

## Chief of Montauk Indians Protests Walters' Election

Thirty or more years chief of the Montauk Indians, Wyandank Pharoah, direct descendant of the original Sachem Wyandank, from whom the Easthampton colonists purchased grants of lands at Montauk, way back in the early days of the Seventeenth Century, takes exception at election of a sachem of the Montauks to succeed him. Wyandank, or "King Dank," as he is known in Easthampton town, does not recognize the tribal election held in Sag Harbor early in April of this year by tribal descendants of the Montauks.

Chief Wyandank is a splendid physical type of the early Indians of Eastern Long Island. He is 56 years old and was born in an Indian cabin at Old Indian Field, Montauk Peninsula, November 10, 1863. Six feet two inches in height, straight as a gun barrel and lithe and athletic, he portrays the best specimen of the Montauk Indian. His skin is a bronze color and his cheek bones prominent. When 14 years of age Chief Dank's father, Chief David Pharoah, died, and his squaw, Queen Maria Fowler, acted as regent of the tribe until young Pharoah reached his majority, when he was elected sachem to succeed his father.

At the tribal election held in April James E. Walters of Little Neck, L. I., was chosen sachem. Others elected to represent the tribe are: Councilors Israel S. Quaw, Easthampton; Walter Halsey, Sag Harbor; Christopher C. Cuffee, Hartford, Conn.; Mrs. M. L. Cuffee, New York City, and one vacancy to be filled at the next tribal meeting or council fire.

Chief Wyandank has sent to The Eagle the following letter in which he protests against Walters' election:

"My Dear Friends:

"I wish to rectify the statement that was put in the paper that at election of the Montauk tribe of Indians that James E. Walters of Little Neck, L. I., was elected sachem of the Montauks. I know nothing of that meeting or where I was named assistant chief. I wish to say that I am chief and the only chief of the Montauk Indians, and I don't want this man Walters to use my name, or any of his tribe, without my consent.

"WYANDANK PHAROAH, Chief."

For many years the few remaining Montauk Indian descendants have been engaged in a futile attempt to establish claim to lands at Montauk,

which were sold years ago by members of the tribe. Long drawn out litigation resulted and Chief Wyandank states that he has frequently been recognized in the Supreme Court as the reigning sachem of the Mon-



tauk tribe. Some years ago the higher court gave a decision that the remnant of the Montauk Indians had so intermarried that the tribe no longer existed as a nation. The valuable acres at Montauk are now, for the most part, owned by the Benson estate and the Long Island Railroad Company.

Chief Wyandank Pharoah lived for 14 years on the Old Indian Field. When the Indians gave up possession he moved to Freetown, a suburb of Easthampton village. There are no inhabitants now at the Indian Field. Chief Wyandank married, in 1898, Florence Van Houten, a negress, daughter of James Van Houten, a musician of recognized talent and a leader of an orchestra that supplied dance music for a generation to the people of eastern Long Island. The chief has no children. He has lived in Sag Harbor for the past 16 years. He has two sisters, the Princess Maria (Newins) of New London, Conn., and Princess Pocohontas of Easthampton, L. I.

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