

Mohawk – Wyandot Ancestry of Lt. John Young’s First Wife:

Catharine Brant-Hill Kayakhon

by

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Evidence Relative to the Wives of John Young:

Lt. John Young, who served in the Six Nations Indian Department during the American Revolutionary War, was married twice. His first wife Catharine’s given name appears in the 1770 baptismal record of their son Daniel at Trinity Lutheran Church, Stone Arabia, NY. Additionally, in the Census of Niagara of 1 December 1783, Lt. John Young was listed with his four children, and wife Catharine Young (age 36 so born about 1747). On 15 October 1796 Young petitioned for land for himself, his four children, and his wife, “deceased, since the Peace” (25 December 1784). It can therefore be stated with confidence that Catharine died between 1784 and 1796.

In his will dated 15 April 1805 John Young mentioned his, “beloved wife Priscilla”. Priscilla (Ramsay) Nelles was an Indian captive (since age 6) and widow of Captain Hendrick William Nelles, Young’s fellow Indian Department officer, friend, and neighbor who died in 1791. It does not appear that John and Priscilla married until after December 1798 when her step – son William Nelles’ account book shows an entry “Priscilla Nelles”. If she was married then, presumably she would have been recorded as “Priscilla Young” – although a lapse in the memory of the person who recorded the information could be a factor. There is no evidence that John Young had any other wife.

The primary goal of this article is to clearly and as unequivocally as possible, identify the ancestry of Catharine, the mother of John Young’s four children. Priscilla can be ruled out as being mother to any of Young’s children. All four children named in the Census of Niagara, are also named in John Young’s will (and none other).

Please note that many of the reference details to the above and later materials can be found in the biography of John Young by [clicking here](#) or a fully sourced unpublished manuscript by the present author (Faux, 1986). However some key references will be given later for those records and sources not specifically noted in the biography, or in the author’s work pertaining to Six Nations records and sources (David K. Faux, “Understanding First Nations Genealogical Records: Sources and Case Studies”, Ontario Genealogical Society: Toronto, 2002).

Evidence Relative to the General and Specific Ancestry of Catharine:

There are two particular data sources that provide the most information as to the general and the specific ancestral and family background of Catharine. The first is a diary written by a Scottish visitor to the home of the Young family in 1792, and published in 1793.

The second is the obituary of Catharine's grandson Warner H. Nelles, which was published in a St. Catharines, Ontario newspaper in 1896. With these record sources, separated by the time span of 100 years, it is possible to outline key aspects of the heritage of Catharine. With the addition of scores of other supporting documents to the mix, which are dated between the 1760s and the 1960s, we can propose a very detailed and complete genealogy of Catharine and her family.

A. DIARY OF PATRICK CAMPBELL, 1792 (Published 1793) -

No record has surfaced to directly state the surname of Catharine. In the quest to detail her ancestry, there is an important diary entry mentioning John Young's wife, written about 8 years after the Census of Niagara, which includes information as to the maternal ancestry of John Young's wife who was alive in 1792. An assumption here is, since there is no evidence to the contrary, that this woman is Catharine.

On 14 February 1792 a Scottish traveller, Patrick Campbell, visited the Young family at their farm on the Young Tract along the Grand River near Cayuga and recorded entries in a diary, published in 1793. Here he stated that Mr. Young served as a lieutenant in the Indian Department in the "last war", and was *married to a squaw, sister to one of the chiefs of the Mohawke nation who succeeded Captain David* (p. 180). He further added, *Here I for the first time played cards with a squaw.*

There is more information to be extracted from this diary, but first it may be useful to seek cross validation of the Mohawk, therefore Six Nations connection via exploring what evidence might tie each of the four children to this Native American heritage.

1) Abraham Young

There is a list of "Sachems and Chiefs" who on the 11th of November 1807 sign a release of land to James Muirhead to settle the debts of the deceased Captain Aaron Hill (NA, RG10, Vol. 103, pp.197-9). The last four chiefs follow the Delawares, and all are Mohawk and likely related to Capt. Aaron – namely Seth Hill, Seth Thomas, Abraham Strong, Henry A. Hill. The first is his eldest nephew and the latter is his son. Unfortunately the names on this list are often illegible and clearly errors are made in the spelling of many Indian names. The copyist could have easily mistaken Abraham Young's signature for "Abraham Strong". An Abraham Strong does not appear in any other connection with the Grand River, and Strong is not a Mohawk surname. However while suggestive, this is not in any way clear evidence.

After the death of their father Abraham Young (the eldest son of Lt. John Young and Catharine) in 1815, over a number of years his children sold off their respective shares to their uncle Joseph Young (below), or to Andrew Alexander Van Every. The matter involved extensive litigation, and is documented in the Indian Affairs Papers. One key document is the survey map of the Young Tract by Samuel Ryckman. On the back of the map is a list of all of Abraham's children, framed by a line or bracket, and rough notations as to which children sold their interest to their uncle Joseph Young. Ryckman

wrote the term “**Six Nations Indians**” to the right of the list of names (RG10, Vol.3, pp. 10-11).

2) John Young Jr.

As noted later, John Young Sr. was recorded as residing at the Mohawk Village in 1788. It appears that his second son John Jr. continued to reside there until after 1800.

Comparatively little is known about John Young Jr. It is possible that in his early years he associated himself with his mother's people. On 10 September 1794, a Moravian minister at Fairfield on the Thames was visited by Captain Joseph Brant and a group of Mohawks from the Grand River. The minister, Zeisberger, stated that, "Among these Mohawks was a half - breed, who understood German well. He told us he had heard that in our town there was no drinking, dancing, playing, whoring around, whether it was so. We replied yes, for he who wishes to live in such sins cannot be here. 'Yes', said he, 'that is perfectly right, and should it be with us also'. These Mohawks were also Christians, went to Church, and had a school-house, played, danced, and drank, and had already smashed nearly all the windows, and thus they live, no better than the savage Indians." ("Diary of David Zeisberger a Moravian Missionary Among the Indians of Ohio". Translated from the original manuscript in German, and edited by Eugene F. Bliss, 2 Vols., Vol. 2, Cincinnati, Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, 1885, pp. 373-374). Considering his residence at the Mohawk Village at about this time, the description fits John Young Jr., the only known German – speaking half Mohawk adult living there in the 1790s.

Also supporting the hypothesis that in the early years he installed himself among the Mohawk people is the fact that on 10 November 1797 John Young Jr. was appointed administrator of the estate of James Latham. John provided an inventory of Latham's possessions and exhibited these goods for appraisal by William Kennedy Smith and Wheeler Douglas *at the Mohawk Village this 23rd Day of Feby 1798* (AO, RG 22, Surrogate Register, Lincoln County, Wills 1794-1813). It seems that John Young Jr. was residing in the Mohawk Village at this time. It appears, however, that early in the 1800s he had taken up full time residence on the Young Tract – perhaps due to the concerns noted above in the Zeisberger Diary.

3) Elizabeth (Young) Nelles

As we will see later, Elizabeth's son Warner H. Nelles inherited a “Principle Chief” title Tahanata in the spring of 1817 when the previous holder, an Upper Mohawk Chief named Francis Cotter Tahatonne, permanently left the Six Nations Reserve to join the Wyandots at Amherstburg (Anderdon Township). The second most important source of data in the quest to learn more about the ancestry of Catharine is the obituary of Warner H. Nelles, who died in 1896. Much of the latter half of the present manuscript will be devoted to exploring what information can be extracted from this source.

Oral history among the present day Six Nations also confirms the First Nations status of the family of Elizabeth (Young) Nelles. Elliott Moses was a chief of the Delawares (his ancestry also included Lower Cayuga) who resided on the southern block of the Six Nations Reserve, and was perhaps the most knowledgeable individual on the Reserve in the 1960s concerning the history and traditions of Six Nations and Delawares. On 23 June 1967, while on a field trip with Dorothy Hutton a local historian of Haldimand County, he pointed to the house on the hill where descendants of Warner Nelles and Elizabeth Young (daughter of John and Catharine Young) had resided since the marriage circa 1798. Hutton reported that Moses said that, *his grandfather or before knew that there was some or a bit of Indian blood in the Nelles' who lived on the other side of the River on the hill*. Probably Moses' grandfather or great grandfather knew, perhaps first hand, of the installation of Warner H. Nelles to the role of sachem of the Six Nations (see later). Hutton read this statement of Moses verbatim from her notes 4 September 1979. This and related material was donated to the Haldimand County Museum upon her demise. Hence even up to modern times the link between the Young – Nelles family and the Six Nations was still recognized by elders on the Reserve. This adds further evidence that Catharine was a Native American – since the Young connection is the only known Indian ancestry in the Warner Nelles line (Records of Mary Nelles, Caledonia, Ontario).

4) Joseph Young

On 25 April 1838 the Six Nations Chiefs in Council granted land to Joseph Young (born 1782), of Young's Tract on the Grand River, the youngest son of Lt. John and Catharine. The original deed is among family records, and a copy is registered in the Library and Archives Canada, Indian Affairs Papers, RG10 Series (Vol. 113, p.512). In the deed they specified that Joseph was to have a parcel of land adjoining one already in the *possession of the said Joseph Young one of our people*. The term "one of our people" clearly indicates that the chiefs recognized Joseph as a member of the Six Nations, born of a mother who was a member of one of the Six Nations. There are numerous other such references such that the meaning is absolutely clear. On 1 March 1809 the Chiefs in Council at Onondaga discussed, *A tract of land that was granted to John Dochstader, who also had a family of our nation, noting his family who were our people*, and specifically the *farm in the possession of his daughter of the Onondagas and Grand son of the Cayugas* (Johnston, 1964, p. 111). On 22 March 1817, the Mohawk Chiefs assigned lands to Abraham Kennedy Smith (whose mother was Mary Hill, a Mohawk). The Chiefs indicated that *this was our particular choice one of our own People & not have any more strangers occupy any more of our People's Farms* without the permission of the Chiefs in Council (RG10, Vol. 34, p.19745).

In order to receive special consideration it was key to being perceived by the Council as having the all important stamp of being "one of our people". Hannah Dochstader, *an orphan daughter of a deceased Indian chief of the Six Nations Indians* petitioned for land 6 October 1838 (RG10, Vol. 155, p. 89861). In a related matter expressed in a letter dated 19 June 1845, Hannah (who resided directly opposite the Young Tract), was *informed by Mr. Wm. Cook and my son from an interview they had with the Chiefs of the*

6 Nations Indians yesterday that I am still recognized by them as one of their people (RG10, Vol. 814, p.612).

Pre – Revolutionary Evidence Relative to the Specific Ancestry of Catharine:

1) Young Family Links to Mohawk Lands, Ft. Hunter, New York State - During the Revolution:

Two uncles of Lt. John Young, although residing in the Canajoharie District prior to the beginning of the Revolution in 1776, are documented as having been residents of Mohawk property in the Mohawk Flats area of Ft. Hunter New York in 1780. This location was on the west side of Schoharie Creek, some thirty miles to the east of their permanent residences near what is today Ft. Plain and Canajoharie. Since some Mohawk families had not left for Canada at this time, clearly John Young's uncles had permission to occupy the homes of those Mohawks who had vacated their lands to join the British.

Andrew Young, brother of John's father Adam Young, and Theobald Schremling, brother of John Young's mother (who was married to Adam Young's sister – hence a double uncle to John Young), resided among the few remaining Mohawks prior to the raid of Sir John Johnson on 18 October 1780. The area known as the Mohawk Flats, between Schoharie Creek and Auriesville, was owned in whole or in part by the Hill family, prominent Mohawks. Aurie's Creek was named after Aurie Kanaghowende "of the Hill". For example, Mary Hill Katehriunigh was the wealthiest individual (male or female) at Ft. Hunter prior to the Revolution. The list of claims for wartime losses included 112 acres of rich flat land commonly called the Mohawk Flats (National Archives, Colonial Office Vol. 42, Q Series, p.242). This claim was made at Lachine, Quebec 11 April 1784. Her brothers Aaron Hill Kanonraron and David Hill Karonghyontye each owned 100 acres of land, but submitted their claims at Niagara (Colonial Office Records, Q Series, Vol. 24, pt. 2). This family was by far the wealthiest at Ft. Hunter in terms of both land and material possessions.

