

Discovery of an Ancient Indian Grave Yard at East Hampton, L. I.

A Case for the Commissioners of Charities to Investigate—Vocal vs. Instrumental Music—"Much Ado About Nothing"—A Disappointed Correspondent Expresses his Indignation—Consolidation of the Police and Fire Departments.

Discovery of an Ancient Indian Grave Yard at East Hampton, L. I.

To the Editor of the Brooklyn Eagle:

It may interest some of your readers, particularly any members of the "Long Island Historical Society," to hear of certain curious discoveries recently made at East Hampton, L. I. Workmen engaged in digging a cellar and laying the foundation of a new country seat for Mr. Satterthwaite, of New York City, have opened several Indian graves at the south end of the village street. The relics found are in an excellent state of preservation. Beside one skeleton having a large skull, and probably in the same grave, were found a heavy stone club—the emblem of authority; five silver spoons, of three different patterns and with the maker's name clearly legible upon them, and several glass (globe shaped) bottles (pints and quarts), and uninjured. The spoons are nine inches long, with a shallow bowl, and flat in general shape. Experts pronounce them silver, and after removing a coat of green mould, they brighten up like new made articles. On one of the bottles was cut, either with a diamond or small file, the name "Josiah Hobart." In Book A, page 73, East Hampton Town Records, I find under date of December 18, 1676, premises "in the hart of the Towne," consisting of "fourteen acres," conveyed by the town to "Captaine Josiah Hobbert," whom they have "late accepted as an inhabitant amongst them." I conclude, therefore, that this Indian burying ground must be nearly (if not over) two hundred years old. Tradition says the Montauk Indians, for fear of their enemies, the Block Island Indian tribe, came about the year 1660 from their lands on the Peninsula of Montauk, and put themselves under the protection of the whites at East Hampton. They were assigned certain lands at the south end of the village, then known as the "parsonage lands." It is thought they began to use this lot (recently purchased by Mr. Satterthwaite) for a burying ground about 1665. A number of these glass bottles I have described have been exhumed, also wampum, beads (still strung on a kind of waxed thread), tomahawks, an adz (for making canoes), and other small relics. The graves are not over four feet in depth, and the soil, I think, a kind of gravelly loam. My informant thinks the bottles prove conclusively the red man's inveterate passion for the white man's "fire water." It is well known that "New England rum" has been the bane of the Montauk Indians, and has destroyed them in former years by thousands.

In this connection I would refer your readers again to the town records. In 1651 the whites of East Hampton manifested a benevolent concern for the welfare of their faithful Indian friends. They ordered "that no man carry any strong drink to the Indians to sell, nor send them any, nor employ any to sell for them, nor sell them any in the town for the present drinking, above two drams at a time; and to sell to no Indian at all, but such as are sent by the Sachem and shall bring a writen ticket from him, which shall be given him by the town, and he shall not have above a quart at a time." The grave in which the stone club was found is supposed by antiquaries to be that of Wyandank, the white man's friend. He died about 1659.

ABORIGINAL.

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