

Supplement to Mt. Washington, N.H. name change application:

The Sullivan Massacre.

Included in this supplement is the request that the U.S. Board on Geographic Names consult with the Haudenosaunee regarding this name change request.

Included in this supplement is a request that the U.S. Board on Geographic Names require consultation with all federally recognized Tribes affected by a person whose name has been proposed for replacement, or for a geographic feature or location.



“The near-annihilation of North America’s indigenous peoples remains a formative event in U.S. history. Along with wars, real estate transactions of often questionable validity, the making and breaking of treaties, forced removal, confinement to reservations, and the 1987 Dawes Allotment Act, which reduced federally recognized native American landholding by about 90,000,000 acres, the American Indian population cataclysm played a central role in the clearing of hundred of millions of acres for colonization. These lands, in turn, provided the vast geography and the cornucopia of natural resources upon which the modern United States was built. Thus, how we explain the Native American population catastrophe informs how we understand the making of the U.S. and its colonial origins.

In 1622, the *Mayflower* passenger Robert Cushman wrote of America: “Our land is full...their land is empty. This then is a sufficient reason to prove our going thither to live lawful; their land is spacious and void, and they are few and do but run over the grass, as do also the foxes and wild beasts. They are not industrious, neither have [they] art, science, skill or faculty to use either the land or the commodities of it; but all spoils, rots, and is marred for want of manuring, gathering, ordering, etc.” Articulating the *vacuum domicilium*, or “empty domicile,” theory, which many would cite in attempting to justify their conquest and colonization of North America, Cushman claimed that American Indians did not inhabit their homeland fully enough, either in population density or in economic development, to justify their having legal ownership, particularly in so-called “empty” areas.

Cushman was not alone in such thinking. In 1516, the English lawyer Thomas More anticipated that colonists would, and preachers John Donne and John Cotton and even Pennsylvania proprietor William Penn later asserted that legally they could, seize “voyde and vacannt,” “abandoned” or unfilled, “vacant,” and “Waste, or unculted Country.” The English philosopher and Carolina Colony secretary John Locke then contended in 1690 that colonists could obtain the legal title to such Indian land with his “agricultural argument,” which suggested that agriculturally unimproved lands could be taken by those who improved them. Meanwhile, “Old World” diseases such as diphtheria, influenza, malaria, measles, scarlet fever, smallpox, typhus, and whooping cough killed great numbers, diminishing many Native American populations while buttressing the specious *vacuum domicilium* theory in some European’s minds. Thus emerged the almost canonical trope of American Indian population decline as a natural disaster created by biological forces, and the expropriation of increasingly “empty” Native American lands as a just response to opportunities created by regrettable, but inevitable, natural devastation.

Disease did kill untold numbers of Native Americans, and scholars continue to explore the causes, dynamics, variability, and magnitude of disease-induced population losses. Yet the emphasis on disease

as the prime agent of American Indian demographic decline tends to overshadow the equally undeniable role of violence in the population catastrophe and in the conquest of the United States. The determination of whether or not such violence constituted genocide requires a more careful examination of the role of human agency in this cataclysm and whether or not some colonizers committed what legal scholar William Schabas has called “the crime of crimes.” It requires an exploration of the possibility of genocide in the foundations of U.S. history, or at least that of some regions. These are difficult issues. Nonetheless, the question of whether genocide occurred in the United States and its colonial antecedents should be on conference agendas, discussed in classrooms, debated in public forums, and pursued in scholarly journals because the stakes are so high for scholars, American Indians, and all U.S. citizens.”

The American Historical Review, Vol. 120, No. 1 (FEBRUARY 2015), Benjamin Madley

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/43696337?seq=6>

“In 1944, THE EMINENT Jurist Raphaël Lemkin minted a new word for an ancient crime: “genocide.” Four years later, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which included the following definition:

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

The Genocide Convention thus provides an internationally recognized, though restricted, rubric for evaluating possible instances of genocide. First, perpetrators must evince “intent to destroy” a group “as such.” Second, perpetrators must commit at least one of the five genocidal acts against one of the four protected groups. The Convention does not allow for the prosecution of crimes committed before 1948, but it does provide a useful analytical tool: a frame for evaluating the past and comparing similar events across time.”