During the above noted raid of Sir John Johnson and his Loyalist troops, after devastating the Caudahurity settlement to the south, they moved toward the Mohawk River and captured Peter Martin and Andrew Young (Simms, 1883, p.441), as well as the above Mary Hill Katehriunigh (Claus Papers, MG19, F1, Vo. 25, p.66). However, the troops failed to recognize Theobald Schremling as kin to the Young family, and he was killed outside his house, *the present residence of Richard Hudson* (Simms, 1845, p.423). According to an Atlas of the area dated 1853, R. Hudson was residing between Auriesville and the Schoharie Creek, closer to the latter, his house being near a hillside, where three trails intersected. This home is one of very few located on the Mohawk Flats – there being considerably more houses in the uplands closer to Auriesville. Later maps, from the 1880s, show the property to be occupied by a B.R. Hudson.

It seems clear that the Hudson property on the Mohawk Flats (which had been occupied by Schremling in 1780), was originally (before 1777) owned by a prominent Mohawk family. It was on this property, in the care of Schremling, where the precious items from

the Ft. Hunter Chapel were buried for safekeeping. These furnishings, *were put in a hogshead [barrel] by the Mohawks and buried on the side of the hill south of the Boyd Hudson place near Auriesville, N.Y.* (Reid, 1901, p.91). The silver items, a gift from Queen Anne in 1710, were recovered after the Revolution and brought to Canada. They were divided between the Mohawks of Tyendinaga near Deseronto, and the Chapel of the Mohawks on the Six Nations lands (now Brantford) on the Grand River.

Thus one can conclude that at the beginning of the Revolution there was a connection between the Mohawks, most likely the Hill family (who owned most of the Mohawk Flats) of Ft. Hunter, and the Young family of Canajoharie. A reasonable hypothesis that will be explored here is that Lt. John Young's wife from prior to the Revolution was a Mohawk who had family ties to the Ft. Hunter area, specifically the Mohawk Flats, and most likely to the Hill family.

2) Young Family Residence – After the Revolution

As noted earlier in the discussion of John Young Jr., the family at one time resided in the Mohawk Village. In January of 1784 John Young purchased the property that was to become the Young Tract (Seneca Township, Haldimand County, Ontario) from the then owners, the Mississauga. He built a home on what later became the Haldimand Grant and Six Nations Reserve, and established a farm close to the Delaware and Lower Cayuga settlements. However he also had a second residence. In his 1788 claim for wartime losses, John Young explained to the examiners that in the spring of that year he was residing *70 miles back [from Niagara] at the Mohawk Village* (NA, A.O.13/16, p.462), and was unaware that he was expected to attend a hearing. It appears that, perhaps because of family ties, Young maintained a second home within the community where most of the Mohawks resided.

3) Sundry Items Linking the Hill and Young - Nelles Families:

John and Catharine Young named their youngest son Joseph Young, perhaps after Catharine's relative and John's good friend, Joseph Brant. At Tyendinaga in 1813, a chief of the Mohawks was one "Young Hill". His name appears repeatedly in sundry documents (NA, RG10, Indian Affairs Papers) with this spelling so it would appear that his forename was Young. This would suggest a link between the Hill and Young families circa **1790** (at which time presumably Young Hill was born).

Furthermore, in **1791** John Young ("garege") paid the merchant William Nelles to discharge the debt of "Aaron Hill Capt. David Son" – his wife's potential relatives (Toronto Public Library, Baldwin Room, 5111 Nelles, William Accounts and Militia Papers, Account Book, William Nelles, 1792-1837).

Among the list of Six Nations who served at the Battle of Chippewa during the War of 1812 was a Mohawk named Henry Nelles Hill (Johnston, 1964).

On the Six Nations Band Lists for the distribution of interest payments beginning Spring **1873** among the Lower Mohawk was Number 361 Young Geo. (Rev.) Seth Clause

accepted the money on Young's behalf as he did for Spring 1874. The Fall 1873 and 1874 payments were signed for by Hester Thomas (NA, RG10, Vol. 9565, C-7177). Hester was a kinswoman of Abraham Kennedy Smith (noted later in relation to the Cotter family and also in the documents relating to the Nelles obituary), and her testimony as to the Hill family ancestry is found in the Lyman Draper Papers (Wisconsin State Historical Society). Perhaps he turned 21 between the Fall of 1872 and Spring of 1873. If so, he would have been born about 1851. George Young then disappears from the records (before Spring 1875) – reason unknown, although death or emigration to the USA being perhaps most likely.

There are those with the surname Young, with Native status, residing on the Six Nations Reserve who may be related – but the specifics are unclear. For example, in the **1901** Census of Tuscarora Township, Division 3, residing on Concession 6, Lot 3 is an Elizabeth Young born September 1858, and mother of James Silversmith. The latter's "Racial or Tribal Origin" (via paternal lineage) is given as Cayuga, whereas that for his mother Elizabeth is Mohawk (T-6460).

Campbell Diary and Supporting Materials

As noted above, the Campbell Diary is one of the two most pivotal sources in the search for the specific ancestry of Catharine. In addition to the earlier statement about Catharine's brother being a Mohawk Chief who succeeded Captain David, there are other statements in the Diary which offer clues as to who this brother was. Once this specific piece of information is properly researched we may have what is needed to address the goal of outlining Catharine's surname, Indian name, clan and family among the Mohawk Nation.

At another location in the diary Campbell noted that Aaron Hill, *eldest son of the renowned chief, Captain David, whom everyone who knew him allowed to be the handsomest and most agreeable Indian they had every seen; he died about two years ago, and, what would be deemed hard by many, the son does not succeed to the honours and titles of the family, but they go in the female line to his aunt's son. Captain Brant did all he could to get the son, who seems worthy of his gallant and amiable father, to enjoy the titles, but it would not do; the ancient laws, customs, and manners of the nation could not be departed from* (see Johnston, 1964, p.61, 65). The wording of this entry suggests the possibility that there **may** have been two men who succeeded to the "honours and titles".

Two questions emerge from the Campbell Diary entry above, and their answer may be the key to documenting the ancestry of Young's wife:

- 1) What "honours and titles" belonged to David Hill at the time of his death?**
- 2) Which Mohawk chief or chiefs held David Hill's "honours and titles" in February 1792?**

The Honours and Titles, and the Role, of David Hill -

The fact that the “honours and titles” of David Hill went to his sister’s son suggests strongly that this sister was a Clan Matron, probably the eldest sister, and alive in November 1790 (the month and year David died).

In sundry sources (see Faux, 2002) it can be seen that David Hill's personal name was **Karonghyontye**, but that he also held the Bear Clan Confederacy sachemship of **Astawenserontha** – both Native names for Captain David Hill being included in a deed of sale to the Van Horne Patent in New York to Jelles Fonda, 6 July 1789. The other titles that could be inherited were”Chief” and “Captain”. Hence there were potentially four “honours and titles” for Hill’s successor(s).

Some Known Family Relationships of David Hill -

The data detailing family relationships as seen in the Jelles Fonda account book records are confirmed in many other record sources. Among the most important of these is the Seth Newhouse Manuscript (see Faux, 2002) which lists the women’s and warrior’s names associated with each of the 9 Mohawk families. Included are siblings Kanonraron (Aaron Hill), Oterouyanente (John Hill), Karonghyontye (David Hill); their sister Kateriunigh (Mary Hill); and the latter’s son Kanenkaregowagh (Seth Hill). In addition Anequendahonji (Johannes Crine – Green) the maternal uncle of the first four, and Aronghyengtha (John Green Jr.) a first cousin, are all found in this same grouping of Bear Clan family names in the Seth Newhouse Manuscript, and all were from the Lower Mohawk (Ft. Hunter) Castle and in the early nineteenth Century the names all belonged to the Astawenserontha Bear Clan family (by 1880s held by Dehennakarineh family) Other names, particularly those from the Upper Mohawk (Canajoharie) Castle, will soon come into view and will be placed in the context of the above family constellation.

Succession of Confederacy Sachemship Titles –

Among the Six Nations typically inheritance of a Confederacy sachem (principal chief) name such as Astawenserontha (Bear Clan) follows very strict rules involving maternal line succession (e.g., Newhouse, 1885; Parker, 1916). Thus a chief is succeeded by his brother or nephew, or maternal cousin but never by his son. It always went to a member of the former chief’s Clan and Owachira (maternal line), assuming that there was an eligible candidate. Seth Newhouse, in his List of Chiefs, penciled “L.M.” (Lower Mohawks) for Astawenserontha, but “U.M.” (Upper Mohawks) in relation to the other two Bear Clan Chieftaincies (see Fenton, 1950, p.41).

Record Sources 1790 – 1795: Two Major Problems –

- 1) Unfortunately many of the most potentially useful documentary sources are unavailable for the “critical years”. In other words, there do not appear to be any deeds or related items containing lists of chiefs from the date of David Hill’s death in November 1790, until the Spring of 1795. As we shall see, the successor

noted in the Campbell Diary entry of February 1792 may have died or relinquished his titles to settle elsewhere prior to 1795. It will be necessary to tap other sources which may be less clearcut.

- 2) Many chiefs who received new chiefly titles appear to have generally used their given Mohawk name – as did David Hill although he was the holder of one of the 9 Mohawk sachem titles. At some point, however, and for reasons unknown, these chiefs began to use their prestige titles in signing formal documents. Hence not using a title in a public record would not necessarily mean that the individual did not possess it.

Hypothesis 1: The Brother of Catharine Young was the First Astawenserontha Recorded after 1790 -

Various record sources in the RG10 collection indicate that Seth Hill Kanenkaregowa succeeded to the titles of his uncle David Hill – although the timing of just when is unclear. Seth, baptized 10 July 1748 at the Albany Reformed Dutch Church, was the son of John “Widemouth” Seth's son and Mary Hill Katehriunigh (David's sister). He inherited the military title "Captain", the title “Chief” and one of the three Bear Clan (Tribe) titles among the Mohawks, Astawenserontha (the name translates as, "He Enters Wearing Rattles"). There is no evidence that Seth ever inherited the name Karonghyontye.

There are a number of references pertaining to “Capt. Seth” as a messenger sent by Brant during the year 1797 (e.g., Russell Papers, Vol. 2, p.41, Joseph Brant to D.W. Smith, 15 December 1797). It can be inferred that he either inherited or was assigned the “Captain” title prior to this time. Again the question can be asked, did Seth inherit this title from his uncle David Hill before 1792? The question cannot be easily answered.

However the name as “Aghstawenserontha” does not appear in the records relating to the Six Nations until 18 February 1805 (NA, MG19, Claus Papers, C-1480, pp.93-5), **14 years after the death of his uncle**. Later that year the name there was no Astawenserontha but rather “Seth Kaneakaregowa”. This might be an anomaly, and refer to the same man. It was not until 9 November 1806 that he is recorded as Seth Hill Astawenserontha, and William Claus the Indian Superintendent wrote “Capt Seth” beside the entry (NA, RG10, Vol. 27, p.15670) thereby ensuring that we have identified the correct Seth Hill. This affords a crystal clear snapshot at this point in time, Seth is then the official successor of his Uncle David Hill. However, this gap after the death of David Hill leaves open the door for a prior successor. In the few records that are available, Seth is recorded with his given name – Seth Kanenkaregowagh, which is his Mohawk name back to at least 1776 when he inscribed it in scrimshaw work on a powder horn. [Click here](#) to see a sketch of the entire design.

With the realization that there could have been a successor to David Hill that preceded Seth Hill, an outline of the content of the following sequence of documents can be instructive. Note, it is typically difficult to determine whether a Six Nations chief has signed, made his mark, or if someone make a transcription that may ignore this data:

- 1) 2 March 1795 in a deed to Phillip Stedman, a signator is "Kanenkaregowagh" (Claus Papers, F8)
- 2) 20 May 1796, in a deed to Robert Kerr, with "Seth Kaneaharegowagh" signing (NA, RG10, Vol. 103, pp.77-8)
- 3) 25 August 1802, among those signing a receipt for lands in Stedmans Township is "Kanharekowah" (AO, RG1, A-I-7, Box 7)
- 4) 8 February 1804, "Seth Hill" signs his name immediately below that of Joseph Brant (Claus Papers)
- 5) 18 February 1805 we find "Aghstawenserontha" (his mark), (Ibid., pp.93-4)
- 6) 22 August 1805, "Seth Kaneakaregowa" (his mark) appears (AO, UCLP, Petition of William Kennedy Smith, S20/64)
- 7) 22 July 1806 the name "Seth aghStaweanserontha" is found among those attending a Council meeting (Newberry Library, Ayer Ms, John Norton Letterbook, Council at Ft. George)
- 8) 9 November 1806 the name Seth Hill Astawenserontha (with the annotation "Capt. Seth" by Superintendent Claus) appears – leaving no room for doubt as to the identity of this individual.
- 9) 22 December 1807 in power of attorney to EpsL Phelps is Seth Hill Astaweaserontha
- 10) 5 March 1809 at a council at Onondaga is Aghstaweaserontha (his mark)
- 11) 13 March 1809 on a deed to Dickson is Seth Astaweaswart
- 12) 1 January 1810 on a deed to Daniel Secord is Seth Aghsdawenserontha

It is curious that on 14 July 1808 old Patterson & 5 Mohawks arrived bringing an account of Seths death (LAC, MG19, F1, Claus Papers, Vol. 1, p. 215). It seems that Seth Hill was alive until at least 1810. On 13 October 1820 (ibid., Vol 22, pt. 1, p. 78) it was recorded that a saddle and bridle was given to "Jos. Hill Son of the late Capt. Seth". The name Astawenserontha does not appear again in the available records until George Martin's listing of the Chiefs of the Mohawks in 1815, at which time the title belonged to John Johnson.

