the intended or unintended audience for this cartoon?
- How does the background information help you to analyze the cartoon?
- How do the pages from *Ghost River* complicate your understanding of the cartoon?
- What questions does this cartoon raise for you about the relationship and reciprocity between the Conestoga, the Pennsylvania Quakers and the Scots-Irish settlers?
- What thesis statement can you write about what wampum meant to both the settler colonists and Conestoga, based on these sources?