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/43696337?seq=6>

“But you will not by any means listen to any overture of peace before the total ruinment of their settlements is effected. Our future security will be in their inability to injure us and in the terror with which the severity of the chastisement they receive will inspire them.” [20]

George Washington to Major General John Sullivan

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-20-02-0661>

George Washington promoted and engaged in genocidal policies toward Native Americans.

“In 1779, with the violence of the American Revolution still smouldering, General George Washington embarked on the first genocidal campaign in US history. His aim: to “chastise and intimidate” the Haudenosaunee or, as one of his subordinates more succinctly put it, “to extirpate those hell-hounds from off the face of the Earth.” With over 85 percent of the national budget in hand, General Washington enlisted the aid of military experts...Together, these men directed hundreds of US troops to ensure the total destruction of Iroquoia in order to clear U.S. lands for settler occupation.”

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5250/amerindiquar.42.4.0427>

“On May 31, 1779, he commanded General Sullivan:

“The expedition that you are appointed to command is to be directed against the hostile tribes of the six nations of Indians... The immediate objects are the total destruction and devastation of their settlements and the capture of as many prisoners of every age and sex as possible. It will be essential to ruin their crops now on the ground, and prevent their planting more... [P]arties should be detached to lay waste all the settlements around, with instructions to do it in the most effectual manner, that the country may not be merely overrun but destroyed.”

Crops such as corn, beans, potatoes, pumpkins, squash, cucumbers, and melons grew in an abundance that astonished the invading soldiers. Some of the corn stalks were sixteen feet high and the ears as much as twenty-two inches long. There were also apple, peach, and cherry orchards. The orchard in one town contained 1,500 fruit trees. None of this was left intact. Forty towns and scattered settlements containing large houses were burned. In his report Sullivan declared, “We have not left a single settlement or field of corn in the country of the Five Nations [sic], or is there even the appearance of an Indian on this side of the Niagara.”

<https://mronline.org/2020/07/04/george-washington-and-genocide/>

“Historians have gone from celebrating United States military campaigns against Native America in the nineteenth century to condemning them as genocide in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Barbara Alice Mann for the first time fully documents the crimes committed against the Indians during the Revolutionary War. Instead of relying only upon biased U.S. documents, Mann also mines British and Indian sources, especially neglected Indian oral tradition. In painstaking detail, Mann chronicles ...General John Sullivan's and Colonel Daniel Brodhead's 1779 campaigns against Iroquois in New York and Pennsylvania. ...

The real reasons for the campaigns, Mann insists, were to acquire Indian land for the United States, and to exterminate the entire Indian population through genocide. Several common themes run through these campaigns. The United States invariably covered up its own atrocities but exaggerated and publicized the few Indian atrocities for propaganda purposes. Whereas Indians did not kill prisoners (soldiers or civilians) and never raped female captives, Americans took the lives of combatant and noncombatant Indians alike, often scalping or skinning their victims. The women who were spared were often raped. Outnumbered and powerless to stop the U.S. forces advancing toward them, Indians

abandoned their towns to the enemy, who looted and burned them. For example, Mann calculates that Sullivan's 5,000 troops destroyed 41 Indian towns, 700 multifamily homes, and 400,000 bushels of crops. As many as 10,000 fleeing Indian refugees died of exposure, starvation, and disease during the severe winter of 1780.

George Washington's War on Native America, and: The Political Philosophy of George Washington (review), January 2011, [Journal of the Early Republic](#) 31(3):529-533

“It may come as a surprise to many that, in Iroquois Country, Washington is no hero. To this day, the term “holocaust” in Iroquois Country is taken to mean the series of raids by General John Sullivan and his associates, under Washington’s orders, during 1779. “Town Destroyer” is a name still commonly used for Washington, father of one country, scorcher of another. Such an image of Washington is difficult for some people to accept in the context of a history awash in myth about him.