It is interesting and perhaps important to note that John Young, and his son in law Warner Nelles, were generally among the three or so witnesses to these deeds and Council minutes.

What is difficult to explain is whether Seth held the title Astawenserontha prior to it appearing in print. He did not inherit Karonghyontye as he was consistently Kanenkaregowa immediately before being recorded as Astawenserontha.

Ultimately the question is, does Seth, the undisputed inheritor of three of his uncle's titles (at least in or before 1805), have a sister Catharine born about 1747 (date of birth of Catharine from the 1783 Census of Niagara). The parents Johannes (Hans) "son of Seth" and Maria (Mary) "daughter of Aaron" were married 12 January 1747 at the Albany Reformed Dutch Church (see Sievertsen, 1996 for all references to church register details).

Seth and most of his kin are recorded in the account books dating to the early and mid 1770s of Jelles Fonda (a Mohawk Valley shop keeper who served the Native community, particularly those of Ft. Hunter, prior to the American Revolution). Here it is possible to reconstruct detailed genealogies, due to the meticulous record keeping. Seth had a sister Margaret and a brother John noted here in the mid 1770s, with a mother Mary, uncles Aaron and David Vanderbarrak (Hill) and step – father Sadoquot (Jelles Fonda Accounts, Cornell University Library, Microfilm 903). Importantly, no Catharine appeared in these family accounts – however if she was residing in Canajoharie, this would not be surprising.

It will be important to try to find a suitable (e.g., born circa 1747 as per the Census of Niagara in 1783) Catharine in the Mohawk baptismal records, to show that indeed Johannes and Mary Hill were the parents of Catharine, who was in turn the person described in the 1792 diary. The only possible entry appears in the Anglican registers of Ft. Hunter, where a Catharine, daughter of Johannes and Mary, was baptized 14 February 1758. Two years earlier an Aaron, son of Johannes and Mary, was baptized 15 February 1756. These would seem to be brother and sister – and with an elder Aaron being the father of Mary Hill, it is quite likely that this was Mary Hill Kateriunigh (David Hill's sister). In 1768, a daughter Mary was baptized to Johannis and Mary at the Caughnawaga Reformed Dutch Church (near the trading post of Jelles Fonda at Caughnawaga). On the same day Mary sponsored the baptism of Aaron, the son of Aaron and Susanna. Since other records show that Mary Hill's brother Captain Aaron Hill Kanonraron was married to a Susannah, this does seem to identify this family grouping (which is also seen in the account books of Jelles Fonda). It should be noted, however, that there were at least three John (Johannes, Hans) and Mary (Maria, Wari) who were baptizing children around this same time interval – so the identification has a tentative nature to it. However, there was no baptismal entry circa 1747 for a Catherine, daughter of a John and Mary but, as we will see later, there is an altered baptismal record consistent with Catharine being the daughter of Johannes and Mary). Furthermore, if the above Catharine baptized in 1758 was the daughter of Mary Hill Kateriunigh, then it is still not possible to rule out Young's wife Catharine born circa 1747 being the sister of Captain Seth Hill – if she was adopted out (which appears to have been the case).

The Inheritance of Other Chiefly Titles –

If the brother being referred to by Catharine was not Astawenserontha, then we should turn to the last quote from the Campbell Diary. It would make no sense (would be entirely futile and even insulting) that Brant would attempt to secure the hereditary title Astawenserontha, one of the 9 Mohawk principal Confederacy sachemships, for Aaron Hill. If a title were to go out of a family, it could be borrowed by another family but only of the same clan. Aaron Hill's mother Esther was the Clan Matron for the Turtle Clan title Satekarewati (which was passed along to Aaron then his younger brother John Hill). Since it is highly unlikely that Captain Joseph Brant attempted to secure the Confederacy title for Hill's son Aaron – this leaves David's personal name – Karonghyontye –

unless Brant was only attempting to secure the title “Captain” for Aaron, the son of Capt. David.

Hypothesis 2: The Brother of Catharine Young Was Karonghyontye –

In November 1790 Joseph Brant reported the death of his great friend, Captain David Hill Karonghyontye who died after a short illness. Often when a great chief (e.g., one who has distinguished himself in battle) dies, his adult name is raised up in another male of his lineage to honor the man. It is expected that the man who now possesses this important name will act in accordance with the behavior expected of the previous chief, and assume his social role. Considering the status of David Hill Karonghyontye (Astawenserontha) in the Mohawk community, it stands to reason that his given name, while not among the 9 hereditary sachems, would be assigned to a kinsman as a badge of honor. This tradition is common to all Iroquoian cultures (e.g., Tooker, 1978; Sioui, 1996). Hopefully by following the individuals who inherited the name Karonghyontye, we can tease out family relationships.

What probably gave Brant hope was that there were occasional exceptions to the “clan rule”. The Clan Matron would keep a list of personal or given names that remained strictly within her maternal lineage. By in large, a son does not inherit his father’s name – but some exceptions among the Mohawk have been recorded. Sievertsen (1996) lists some of the personal names which were assumed by a son on the death of the father. An example is Crine (Turtle Clan) Anaquendahonji’s Native name which, upon the latter’s death, went to his son Johannes Crine (Green) who was known as Anaquendahonji (of the Bear Clan) for the rest of his life. Also Captain Isaac Hill Anonsoktea (a contemporary of Joseph Brant) was the son of Isaac Anonsoktea (senior). John Smoke Johnson (born 1790) reported that his father was Jacob Tekahionwake (born Sandusky, Ohio), as was his grandfather also named Tekahionwake. Another example is John Deserontyon’s son Peter, who while being known as Peter John in some records, was also listed as Peter Deserontyon (Johnson, 1964, p.204). Perhaps Joseph Brant attempted to obtain this “perk” for David Hill’s son – but failed. It is one thing for Mohawks at Ft. Hunter (New York) or Tyendinaga (Ontario) to make an “arbitrary” decision, but the Six Nations Chiefs in Council as established on the Grand River is quite another matter. Here conservatism and the traditions of the Confederacy rule. Based on the Campbell Diary, the decision of the Six Nations in Council was evidently that the name Karonghyontye (or the title Captain) would go to a suitable candidate among those in the maternal line of succession – his sister’s son.

The process of inheritance of these non – sachem chiefly names is fairly well documented, at least for the era surrounding the War of 1812. At this time in history, it was necessary for a successor of a chiefly name (not a principal or Confederacy chief) to produce a “medal” or gorget possessed as a gift from the British for wartime service. A gorget was an embossed, generally crescent-shaped metal (usually silver or silver gilt) ornament on a necklace that was worn by European military officers as a badge of rank. Thus a maternal nephew or brother would present this item to Council as a credential to legitimize his claim to be installed in the place of his predecessor. This is precisely what

“Little Peter”, nephew of the deceased “Little David” did, and on 11 October 1819 both the Indian Department officials and the Chiefs in Council accepted Peter, and *invested him with the gorget & recommended to him to follow the example of his uncle, the late Chief, as a good man, & good warrior* (Claus Papers, MG19, Vol. 11, p.252). The subject of succession was even more problematic at Tyendinaga (Bay of Quinte) where on 26 September 1815, John Ferguson wrote to Claus that, *On the subject of Medals, George Martin told me, that his relation Old John Green, was the first entitled by Birth, to be a Chief – He has had a Medal some years – the next he said was a son of Abram Hills – this Abram is one of whom you allude in your letter – the Man who actually killed his cousin, Laurence* (RG10, Vol. 31, p.18458).

As noted above, David Hill’s major “honours and titles” (note the use of the plural) went to his nephew Seth Hill – but exactly when is unclear. However our prime focus here is on the years 1790 to 1800 and determining what became of David’s given name “Karonghyontye”. Was it included with “Chief”, “Captain” and “Astawenserontha”? The present author has attempted to secure copies of all known documents relating to the Mohawks (e.g., deeds, journals) from 1790 to 1845. David exclusively used his Mohawk given name when signing. His sachem title appeared in addition to his “everyday name” Karonghyontye in one single document, that he did not himself sign). Determining who next held this name / title may be of great significance.

In order to identify the successor to the title Karonghyontye it will be helpful to ascertain the English translation of the name. This will be important, but complicated by a number of factors, as we shall see shortly. The translator of a letter written from David Hill to Daniel Claus, in Mohawk and dated 1784, indicates that the meaning of Karonghyontye is, ‘Flying Sky’. *The elements of the name are as follows: Karonghy -, from ga rongh ya ‘sky, firmament, heavens’; and –ontye, from the present imperfect tense of an irregular verb, dagaden, to fly* (MG19, Claus Papers, Vol. 4, p.21). [Click here](#) to see the letter and the signature. Gunther Michelson questions whether David Hill’s name is karuhutye? (Floating Sky), (letter to George R. Hamell, 2 september 1988). In 1879 Mrs. Ellen Maricle reported that, *The Indian name of Capt. David Hill was as the Mohawks pronounce it – Ka-ron-yon-tye, or The Flying Cloud* (Draper Ms, Series F, Vol. 13, p.88).

Before listing instances where Karonghyontye appears in lists of Chiefs of the Six Nations of the Grand River, a chronological listing of other relevant entries will be noted first.

1780 - 1790

There are multiple sources of evidence that David Hill, Chief Karonghyontye, (who died in November 1790), was an important war chief during the American Revolution (see numerous entries in for example the Papers and Records of Sir Frederick Haldimand). Later he was a Six Nations messenger and ambassador to other Indian Nations who resided in the American Republic, and the Western Indians of the Sandusky, Ohio region (then the “Northwest”). For example in August 1782 Joseph Brant was sent by the anxious Indians at Oswego with David Hill and a Cayuga Chief to Quebec to see

Governor Haldimand to air grievances (Kelsay, 1986). Hill also joined Joseph Brant as a Mohawk deputy at the Ft. Stanwix Treaty 10 September 1784 (Public Papers of George Clinton, Vol. 8, p.370). He was, frequently sent on embassies for the Six Nations and was recorded as being accompanied by “Captain Isaac Brant” 7 November 1788 at Marietta and recorded in the diary of Rev. John Heckewelder (Wallace, 1958, p.415). Heckewelder said that among the Mohawks who visited, was Capt. David, a high chief of the 6 Nations & a Mohawk by birth. Heckewelder further said that David and, Col. Brand’s son who was also with the party are distinguished – looking & very modest persons, & both speak English well (Ibid., p.228). This does not at all sound like a description of Isaac, Joseph’s son. Instead David Hill may have been accompanied by a possible “understudy”, his sister’s son who was also a relative to Joseph Brant. However Isaac the nephew was never known in any other source as “Captain” at such an early date (as described in the Addendum). It can then be assumed that Wallace was referring to the title (Captain) Isaac may have used at a later date. Furthermore, two years later, in the spring of 1790, the Six Nations sent Isaac (Brant), Joseph Brant’s nephew to the Miami chiefs recommending that they should “keep a low profile” for the moment (MG19, Claus Papers, 4, p.213) [obtain original]. The Miami chiefs, in their letter to Claus of 3 May 1790, clearly identify Isaac as Joseph’s nephew, not his son of the same name. Perhaps this is David Hill’s successor who, as we shall see, clearly followed in Hill’s footsteps from 1791. One of David’s last “official acts” was his appearance with Joseph Brant in Albany on 16 June 1790 when the former gave a speech to the Committee of the Corporation of Albany (Hist. Soc. Penn., Gratz Coll.).

Hence, sometime around November 1790 perhaps the Mohawk maternal nephew of David Hill would have obtained the medal or gorget and, after his mother’s approval, presented it to the Six Nations in Council, and was raised up as Karonghyontye (Flying Sky). Hopefully his name will be found in documentary sources circa 1792 (date of the Campbell Diary entry). Alas, as was noted earlier, there is no list of chiefs as would be found on a deed or in Council minutes, pertaining to this time period, so we must turn elsewhere.

1792

Recall that it has been documented that the brother of Lt. John Young’s wife Catharine had succeeded to all or part of the “honours and titles” of their uncle David Hill at the time of Campbell’s visit in early 1792. Hence it would be ideal to have firm evidence as to who held the chiefship of Karonghyontye in that year. Here the author presents evidence that the successor to Karonghyontye was Isaac Brant, Joseph Brant’s step – nephew, and David Hill’s nephew (via his possible sister Margaret Hill), messenger and ambassador to the Western Indians, personal assistant to Joseph Brant, and translator for the Miami, Shawanee and Delaware languages.

An important documentary source is the journal of the Stockbridge – Mahican chief, Hendrick Aupaumut detailing of his travels as an official emissary of the United States to the Western Tribes. His “Narrative of an Embassy to the Western Indians” (Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Vo. 2, 1827) unfortunately, while peppered with

days and months, does not contain the year of his journey, although it can be inferred by comparison of events noted (see Kelsay, 1986). A former Indian Commissioner, Timothy Pickering, attested to the authenticity of the Aupaumut journal. He also noted that he recognized some of the spelling idiosyncrasies, including a problem in rendering correctly those Indian names not in Hendrick's native language. Hendrick's journal also places him at Canandaigua on the 1st of June, where he met Joseph Brant, and on Buffalo Creek in the second week in June 1792. Aupaumut boarded a vessel bound for Detroit on the 18th of June, however due to the weather he was compelled to send for his cousin Delaware Aaron to act as pilot, and followed the inland route along the Thames.

Importantly, after meeting up with Delaware Aaron, the journal continues with an aside describing how Aupaumut was informed by Aaron that Joseph Brant sent out a party of four Indians from the Grand River (one being Delaware Aaron) in the spring (so March, April or May) of that year, taking the overland route to the rendezvous place of Miami (Ohio country). Brant before he went to Philadelphia, he sent a message to the western Indians, by this Aaron and three other Indians one of them Brant's nephew, named Tawalooth. Part of the message was to ask the western nations whether they would approve of Brant's going among the big knives and three days after they left the Grand River, this Tawalooth begin to say that he is the head of that company, and that he will deliver the messages of his uncle, to the western Indians (p.85).

A letter from Joseph Brant to Alexander McKee in Detroit, dated 27 March 1792, Joseph encloses a copy of the invitation to Philadelphia he received from the American Secretary of War General Knox. He noted his hesitance of going without the approval of "our Western friends", and asks McKee to help advocate for him. Brant also requests that, *The Messengers I dispatch herewith I hope you'll forward without delay* (i.e., Delaware Aaron, Tawalooth et al.). These were sent with wampum in order to convey the seriousness of the matter (SP, pp11-12). This scenario fits perfectly with the above. Hence, Brant's nephew "Tawalooth" left for the west about the beginning of April 1792.

Apparently in the process "Tawalooth" left many of the villages along the Thames in a state of agitation. The messengers arrived back from their mission to the Western Indians about the middle of May (Kelsay, 1986). No doubt "Tawalooth" would seek out his uncle at the earliest opportunity in order to relay the news about the views of the Western chiefs to Joseph Brant's proposed trip to Philadelphia.

This description is consistent with Joseph Brant leaving for Philadelphia in April but lingering quite a while until reaching Canandaigua New York on June the 1st where he stayed a few days, meeting Hendrick Aupaumut while there (Aupaumut, 1827, p.78). It is here also that Joseph procured a horse for Isaac who had likely just arrived to inform his uncle about the feelings of the Western Indians about his trip. (Kelsay, 1986, pp.466-7). Again, this series of events ties in exactly with the quote from the Aupaumut Diary above.

At any rate, Joseph and party arrived on the 20th of June, and returned from Philadelphia to reach Niagara on the 24th of July 1792 (Kelsay, 1986, p.475). It would appear that

upon reaching Niagara Isaac was outfitted to take another message to the Western Indians. As noted above, Zeisberger has him passing the Moravian Village on the Thames River on the 17th of August. At this point we can return to integrate the content of the immensely valuable Aupaumut Journal.

Aupaumut stated that on the 13th of September (1792) Brant's messengers arrived, eleven in number. The Head of them called Tawalooth. On the 17th inst. This Tawalooth, Brant's nephew, and now messenger, delivered a speech in a council (p.112). He gave a speech on behalf of his uncle, the substance of which included the statement that, *I have wonderfully got thro from here to Congress and back. I am much concerned for you but am lame and could not go at present - but will go and see you as soon as may be* (Ibid., p.112). Brant's nephew also announced that he has come with 10 warriors to assist in the war.

Aupaumut believed that Brant's nephew was causing severe problems for the "American cause", by *delivering his uncle's Message, and by his own artful lies being a proper Liar or Emmissary of the Devil*. Aupaumut also noted that **Tawalooth could speak the Shawany tongue, also some other languages** (p.113). It appears that this nephew of Joseph Brant may have also been his translator – known from other records of this time and place. More on this shortly. Joseph Brant arrived at the Council on the 11th of October and took over the role of delivering speeches. In one of the latter, the Delaware Chief Big Cat noted, the Message of Brant reached our ears by his Nephew (p.124). Since Aupaumut spoke a language he said was close enough to Delaware so to be mutually intelligible, he is not going to mistake the Delaware words for "son" and "nephew".

Tawalooth may have been the "everyday name" or former name of Chief Karonghyontye – or a very bad phonetic rendition of the name, for example, Ka ra yoo th. There is no "L" sound in the Mohawk language (e.g., Gerin, 1899/00), although the name may have been a Mahican version of the sound or meaning.

At this point we need to address **a recurring problem. The identification or rather misidentification of Tawalooth, Isaac Brant** – Europeans contradicting what Aupaumut and other Indians had to say about family relationships. The above General Knox reported to General Chapin on 27 June 1792, *It is Well judged to deliver Captain Brandt's son the horse you mentioned* (AIA, Old Series, Vol. IV, p.237). On 27 June Knox wrote to Chapin's son about a sum of money, *You are to defray the expenses of Captain Brandt, his servant and two horses, from this city to Niagara* (Ibid.). Son or servant? Kelsay deals with the inconsistency by assuming that once "the son" got the horse he turned back (Kelsay, 1986, pp.466-7). In the Diary of David Zeisberger of the Delaware Moraviantown settlement along the Thames River, in relation to a later trip by Isaac, he noted that on the 17th of August 1792, Brant's son went through here with six Mohawks with peace propositions from Congress to the nations who are now assembling upon the Miami. Brant could not himself come, being ill, but will soon follow. The latter is correct in that Joseph Brant became seriously ill on the way back from Philadelphia (see Kelsay, 1986). He did pass by Moraviantown on 29 September with about 40 of his

people (1885, p.282). Perhaps Isaac did nothing but give his name Isaac Brant and did not find it in his interest to correct the assumptions of Europeans. It should be noted that in her comprehensive biography of Joseph Brant, Kelsay (1986) notes that the head of this party was Isaac Brant but she terms him Joseph Brant's son – despite the statements of Hendrick Aupaumut who calls Isaac, Brant's nephew. She states that Aupaumut, *persisted in speaking of the youth as Brant's nephew, giving him the Algonquian – sounding name of Tawalooth*. Kelsay said that this apparent misconception was due to the fact that, *Hendrick did not know Joseph well, and probably had no acquaintance at all with his family* (p. 478). In fact one of Aupaumut's cousins, Delaware Aaron (also known as Captain Aaron Kanaghsadiron), was literate and well known to Joseph Brant (see p. 85 of the Aupaumut Journal). He was a member of the party of Mohawks selected by Joseph Brant to go on a mission to the west and described by Aupaumut. Delaware Aaron was also a signator to virtually all of the deeds and Council minutes of the time. Aaron was Hendrick's informant for the early diary entries. However the Miamis, the Delawares of Sandusky, Delawares of the Grand River, and Mahicans were all aware that Isaac was Brant's nephew – as well as Joseph Brant himself, it was only some Europeans who did not know the family who, likely made an assumption, and reported this Isaac Brant as being Joseph Brant's son. In the official records of conferences, mistakes were unlikely to have been made. The American Commissioners correctly identified Isaac as Brant's nephew – as will be seen shortly.

The only evidence that Brant's son Isaac played any official role for his father is from a conversation with Brant by Samuel Woodward wherein the latter recalled that Brant said about Isaac that he, *installed him in the capacity of his own secretary* (Stone, Vol. 2, p.185). Meanwhile in the years leading up to his death at the hands of his father, Isaac was in almost constant trouble in the Mohawk Village for example shooting the horse of a resident and wounding the man, aligning himself with the malcontents (i.e., anti Joseph Brant faction) at the Grand River, and ultimately Isaac murdered a village saddle maker before precipitating a fight with his father in 1795 which resulted in Isaac's death (see Kelsay, 1986). Not in the least is his behaviour consistent with the actions of the Isaac recorded in the years 1792 to 1794.

It is essential to clarify these statements of Aupaumut further, using other sources to seek cross validation and an indication (preferably two different document sources) that Isaac was known as Karonghyontye (Flying Sky). This was to come in the year 1793.

1793

The Papers of Governor John Graves Simcoe (SP) in 5 Volumes (Ontario Historical Society, 1924) contain a wealth of data pertaining to the years Isaac, the nephew of Joseph Brant appears in the records between the years 1792 and 1795; as do the New American State Papers (AIA), Indian Affairs in 13 volumes.

In a letter from Matthew Elliott to Alexander McKee from Detroit 5 June 1793, he described the arrival of “**Karaguantier's Party**” of 30 men the previous day (4 June 1793). Elliott (an Indian Department officer) would have been familiar with the Brant

family and did not call this Mohawk, “Brant’s son”. He only used the Mohawk name, which in his orthography is phonetically very close to Karonghyontye, or Flying Sky in English – although closer to Flying Sun – a name frequently confused with the former. Elliott reported that a riot ensued involving this group and the residents (SP, Vol. 5, p.48).

On the 10th of June Col. R.G. England requested that McKee ensure that in returning “young Brant” avoid Detroit due to this event. In a letter of 18 August 1793 R.G. England cautions Alexander McKee that if “Captain Brant or his Son’s intentions to return to the Grand River immediately” that they avoid Detroit since the latter started a riot previously “which the Inhabitants here have not forgot”. It appears that England, an Irish born Commandant of Detroit who arrived there 8 June 1792 (DCB, Vol. 5, online), may have made an assumption as to the identity of Isaac, Brant’s nephew. Aupaumut et al. termed him Brant’s nephew – this would appear to be a more reliable source.

Joseph Brant had arrived at Detroit on the 17th of May, and wrote a journal which is included in full in the Simcoe Papers (Vol. 2, pp.5-17). During a lull, he decided that it would be good to send deputies back to Niagara to meet with the Senecas and the three Indian Commissioners (Pickering, Lincoln, and Randolph) and a large assembled group (including Quakers) awaiting permission to board a boat to go to Sandusky. However, *the haste was so great that no speaker had been appointed* (Kelsay, 1986, p.495). It turns out that Flying Sky may have assumed that role in Niagara (see later). Joseph Brant was given approval and was chosen as a deputy, with the authorization being signed by McKee 1st July 1793 (Simcoe Papers, Vol. 1, p.374). Brant arrived with about 50 Western chiefs of most or all of the tribes in the region on the 5th of July (AIA, Vol. 4, p.131). Brant’s speech to the Indians and Commissioners at Niagara took place from the 7th to 9th July (Ibid., 377-382). Isaac, his interpreter may have been sent ahead, or was with the group who went with Joseph by boat up the lake. A document soon to be discussed suggests the former option may have been correct.

Whatever the specific circumstances, during the brief time when Isaac was present in the vicinity of Buffalo Creek, he appears to have been the subject of a sketch and a painting.

The next occurrence of the name Karonghyontye, located to date, relates to an insertion in a journal that General Lincoln kept enroute to and during a treaty held with the Indian tribes of the northwest (Ohio), Lincoln being one of the Commissioners of the United States. A sketch was made of the Indian orator (and all present) and included (many years later) with the publication of Lincoln’s journal. The artist was one Col. Pilkington who titled the sketch, *Talk with the Indians at Buffalo Creek in 1793* (Mass. Hist. Soc., 3rd Series, Vol. 5, 1836). The sketch applies to an occasion when all three Commissioners were present along with the Quakers and others shown in the drawing. The “Indian orator” was not specifically named in this document.