In the genteel lexicon of the nonmythical Washington, the destruction of roughly sixty Iroquoian towns and the burning of their farm fields in 1779 was euphemized as “chastisement.” Washington never seems to specify exactly what they had done to merit the final solution that he called “the rod of correction,” but he ordered Sullivan to “cut off their settlements, destroy next year’s crops and do them every other mischief, which time and circumstance will merit.” Upon its conclusion, having crushed the Iroquois by means that violated every European rule of war, Sullivan called his victims “inhuman barbarians.” Washington later lauded the campaign, praising its “destruction of the whole of the towns and settlements of the hostile Indians in so short a time, and with so inconsiderable a loss in men.””

George Washington's War on Native America. Barbara Alice Mann, 2005

Sullivan-Clinton Campaign; Indigenous Values Initiative

“To this day, as a consequence of the Sullivan Clinton Campaign the Haudenosaunee refer to the office of the President of the United States as Hanadagá:yas, which translates “He Who Destroys Villages.” This encapsulates that historical relationship with United States.”

<https://indigenousvalues.org/decolonization/sullivan-clinton-campaign/>

See also:

Letter from George Washington to Major General John Sullivan, 31 May 1779:

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-20-02-0661>

The Sullivan Indian Expedition: One Man’s Victory Is Another’s Ethnic Cleansing, New England Historical Society.

<https://newenglandhistoricalsociety.com/the-sullivan-indian-expedition-one-mans-victory-is-anothers-ethnic-cleansing/>

Native America and the Question of Genocide, Alex Alvarez Lanham, M.D., Rowman & Littlefield, 2014

Ethnic Cleansing and the Indian: The Crime That Should Haunt America, Gary Clayton Anderson, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014

The American Genocide of the Indians—Historical Facts and Real Evidence

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/2649_665393/202203/t20220302_10647120.html

Toppling George Washington and the myth of American democracy, Joseph Massad, Middle East Eye, June 25, 2020

<https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/why-statues-colonialist-criminals-need-come-down>

'Town Destroyer' Versus the Iroquois Indians, Forty Indian villages—and a powerful indigenous nation—were razed on the orders of George Washington, U. S. News, Johannah Cornblatt, June 27, 2008

<https://www.usnews.com/news/national/articles/2008/06/27/town-destroyer-versus-the-iroquois-indians>

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<http://www.seacoastnh.com/general-john-sullivan/>

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22. Heilig, M. R. *With Sullivan in Seventeen Seventy-nine; A Tale of the War for Independence, Being the Diary of a Forest Runner*. Stroudsburg, Pa. : Stroudsburg Printing Co., 1907. 89 pp. (Fiction)
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31. Parker, Arthur C. "The Indian Interpretation of the Sullivan-Clinton Campaign." *Rochester Historical Society, Publication Fund Series 8* (1929), 45-59. (Draws on a few Seneca traditions, but mostly another summary of the action)
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3. _____. "The Indian Settlement at the Head of Conesus Lake and Scenes Connected with Its Destruction, Sept. 13, 1779." *Livingston County Historical Society*, 14th Annual Meeting, 1890, 6-9. (Town of Conesus)
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5. *Canajoharie and the Sullivan-Clinton Expedition, 1779-1929*. Canajoharie: 1929. 127 pp. (Newspaper articles, addresses, etc.)
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“Sullivan Expedition Issue

This commemorative honors the 150th anniversary of Maj. Gen. John Sullivan's expedition against the Iroquois. It is a single 2-cent red stamp issued on June 17, 1929. The campaign's success is credited with weakening the alliance between the Iroquois and the British and helping facilitate the westward expansion of the new nation.

Gordon T. Trotter”

<https://postalmuseum.si.edu/exhibition/about-us-stamps-bureau-period-1894-1939-commemorative-issues-1928-1929/sullivan>