In 1838 General Henry Dearborn wrote a journal of his trip to the Niagara Frontier, *for the purpose of negotiating treaties with the Senecas & Tuscarora Tribes of Indians* (1904, p.39). On 2 October he showed the above sketch published in Lincoln’s journal

two years previous to some Seneca Chiefs. One of them, Capt Pollard, then an aged man, stated that he was present when the Commissioners Genl. Lincoln Col. Pickering & Govr. Randolph visited the Senecas on this Creek in 1793, and could identify the Chief shown in the Lincoln Journal. The interpreter, Mr. Strong, Capt Pollard's son, wrote the following letter to Dearborn and is worth quoting in full:

Buffalo Creek Oct. 2nd 1838

Genl. Dearborn,

Sir. Capt Pollard states, that the Council held on Buffalo Creek 1793, (as mentioned in Genl Lincoln's Journal) In which Genl Lincoln and Mr. Randolph Commissioners of the United States. The orator mentioned in the journal, and the accompanying Sketch, was a Mohawk Chief, Colleague of Capt Brandts, by the name of 'Flying Sky' – Capt Pollard further states, that at the above mentioned Council, Capt Brandt was at Sandusky or at Detroit, As Brandt came as a passenger in the Vessel come down the Lake; after the Commissioners above mentioned – Brandt returned with them & the rest of the Seneca Chiefs up the Lake –

Note. This statement of Capt Pollard explains why the duty of making Speech to the Commissioners fell upon Chief Flying Sky – had Capt Brandt been present at the Council, he undoubtedly would have made the Speech.

Your friend

Hon-non-de-ah

(Publications of the Buffalo Historical Society, Vol. 7, 1904, p.145).

[Click here](#) for a copy of the engraving showing Flying Sky in 1793. He was termed a “Mohawk Chief” by Capt Pollard and the drawing shows him wearing the three string wampum on his head that is the insignia of his office (more on this later). It is important to note, however, that an assumption must be made here. That is to say, for the above to be true, the memory of Capt Pollard for events that occurred 45 years earlier must be accurate in the essentials. What can be validated is that Capt Pollard was correct about Joseph Brant arriving later, by ship, then being among the Seneca contingent heading back by boat to the Detroit area (e.g., Kelsay, 1986). So Isaac Brant appears to have been memorialized in June or July of 1793. However, not only a pen sketch was made, but a painting of virtually the same scene. Lewis Foy painted, “The Great Indian Council 1793”. If it is unclear, however, as to the location of this Council, where all of the parties (e.g., American Government officials, Quakers) – Buffalo Creek or Sandusky. [Click here](#) to see this image. [Click here](#) to see the close up in color of Flying Sky. So not only does a painting of David Hill Flying Sky exist from 1776 ([click here](#)), but also one for his apparent successor Isaac (Brant) Flying Sky from 1793 ([click here](#)). Note that the three strings of wampum are apparently identical, except the position of the half leather string (being to the front in 1776, and to the back in 1793).

It is important to note that in every document signed by himself, David Hill only used his day to day name Karonghyontye (Flying Sky). [Click here](#) to see his signature on the Ft. Hunter Deed of 1789 (a year before he died). It is only on the Canajoharie Deed of 1789 ([click here](#)) where someone else added in “Astawenserontha” (and even Joseph Brant’s Mohawk name). Hence one might expect that his successor would follow in his uncle’s footsteps, being known as Karonghyontye in almost all situations (except perhaps Council meetings involving all the Six Nations), and attending with or representing Captain Joseph Brant in diplomatic missions – this was David Hill’s role at the time just before he died. Whether Isaac inherited the Confederacy Chief title of Astawenserontha is unknown.

The sketch could not have been completed until after 26 June 1793 when General Chapin, whose name and image is recorded on this document, arrived (AIA, Vol. 4, p.130). Perhaps the most likely occasion was coincident with Isaac’s role during the conference held between the 7th and the 9th of July, when the Commissioner’s replied to Joseph Brant’s speech on behalf of the Western Indians. The speech took place at “Niagara”. At the end, the Commissioners recorded that, *The foregoing speech, having been interpreted by Mr. Dean in the Oneida tongue, was interpreted by Captain Brant’s nephew, into the Shawanese language, and from that, by another interpreter, into the language of the Chippewa nation, after which, the Shawanese chief (called Cat’s Eyes) thus addressed the Commissioners* (AIA, Vol. 4, p.132). Other than Joseph Brant, his interpreter Isaac was the only Mohawk known to have spoken before all three Commissioners plus General Chapin.

Returning to the diary kept by Joseph Brant of his time at Sandusky, it is evident that he and Isaac had returned to the west by July. The Commissioners, Quakers and others had arrived at Sandusky from Niagara on the 21st of July (Life of Heckewelder, p.131), so the business of forging a treaty could begin. Joseph Brant reported in the entry in his diary for the 23rd of July, that while at Council at the Foot of the Rapids, *the Chief of the Delawares (Buckongehalis) interrupted me in a very abrupt manner, whereupon, **The interpreter (Isaac) opposed the Delaware Chief, and told him that it was not Customary for a Speaker to be interrupted, and that any reply must be deferred until the Speech was delivered*** (Vol. 2, p.7). At a major Confederacy Council of the 7th of August 1793, the Six Nations were maintaining that the Muskingum was, *the most reasonable Boundary. To which Buckongehalis, the Chief of the Delawares replied by **Isaac the Interpreter & pointing to Col. McKee, said that is the Person who advises us to insist on the Ohio River for the line*** (Ibid., p.16). There can be no doubt who this Isaac who could speak both Shawnee and Delaware was, it was Isaac, Joseph Brant’s nephew who interpreted for the same parties at Niagara a few weeks previous – and Joseph himself recorded this information.

It should be noted that other documentation (now missing from the present author’s collection at the local Archives) consistently name the interpreter noted at these various events as, ***Isaac, Brant’s nephew.***

1794

Further clues as to the identification of Flying Sky come from the records of Governor Simcoe and Lord Dorchester relating to the events leading up to disastrous 1794 Battle of Fallen Timbers. *Consequently, Simcoe instructed by Dorchester played a tense diplomatic game in the American border areas -- not much aided by Six Nations Chief Isaac Brant, who realistically thought it impossible to create a neutral Indian state there, as Simcoe had hoped. American military power soon settled the question in any case, shattering Indian resistance and forcing the western tribes to virtual surrender in 1794 (Canada: A Celebration of our Heritage, Chapter 5, 1999). This is the last reference to Isaac Brant the nephew, and the name Karonghyontye does not re-appear at the Grand River until 1810. This is ironic that there is a hiatus in the records of the Grand River, which could be of immense assistance, between 1787 and March 1795.*

So clearly **Isaac Brant (1788) and Isaac Brant (1790), Tawalooth Brant's nephew (1792), and Karaguntier as well as Chief Flying Sky Karonghyontye, and Isaac the nephew of Joseph Brant and his translator (1793), Chief Isaac Brant (1794), were perhaps one in the same.** Karaguntier, Karonghyontye, and Karughyundy (the latter: Claus Papers, MG19, F1, Vol. 4, pp.31-2), despite small surface appearances, are likely all the same name in this context, and the same man – from 1790, Isaac Brant, step-nephew of Captain Joseph Brant. More on the genealogy, and Mohawk name irregularities later.

The sources paint a reasonably clear picture here, although the tendency of some Europeans to confuse the son and the nephew of Joseph Brant (since they had the same name) does add a degree of fuzziness.

If Isaac, the nephew of Captain Joseph Brant, was also a nephew of David Hill, and assumed both his uncle's the role and the title "Captain" after November 1790, and was the "Flying Sky" noted above, then this Isaac Brant may have been the brother of Catharine, Young's wife.

Other Nephews

Joseph Brant had one biological nephew alive at that time (the 1790s), George Johnson, his sister Molly's son (Dictionary of Canadian Biography, "Gonwatsijayenni", Vol. 4, 2000). There is no record of any other full or half siblings who reached adulthood. The others were step-nephews, who were all termed simply "nephew". Among those in this category of "step-nephews" were the sons of Brant Canagaradunckwa's children (Joseph Brant's step-brothers and step-sisters) by his other two wives (i.e., after Joseph's father died, his mother became the third wife of Brant Canagardunckwa),

Brant Canagaradunckwa was a good friend of Sir William Johnson. One of Brant's daughters became the consort of Sir William, and the mother of his sons Brant Johnson Kaghyakon (Kaghneghtagon, Quakyaron etc.) and William Johnson Tagawirunte. Brant resided at Ft. Hunter where he was a head village chief and lived in a two-story frame

house in the style of a middle class Colonial resident. In 1753 he married Margaret, the mother of Joseph and Molly (who became the wife of Sir William Johnson after the death of her predecessor) – both of whom took their step-father’s first name as a patronymic (using “Brant” as a surname). He moved to Canajoharie, Margaret’s home village in 1753 and became one of the chief village sachems in this location (see Kelsay, 1986; Sievertsen, 1996). His first two wives, prior to Margaret, were:

- 1) Catharine, the first wife of Brant Canagaradunckwa had known children (step-brothers and step-sisters to Joseph Brant): Thomas Brant (b.1721), Nicholas Brant (aka Brant Canadiorha), Hester, Rachel and Rosina, as well as the daughter who had two children, (Lt.) Brant Johnson Kaghyakon and William Johnson Tagawirunte by Sir William Johnson (prior to Sir William taking up with Joseph’s biological sister Molly Brant).
- 2) Brant Canagaradunckwa and his second wife Christina had one known child (step-brother to Joseph Brant): Young Brant Kanadagaia (b.1742).

This entails a rather large pool of individuals who may have had sons who would be step-nephews to Joseph Brant. One is known to have had contact with Timothy Pickering, noted above in relation to the Lincoln and Aupaumut journals. In attempting to establish a “British Mohawk Treaty”, *Pickering had discussed Mohawk claims at Canadaigua with Henry Young Brant, a nephew of British Army Captain Joseph Brant* as recorded in Pickering’s journal entry of 13 November 1794 (Hutchins Report, Ch. 12, p.289). It is possible that **Henry Young Brant** was the Tawalooth above, although there is no record of him in the 1793 proceedings. His father was Young Brant (son of Brant and Christina) and his mother Catherine Konwateatiatha (1789 Ft. Hunter deed) was a head woman of the Turtle Clan (Seth Newhouse Manuscript) and so Henry Young Brant was not Flying Sky of the Bear Clan.

While it is noted here that Isaac, nephew of Captain Joseph Brant was a Chief of the Six Nations, and appears to have been raised up as Karonghyontye, it becomes important to properly identify all of the Mohawks named Isaac Brant. It has never been proposed that Joseph Brant’s son Isaac Brant was a chief of any description and certainly not a Mohawk chief (his mother was an Oneida). Neither was he known as “Captain”, nor is their evidence that he was involved in the politics of the Western tribes prior to 1793. Hence the reference here would seem to be to the nephew. However the similarity in names appears to have caused considerable confusion. This is reminiscent of trying to tease out the children of the three Mohawk John and Mary’s baptizing children at about the same time – two of the males being a Seth’s Hans (John son of Seth). The only other adult with the name Isaac Brant who in the 1790s either resided at, or was associated with, the Grand River was Captain Joseph Brant’s eldest son was Isaac Brant (born about 1767 died 1795 in a fight with his father Joseph).

If the above Isaac Brant Karonghyontye was a step-nephew of Captain Joseph Brant, then it is possible that Catharine Young must have been a step-niece of Brant.

1795 and Later

In seeking out the activities of Isaac (Brant), Joseph Brant's step-nephew, since he does not appear along the Grand River or in any record source after 1794 there are two primary hypotheses – either he died circa 1794, or he moved away from the Mohawk Village. Also there are also two candidates for Isaac, Joseph Brant's nephew:

- 1) Isaac may have resided in the Ohio country among the Six Nations groups there. The most likely candidate was a man with the surname Brant, married to a daughter of Charliou named Susannah. She was born about 1756 (Butterfield, 1848). In all probability he was the Isaac, nephew of Joseph Brant (and the latter's interpreter and ambassador). This man's four children, Susan VanMeter, Thomas Brant, Paulus Brant and Isaac Brant were residing at the Honey Creek Mohawk settlement founded at Upper Sandusky in Ohio circa 1817 (when the John VanMeter Reservation was granted). They had formerly been living among the Wyandot in the area – although “Mohawktown” near Tiffin, Ohio had been in existence for an unknown duration. The eldest child, Thomas Brant, was a Captain, and his brothers Paulus and Isaac also fought on the American side during the War of 1812 (Welsh, 1844). It is interesting and perhaps significant that the Mohawks of this part of Ohio were known as the Bear (Isaac's clan). It would appear that all of the time spent by Isaac in the Ohio country, plus, perhaps, the politics of the Grand River, encouraged him to set down permanent roots among the Western Indians – Wyandot, Delaware, Shawanee and Seneca among others. The eldest son Thomas Brant Tooteeandee had become head man of the village at Honey Creek and the Seneca Towns by 1835 (e.g., Lang, 1880), prior to leaving for Oklahoma.
- 2) There is little direct evidence to suggest that the Isaac of 1792-3 used the surname Brant. As we will see shortly, his mother was a Hill and, like his cousin Seth Hill, may have used his maternal surname. There is a possible, if somewhat enigmatic, candidate in a “Chief Isaac Hill” who had a very large family (including sons Abraham and Isaac Hill Jr.). In 1879 Hester Thomas (see above re George Young) reported that she was the great granddaughter of Isaac via his daughter Elizabeth. Furthermore, *regarding Isaac & David Hill that they were not brothers, but that Isaac was David's uncle and Isaac Hill accompanied Capt. Brant in all his war Expeditions – he died near Paris above Brantford where he resided Isaac died about 59 years ago Isaac Hill was connected with Brant by marriage* (Draper Ms, Series F, Vol. 14, p.39, 28 May 1878). Hester appears to confuse father and son a number of times in her recollections. Hester Thomas also noted that Isaac was a relative of Mary Hill (born circa 1768) who married William Kennedy Smith. In the obituary Col. William Kerby (the grandson of the said Mary Hill) it was stated that the father, *encountered an Indian maiden, a grand – daughter of a Mohawk Chief, Isaac Hill, who was a relative of the celebrated Joseph Brant* (Ibid., p.76). More specifics come from David Jacket Hill. Draper stated that the, *Informants father was Capt. Isaac Hill – (whose father was Isaac Hill also, from Mohawk country) - born in 1762 – died 46 years ago – 1833, above Brantford, aged 71 years* (Ibid., Vol. 13, p.29, 26

September 1879). It seems likely that Draper recorded the father's age for that of the grandfather – but this is unclear. Assuming that 1762 plus or minus two years is correct, then between 1760 and 1764 there were 9 recorded Mohawk baptisms, all at the Dutch Reformed Church of Schenectady, and 4 infants were given the name Isaac. A better candidate is an Isaac, son of Isaac and Catharine (married 24 February 1754), baptized at the Ft. Hunter Anglican Church 25 February 1756. This Isaac had a brother Abraham baptized here 9 February 1758 (Sievertsen, 1996). In explaining the origin of the Hill surname, Draper said that Mrs. Martin (descendant of the Hills of Ft. Hunter) and David Jacket Hill, *can give no account of relationship with Capt. David Hill & brothers, yet give me precisely the same hill – side origin of the family name. Hence it would seem to me, they had a common origin* (Ibid., p.40). The above is clear as mud in an attempt to ascertain whether “our” Isaac was the above scion of this large family responsible for so many of those with the surname Hill, the most common / frequent of all surnames on the Six Nations Reserve. If he was the brother of Catharine, then the surname Hill could also likely be the surname by which she was known.

Irrespective of the Brant or Hill surname issues, the date of Isaac's death (or relinquishing of his credentials) can be inferred via the timing of Joseph Brant's selection of a new interpreter, an individual he formally adopted as a nephew, presumably in the place of Isaac.

Joseph Brant's “adopted nephew” and official interpreter was **John Norton** (the son of a Scottish mother and Cherokee father). Norton served earlier as a school teacher at Tyendinaga and trader for John Askin in the west. This “adoption” appears to have taken place about 1795 when Norton was recommended by Joseph Brant to be the official Six Nations interpreter (see Kelsay, 1986). John Norton's Indian names were Teyoninhokarawen (after 1799) and earlier “The Snipe” (Dow-wis-dow-wis). On 22 December 1795, Governor Simcoe forwarded a letter to Lord Dorchester from Joseph Brant requesting that Norton be made Interpreter in the Indian Department for the Six Nations (DCB, Vol. VI).

The fact is that Brant's interpreter prior to 1795 was his nephew Isaac, but that in 1795 Brant petitioned for a paid position as interpreter for Norton. This may mean that Isaac and his family remained in the Sandusky area after the defeat of the Western Nations at Fallen Timbers by General Anthony Wayne, and that Brant needed a replacement who would reside at Six Nations on the Grand River (see Biographical Introduction, Journal of John Norton, 1816, Published 1970 by the Champlain Society). Also it is very likely that the reason for Norton's appointment was due to the death of Joseph Brant's nephew Isaac in 1794 or 1795. Thus Norton would be “in the room of” Isaac, Brant's nephew and so “interpreter and adopted nephew”. At any rate, no Isaac Brant Karonghyontye appears in any existing record pertaining to the Grand River after 1794. The fact that the name Karonghyontye does not reappear on the Grand River until 1810 (see later) may support the possibility that Isaac died about this time.

Sometime before 1805, Seth Hill likely inherited the Captain and Astawenserontha titles, but there is no evidence that he used the name Karonghyontye (Flying Sky), but instead kept his name Kanenkaregowagh. Seth died about 1810. By 1815 the person who held the title Astawenserontha was John Johnson. Seth Hill would appear to be either the maternal first cousin of Catharine (see later) or her brother or half brother.

To summarize to this point, Chief Flying Sky (Karonghyontye), who inherited the name from his uncle Captain David Hill Karonghyontye, was Captain Joseph Brant's step – nephew. It is also proposed that Isaac also inherited the “honours and titles” of Chief and Karonghyontye (whether also Captain and Astawenserontha also cannot be said), but died or relinquished his role before the latter appeared in any document associated with the chiefs of the Grand River.

Background of Isaac Brant - Hill Karonghyontye

As to the documentation relating to the early life and identity (e.g., names of parents; previous Indian name of Isaac), there are only strong likelihood's to work with. Just focusing on the church registers of Schenectady for example, there are multiple Isaacs baptized circa 1762 (Sievertsen, 1996). Without further clues, the evidence is inconclusive and confusing. Isaac may have been “Isaac, infant, names of parents forgot” who was baptized 17 February 1751 at the Ft. Hunter Anglican Church (Sievertsen, 1996).

On 12 January 1788 a group of Mohawk men and women related to Johannes Crine / Green (“White Hans”), and / or a Sarah (with a large family) petitioned (from Canajoharie) for a return of their lands at Ft. Hunter and Canajoharie. Among those signing, in this case immediately after John Crine Aronghyenghtha (an Astawenserontha name), was thirdly Isaac Geagaregonra, and fifthly Isaac Kesheghstoaghre (NYSL, Assembly Papers, Vol. 40, pp.41-4). The only probable Isaac in the two July 1789 Deeds is an entry from the Ft. Hunter (Lower Mohawk) deed with Isaac Continehquo; and from the Canajoharie (Upper Mohawk) document (which is torn) Dehonw----- Isaac (-is Mark). The only likely Astawenserontha names from the list of Seth Newhouse are, **De ka hon was henh** or **De yo yon wat heh** – which relate to the Canajoharie Isaac. Could any of these be a heavily modified version of Tawalooth? With the second, it would only take a single reversal of two consonants to make sense. Recall that D and T are the same in Mohawk, and there is no “L” sound in Mohawk. So the Mahican Hendrick may have heard, **Tah wa you theh**.

However the surname Brant, apparently linked to Isaac, may be a major clue (which was used on occasion by Europeans when referring to Isaac). While Thomas Ganaghsadirha (son of Brant Canagaradunckwa) did have a son Isaac baptized in 1749, this is unlikely to be “our” Isaac of the Bear Clan since the brother of Thomas's son Isaac, John, who was baptized in 1744, was John Deserontyon of the Wolf Clan. Furthermore, his daughter Lydia married Captain Isaac Hill Anonsokgea of the Bear Clan Astawenserontha family (see Sievertsen, 1996, p.82; Seth Newhouse Manuscript, 1885). If Isaac's parents were Nicholas Brant (Nicus in Mohawk) the brother of Thomas (and recorded father of

Catharine baptized 1747); and Margaret possible the sister of Mary Hill whose son Seth Hill is noted above, we have a stumbling block. While there is a baptismal record for an Isaac Brant son of Thomas Brant, there is none for an Isaac son of Thomas's brother Nicholas.

At this time surname usage was far from regular among Mohawks – except perhaps among the Hill family. Isaac appears to use his baptismal name and his Mohawk name – although this is not entirely clear. Even though a sibling was registered in the baptismal register as say John son of Nicholas Brant, there is no predicting the name by which he will chose to be known in the wider community once he reaches adulthood. In this case it would likely be one of four possibilities, following the baptismal name:

- a) Brant
- b) Claus (a diminutive of Nicholas)
- c) Hill (as was the choice of all the children of Margaret's sister Mary Kateriunigh)
- d) Mohawk name

At this time (1700 - circa 1820) standard European surnames were very rare. Much more common were patronymics (as found earlier in the Dutch community). For example Peter Davis was Peter, the son of David (Peter, Davids'son). Most common were baptismal names plus the Mohawk name – especially at Canajoharie which was less influenced by European practices (until the post – Revolutionary War era). It does appear, however, that Isaac's children may have used the Brant surname (as noted earlier).

If we have arrived at a correct identification, Isaac Brant will have a **sister Catharine** born about 1747.

Is There a Catharine, Daughter of Nicholas Brant, Born About 1747? **The “Mysterious 1747 Baptismal Record”**

On the 4th of June 1747 Catharine, daughter of Nicus Brant and Margarietje, was baptized at the Reformed Dutch Church of Schenectady. Brant and Christina (second wife of Brant) were the sponsors. However “looks can be deceiving”.

There was a small handful of Mohawks named Catharine baptized between 1745 and 1749 (the target year range based on Catharine's age in the Census of Niagara of 1783, which indicates that she was born circa 1747). However there is generally a “problem” in an attempt to link any to the matter here under discussion. The only recorded Mohawk baptism of a Catharine in 1747 occurred 3 June at the Schenectady Reformed Dutch Church. Her parents were listed as Nicus Brant and Margaretje (see important caveat later), with the former's father Brant (Canagaradunckwa) and step - mother Christina as sponsors. [Click here](#) to see the baptismal record. Unfortunately only a brother Lawrence (baptized 1754 Ft. Hunter) and a sister Susanna (baptized 1758 Schoharie) are documented in the church registers. There were likely more (perhaps many more)

children, probably baptized by Reverend Ehle - but he left no existing written records of his ministerial duties.

An Anomaly in the Baptismal Records:

To add an element of confusion (something we will see frequently in the available records), there is a baptismal entry that amounts to one huge anomaly. It pertains to a Catharine apparently born at the time expected for the Catharine in the 1783 Census entry. It is the interpretation that will be problematic. It is very ironic that this anomaly involves the only other female who the author, if pushed to proffer a second choice, might chose as a candidate for the identity of Catharine, the first wife of Lt. John.

So what is this “mystery entry” in the baptismal records of the Albany Reformed Dutch Church. The author suggests that the reader look at the entry for a Catharine, baptized 3 June 1747 by [clicking here](#). By using the magnification feature, and by looking at the way the minister or clerk has written other entries on the same page, it is clear that the entry for Catharine with parents named,

Nicus Brant
Margaetie

has been overwritten. A close inspection of the particulars of the entry suggest that it originally may have been,

Hans
Maria

The above odd version of the name Margaret is the clearest indication of something amiss. There are two other Mohawks with the name Margaret recorded on this page and both are spelled “**Margariet**”. Also there is a clear and distinct dot over the “g” in the first version of Margaret. While there are some stray marks on this page, the one above the “g” is clearly a purposeful dot – probably the remains of the “i” in Maria.

In looking at Nicus versus Hans, there is no other “N” written this way with a “flourish” at the top left – yet there is a very precise example of this with “**H**illegond Veddir”. Also the letter has smudges consistent with alteration.

The author is “stumped” by this entry since it is difficult to know why the original version would have been amended to change the entry to create two completely different parental names. So the question is, does the entry pertain to a Catharine born to Nicus and Margaret or Hans and Maria? It should be noted that the author may be “over – interpreting” here and the matter is subject to the role of expectation.

There is no evidence that Mohawks “waited until marriage” to begin having children. Thus a Catharine could well have been born in 1746 or early 1747 and baptized in June,

with the second child Seth coming closely on her heels within a year (not atypical) in 1748. So what do we do about this entry? As a rule in such instances, the final entry, even if amended, should be accepted as the most likely of the two alternatives – although clearly it would be “convenient” to the primary hypothesis to have a Catharine baptized to a Hans and Maria in 1747.

In seeking evidence as to the lineage of Catharine Young by detailing the first successor to the title Karonghyontye, further confirmation may come from locating information to show who was the next to succeed to David Hill’s former name.

Brother and Karonghyontye Successor 2: Paulus

As noted, the first recorded appearance of the name Karonghyontye on the Grand River was in 1810 – the baptismal name of this Chief being Paulus. It may add significantly to the array of evidence to explore the background of Paulus, since he would appear to be the brother to both Isaac Brant above, and Catharine Young. Perhaps Paulus Brant of Sandusky noted above was named after his proposed uncle.

A reasonable question to pose here concerns whether there is any evidence that Catharine had a brother Paulus.

It is interesting that in the records of the Indian School of Rev. Wheelock in Connecticut we find a Katharine who is a Mohawk pupil there in 1765. It is remotely possible that she was the wife of John Young. Katharine was soon joined by Margaret, the wife of Captain Daniel Oghnawera. In September 1766 Margaret was in a situation where she needed to escape the wrath of her husband who was “involved” with a close female relative of hers. Sivertsen (1996) indicated that earlier that year Margaret had written (in English) to Wheelock noting that her maternal niece Katharine was a student there. At the same time John Green and Seth (first cousins once removed) were also students there. Margaret brought with her from the Mohawk country one Paulus, who was *probably Katharine’s younger brother, come to see his sister*. It would seem that most of the Mohawk students in school here in late 1766 were members of one extended family. However, Sievertsen (1996) concludes that Katharine and Paulus were children of Lawrence and his wife Anna Holmes – based on their having two children of with these names recorded in the baptismal register. Considering the number of Mohawks whose baptismal record does not exist, this assignment is a questionable. At any rate on 9 January 1767 Margaret left taking with her Katharine, Paulus and another Mohawk student named Mary (likely also a family member) – Katherine would have doubtless married John Young soon thereafter.

Paulus signed his baptismal name on the 1789 Canajoharie (Upper Mohawk) deed noted above also signed by Catharine Kayakhon and Isaac Dehon----. Since the name appears at the bottom of the document it is not clear whether the name is spelled Paulus, Poules or a similar variant – [click here](#). However, someone wrote in “Shagoyadiyostha”. This name is of the Bear Clan Astawenserontha family (Seth Newhouse Manuscript). Apparently he did not use any surname, and on later deeds even his baptismal name is

missing (which was common with Canajoharie Mohawks at this time). Paulus probably obtained the necessary gorget for installation as a Chief (see above), as an heirloom from his brother Isaac and given to their mother, or perhaps a relative (Margaret Hill – Powless - Cotter), who was a Clan Matron was entitled to select the next Karonghyontye (more on the genealogy later).

Paulus was clearly from a very prominent family in that his name immediately follows the 8 League sachems in the 1789 Canajoharie deed. Also during the 1789 negotiations with Jelles Fonda the latter gave “extra” payments of 25 pounds to the most important or prominent Mohawks. One of these half dozen individuals was “Poules” who, with Jacob (likely Jacob Lewis Hayonwatha), were the only two to sign (NYSHS, Jelles Fonda Ledger 10, 1772-1791). The full list is Jacob, Adam, David, Thomas, David Junr and Poules. This was apparently in addition to 10 pounds paid to these same individuals in 1791. The last two were given payment via Joseph Brant (who received 100 pounds in this transaction). Here follows the notation:

Paid in full	for his Note P Schuyler 1791 – 10 pounds
Paid David haraghontye	pr Brant 10 pounds
Paid Paulus	pr Brant 10 pounds

The most likely interpretation here is that “David Junr” also known as haraghontye. Alas, more confusion. The names Karagh (sun) and Karon (sky, heavens – sometimes cloud) are frequently confused. However “Little David” appears frequently in Revolutionary War entries as “Caragonty” or similar variant. It is thus difficult to differentiate between these “Davids” who often occur in the same record. For example in the Indian Department rosters we find Lieutenants John Young and Brant Johnson, Interpreter Aron Vanderbergh, and together (Haldimand Papers, Reel 49, p.101, 3 September 1782):

David Vandebergh
Davd Rutt / alias Caraghguntty

As noted by Sievertsen (1996), Vanderbergh means “of the hill” (in German) and this name is used by each of the members of the Hill family in the Jelles Fonda Account Books (Vanderbarrack in Dutch). So we have “Capt. David” and “Little David” (David Junr) son of Rutt (Rath) with almost identical Mohawk personal names. However Karonghyontye is a Bear Clan name, whereas Karagontye is a Wolf Clan name. For example in the October 1760 list of Mohawks who went with Sir William Johnson to Montreal is the Canajoharie Wolf Clan warrior “David Karaghkundy” (JP, Vol. 13, p.175) – likely “Little David” above. In the same group is “Rath Karughiyonko” who, may be David’s brother.

In fact Karongh, Karagh, and Karugh frequently overlap and names confused. This has to be considered in relation to the 1793 “Karaguantier” entry noted earlier.

Shagoyasdiyostha and Karonghyontye Names in Six Nations Grand River Lists of Chiefs:

The first official appearance of Paulus in the records of the Grand River after 1789 was on the first and second available deed or Council meeting list (John Young witness to each):

- 1) 2 March 1795, when he appears as “Shagohawightha”, the fourth signature, two above Kanenhonegowagh (NA, MG19, Claus Papers, F8).
- 2) 2 November 1796, Haldimand deed, as “Shagaweayhsioeh” (NA, MG11, Q Series, Vol. 283).
- 3) 9 February 1801, when a group of Chiefs acknowledged their appreciation of the efforts of Joseph Brant. The name “Shagoyatdiyostha” is the second on the list of Chiefs (Draper Manuscripts, F21, p.7).
- 4) “Shakoyadiyostha” is also included among the list of Chiefs present at the Onondaga Council House 9 November 1806 to confirm the lands of the Youngs and others. The three white witnesses to the minutes of the Council meeting were Warner Nelles, John Young, and John Ryckman. Paulus’s name was always included among the principal Chiefs of the Mohawks, in this case between Shoskowitzowane (Bear Clan Sachem) and Hayonwaghtha (Turtle Clan Sachem). Minor chiefs are never found listed between the hereditary sachems, hence Paulus must have been a high ranking Mohawk – even before being raised up as Karonghyontye. It is also highly likely that he, like Seth, used his given Mohawk name until about 1800 – 1810 when principal chief titles were commonly written. Paulus could well have inherited the title Karonghyontye at a much earlier date if for many years he chose to write his given name on deeds.
- 5) A signer of a Secord family deed dated 1 January 1808, was “Paulus Shakoyadyughstha” (RG10, Vol. 160, pt. 1, 91900-A) among the four Mohawk Chiefs who signed the document. The small paper seals placed beside the name without the words “his mark” suggests that Paulus used his signature since it is known from other documents that the three previous Chiefs on the document were literate.
- 6) 31 July 1809, “Paul Shagoyatdiyostha” appears on another deed to the Secord family.
- 7) As noted above, the first appearance of the name “Flying Sky” at the Grand River after the death of David Hill in 1790, is 1 January 1810 where “Poulous Karonghyontye” was among the chiefs who signed a deed to Isaac Secord. This is **20 years after the death of David Hill Karonghyontye**. His name appears immediately after the name of “Seth Aghsdawenserontha” (the last time that Seth appears in any document) – so both men here are using the two names once possessed by their uncle David Hill (NA, RG10, Vol. 103, pp.236-9). Also the three Bear Clan League sachems are followed immediately by Paulus’ name – the same position as when he was using his given name years previous.
- 8) 11 April 1811, in a complaint about sovereignty that was sent to the Indian Department where one of those listed is a chief “Paul Karrongonty” (RG10, Vol.

27, p.16291). Unfortunately these documents are copies and it is not possible to determine who signed, and who made their marks.

that sometime between 31 July 1809 and 1 January 1810, Paulus Shagoyadiyostha began using the name Karonghyontye in all official records. Hence one reasonable interpretation is that his cousin Seth died about one year previous, and Paulus was raised up as Karonghyontye in late 1809. It is possible that Isaac Brant was residing in the Sandusky area, and died prior to 1809 thereby making the name available for a successor. Catharine's grandson Warner H. Nelles did not give up his chiefly title which he held from 1817 to his death in 1896, even though he left Six Nations to reside in St. Catharines Ontario in 1820 (see later).

However, since it is known from later sources that in the 1820s Karonghyontye was a name used by first Paulus Paulus (Powless) then his brother Peter – the question is, “did Paulus brother of Peter have this name from 1811 (the first time it is recorded after the death of Capt. David in 1790) and all of the descriptions about Paulus Shagoyadiyostha above amount to a red herring?”

In exploring the succession of the title beyond Paulus Shagoyadiyostha matters get very complicated. It would appear that both Paulus Shagoyadiyostha and a Paulus Sahonwadi were contemporaries (although the latter died circa 1787) and each had two sons, Peter Paulus and Paul Paulus (Powless). There was also a likely kinship connection between the two. It appears that Sahonwadi married Margaret, the sister of Captain Seth Hill Astawenserontha. She married secondly Nichloas Cotter, a White man, and became parents to Francis and Nicholas Cotter, half brothers to Paulus Paulus and Peter Paulus.

At some point likely during the War of 1812, Paulus Shagoyadiyostha died. On a “List of Mohawks who receive rations”, undated, but relating to the time of the War of 1812, there is a “Widow Paulus Deyotwanhea” (Archives of Ontario, MS 94, John Norton Papers, 1796-1843). The name appears to be her Indian name. Therefore about 1812 Paulus Shagoyadiyostha (Karonghyontye?) had died and his title assigned to his probable nephew or other maternal line kinsman

On 29 November 1817, a *List of Indian Claimants for Losses Sustained during he late War* included 77 Mohawk Claimants, plus the name of the person who received the third installment in 1837. Two entries of interest are:

- 7) Widow Powlis, received by Mary Johnson, her mark.
- 8) Pawlis Onwanegharaugh, received by Paul Powlis, his mark.

(Archives of Ontario, 8 Victoriae, Appendix GGG, A. 1844-5). Caderin Pauls (widow) was still alive when a census of the Upper Mohawks was taken 31 July 1823 (RG10, Vol. 41, p.22349).

As to Paulus' name Karonghyontye, apparently when the eldest son of Paulus Sahonwadi, Paulus Powless, reached adulthood he was given the name Karonghyontye –

“signing” by making his mark. He appears as Paulus Paulus X Karenyontye in a deed signed 17 February 1816 (Archives of Ontario, MU2918, Street Papers), along with Francis Cotter (whose importance will become clear soon). He was shown as Paulus Onwaneharon (another Astawenserontha name; and the same as the above from the 1817 Claim), 24 June 1813, listed between brothers Francis Cotter and Nicholas Cotter among the Mohawks at Beaver Dams (Johnston, 1964, p.203). Hence sometime between 1813 and 1816 Paulus Powless became Karonghyontye. However, why Karonghyontye was not recorded on the list of “Principle Chiefs” composed by George Martin in 1815 is a mystery. It seems to have been replaced by Tahatonne linked to Astawenserontha with a bracket) – the Indian name of Francis Cotter. Paulus Paulus Karonghyontye appears last under this name in a document dated 15 November 1819. It should be noted that Paulus Peters, the father of Paulus Sahnwadi, was a close associate of Nicholas Brant Canadiorha – who we will encounter later.

Most of the subsequent assessment of the identity of Catharine, the first wife of John Young and mother of all his children, rests on information in the obituary of one of her grandsons. The content can guide a search backwards in time to help pin down the identity of Catharine. Hence the interpretation will hinge on how much of the content can be verified, and yield clear interpretations. As we shall see, following leads from both the Patrick Campbell Diary of 1792, as well blending those from the following obituary of Warner H. Nelles, may provide “answers”.

Search for the Names of the Parents of Catharine Young, Isaac Brant, and Paulus : Beaver Clan - Wyandot Connection

B. OBITUARY OF WARNER HENRY NELLES, 1896:

Col. Warner H. Nelles, was born 1799 on the Grand River Six Nations Indian Reserve, the son of Lt. John Young’s daughter Elizabeth (Young) Nelles and husband Warner Nelles. Warner H. Nelles was the nephew of Joseph Young, who was mentioned as being “one of our people” in a deed from the Six Nations in 1838.

The key segment from his obituary of 12 October 1896 reads (with emphasis added):

His popularity as a young man may be judged when, being only seventeen, he was made a chief of a tribe of Indians called the Beavers. Upon the death of the old chief, they saluted him as Tahanata, and the chain of wampum they threw over his head is still in the family. Up to the end of his death he was still recognized as chief, though the tribe is greatly scattered (Haldimand County Museum, Dorothy Hutton Collection N-1-4).

Clearly Warner H. Nelles was eligible, by descent from his mother and maternal grandmother, to inherit a title as a chief of the Six Nations, *There being no foundation for the common belief that white men are made chiefs of any kind when Indians adopt such persons, or confer a name on those whom they wish to compliment* (Boyle, 1898, p. 176).

The name Tahanata and Age of Installation: It was shown above that the Young – Nelles family were members of the Six Nations, and linked most particularly to the Mohawk Nation. There are 50 hereditary sachem titles of the Six Nations. Nine names are specific to the Mohawks, and none of the latter titles is “Tahanata” or any similar name. However at the time of Nelles’ installation, there was a single exception.

A list of "Mohawks Principle Chiefs" was created by Chief George Martin for the Indian Department 22 February 1815 (i.e., about two years before Nelles was made chief) and included the names of the holders of the three hereditary sachemship titles for each of the Turtle, Wolf and Bear Tribes (Clans), and the associated War Chiefs for each sachem (Archives of Canada, MG19, F1, Claus Papers, Vol. 10, p. 153). Number 3 in the Bear Tribe is John Johnson Astawenserontha (Captain Seth Hill died in 1810). While it is not entirely clear who this John Johnson is, it could be the John, brother of Seth Hill (but using the first name of his father as a surname – very common among Mohawks and their neighbors the Dutch). This Johannes, born to John and Wari (Mary), was baptized 19 January 1751 at Ft. Hunter. The associated "War Chief" was John Green Aronghyenghtha (see 1788 Canajoharie petition). While this individual would appear to be the Johannes, son of Johannes Crine and Neeltie baptized 19 May 1755 at Ft. Hunter. The father Johannes Senior was a member of the Astawenserontha Bear Clan family. Hence Johannes Junior, in theory, could not become chief of his father’s Owachira (maternal clan). The matter is confusing, and best left alone since it is peripheral to the main focus of this story.

Oddly, here the Bear Tribe was shown as having four hereditary sachem titles with #3. Astawenserontha and #4. Tahatonne linked together via a bracket thus }. Since time out of mind there have been three Turtle Clan titles, three Wolf Clan titles, and three Bear Clan titles - and no more – except circa 1815. A hypothesized reason for this exception at this particular time will be given later. It is also noted (e.g., Hale, 1881; Tooker, 1978) that there were so – called “pine tree” chiefs elected from time to time due to merit, but the title died with the original holder. Each Principal Chief had an associated War Chief (as seen in the 1815 Martin document), also appointed by the Clan Mothers, but the title also died with the chief. There was also a class of sub – chiefs to assist the Principal Chief with his duties – also appointed by the Clan Mother. Tahatonne may have started as this category but was elevated (for reasons noted elsewhere) to almost equivalent to, in this case, Astawenserontha. So Tahatonne (and later Tahanata) first may have been essentially a “special advisor” to the more senior sachem who held the title of Astawenserontha. However it is unique to have a list with 10 Principal Chiefs (hereditary sachems) among the Mohawk, giving the Bear Clan / Tribe a numerical advantage (also in the number of War Chiefs with 5 in contrast to the 3 for the Turtle and Wolf Clans / Tribes). [Click here](#) to see the Martin document.

The spelling differences, in the Nelles obituary - Tahanata; and the Martin document – Tahatonne, could reflect a simple switching of the last two syllables in the name. It can be assumed that the Nelles obituary informant was most likely one of his children or grandchildren, all of whom were born and raised in St. Catharines, a Canadian city about 80 kms (50 miles) away from the Reserve. Perhaps he or she made a simple error.

However, it was typical of this time to inscribe the name of the office holder's Indian name on the wampum. Beauchamp (1901) discusses this matter, indicating that the item number 57, *belongs to the writer, and contains a chief's name* (p.349). Thus the Nelles informant may have been reading the name directly from the wampum strings in their possession, and is unlikely to have made a mistake. Also, considering that Martin may have been only vaguely knowledgeable about this rarely used name (Tahanata/Tahatonne), a spelling irregularity by Martin is entirely possible – since Indian names are frequently spelled in wildly different ways (see Sievertsen, 1996). There is no compelling reason to assume that Martin's version is more likely correct relative to information provided by Nelles family members. The present author does not recall the name Tahatonne or Tahanata appearing in any record pertaining to the Mohawks of the Grand River (1787 – 1896) other than the 1815 list and the Nelles obituary respectively – or if so it is not easily recognizable.

With reference to Tahanata, on the above 1789 deed signed by the Canajoharie Mohawks there is a name, David Dehanonyantha. His identity is unknown. Phonetically this is similar to, and perhaps more precisely written, Tahanata (D and T being equivalent in Mohawk). It is exceedingly difficult even for those who are fluent in the language to determine whether two Mohawk names are identical, due to spelling and dialectical differences and change in word meaning over time. One other example of a Six Nations name likely to be equivalent to Tahanata was “Tachanuntie or Tachanontia”, an Onondaga Chief attending the June 1744 Conference in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He was known as “the Black Prince” due to his African – Indian heritage, although others say it was due to his tatoos (Colden, 1747, p.110; Shannon, 2008).

There is also the strong possibility that names introgressed from other Iroquoian Nations (more on this subject later), especially after the wars of the mid 17th Century when Iroquoian speaking tribes such as the Huron, Wenro, Attiwandaronk, and Erie were effectively destroyed, and many of the survivors adopted into member nations of the Iroquois Confederacy.

In truth, there is no clear evidence that either name has appeared in the historical record among the Mohawk prior to their appearance as the names of Cotter and Nelles respectively.

If the chiefship was of ancient lineage, it may have been similar to the others including Astawenserontha. Most of the chiefly titles never appeared in any of the hundreds of documents to the end of the 18th Century. This has puzzled historians and led to questions about the antiquity of the chiefly names associated with the Confederacy (Shannon, 2008). Perhaps there was a “taboo” to using these names for what might be called “profane” purposes – such as signing land deeds although it is difficult to accept this rationale for Council minutes. The one exception was the head Turtle Clan chief, Tekarihokea. Most individuals used their name given upon reaching adulthood. For example, as noted earlier, David Hill used only Karonghyontye except in the 1789 Canajoharie Upper Mohawk deed where he appears for the Mohawks of the Lower Castle using both his above name and Astawenserontha – but this was very rare and it appears

that someone else wrote in one or both names (it is not his signature). The 1789 Canajoharie deed includes 8 of the 9 sachem names (but these names seem to have been added by a white witness to the document). This practice appears to have changed prior to the War of 1812. By about 1805 Captain Seth Hill had dropped his old name of Kanenkaregowagh and was known only as Astawenserontha in all official documents. However, as noted above, it appears that David Hill's name was elevated to a special category and inherited by a maternal lineage relative.

As to the meaning of the name Tahanata, it is often very difficult to obtain a clear interpretation of the meaning of Mohawk names from many years ago since they are frequently shrouded in the mists of time. Much depends on which dialect of Mohawk is used (there being differences in pronunciation and spelling between say Grand River and Kanawaki); and the languages and dialects spoken by anyone today trying to interpret a particular spelling of a name. The present author was indeed fortunate that a Six Nations linguistic scholar, Philip Henhawk, happened to contact him about another matter. Philip (personal communication, 7 March 2011) found the name Tahanata to be very straightforward in terms of ease of translation into English. Philip's detailed analysis of the name can be found by [clicking here](#). Tahanata is a Mohawk name and means, **Towards his village**.

Francis Cotter held the title of Tahatonne in the George Martin document of 1815, and its connection to Tahanata must be specified. As we shall see, when Cotter resigned his office and moved to the west he appears to have taken his Mohawk name Tahatonne, tentatively "He is coming to the end of it" (Philip Henhawk, personal communication, 24 March 2011) with him. Unfortunately all documents which have been located and date to this interval were signed by Chief Cotter using only his non – Native name. Understanding the "Cotter connection" may be one of the keys to identifying Catharine's ancestry. Since there is often missing data or inadequate documentation, an assumption will be made here that by virtue of the Cotter – Nelles link, that their respective mothers were closely related. It appears that Catharine and Cotter's mother Margaret were half sisters in the maternal line.

If the present author is interpreting the data correctly, then Margaret (b. 1749, daughter of John Widemouth Seth and Mary Hill Kateriunigh) married first Paulus Sahonwadi (schoolmaster at Canajoharie Upper Castle) who died about 1787 (his name is not found in any document after this date). By him she had four children Margaret Paulus, Paulus Paulus, Peter Paulus [who inherited the title Karonghyontye], and Mary based on a letter of 7 August 1785 to Daniel Claus (LAC, MG19, F1, Claus Papers, Vol. 4, pp.79-81; pp.24-25) shortly before Paulus appears to have died. Margaret married secondly Nicholas Cotter, a White man and had two sons by him, Chief Francis Cotter Tahatonne, and Nicholas Cotter. Thus the Paulus brothers and the Cotter brothers were half brothers via the maternal line. This would make Chief Francis Cotter Tahatonne her first cousin to Chief Warner H. Nelles Tahanata – again, in the direct maternal line (their mothers being half sisters).

The evidence, admittedly all circumstantial, will be explored throughout the present work. Perhaps she was Margaret Konwariseh, who appears as (Kon) Watyesea (Kon)

waGeri (Mohawk for Margaret) from the 1789 Canajoharie Deed (document folded at bracketed location). She is the next name after Katerin Kayakhon, and also has a Bear totem beside her name.

Francis Cotter's father was Nicholas Cotter, a white man, married to Margaret, a Lower Mohawk (Claus Papers, MG19, F1, Vol. 21, pt.2, p.85 – no date but before 27 March 1819). Note that there is a great deal of fluidity in deciding who was Upper Mohawk (supposedly from Canajoharie) and Lower Mohawk (supposedly from Ft. Hunter). There are many instances in the various census records for annual annuity payments where it is noted that by petition a family had changed their affiliation from one band to the other.

Francis Cotter, according to the Six Nations Chiefs on 9 January 1814, was among a group of Mohawks who acted in an "Unbecoming manner" by refusing to fight the enemies of the King (during the latter stages of the War of 1812), and so they recommended that he not receive any of "His Majesty's bounty" – which meant annuity payments (Johnston, 1964). Cotter and 8 other Mohawk chiefs blamed this schism on the behavior of the Lower Mohawks formerly of Fort Hunter, where members of the Upper Mohawks formerly of Canajoharie “are treated like outcasts” (Indian Affairs, RG10 Series, Vol. 118, p. 169562, no date but before 27 November 1818 – Vol. 790, p. 7048). Francis Cotter was thus an Upper Mohawk chief apparently with ancestral ties to Canajoharie, although his mother also had ties to the Lower Mohawks – as seen above.

The conditions on the Reserve in 1816 and 1817 appear to have been lawless and chaotic, permeated with factionalism and name-calling. As of about 1816, Cotter appears to have been "shunned", both via the factionalism within the Mohawk community, and by his behavior during the War of 1812. The evidence shows that on 17 February 1816 Francis Cotter was still a “Principle Chief” when he signed a certificate – it being noted in a later addendum that he was among those still living 14 April 1835 (Archives of Ontario, Street Papers, MU2928).

One other reason why Francis Cotter was dissatisfied with his circumstances, was perhaps that he had expected to be raised up as either Astawenserontha or Karonghyontye. The former was firmly in control of the Lower Mohawks. The second had been assigned to Paul Powless, also a member of the Lower Mohawks. In order to placate Cotter and those who sided with him (the Upper Mohawks), it may be that the Chiefs decided to elevate Cotter's personal name to the chiefly rolls and place him alongside Astawenserontha (as seen on the 1815 George Martin list of Chiefs). If this is correct, then until circa 1814 Tahatonne was not a chiefly name, it was simply the name of an Upper Mohawk who was raised up as a chief in order to defuse a potentially serious political crisis. Hence it is likely that there is no “history to” the name prior to Cotter. If so, it seems to have been a futile gesture by the Chiefs since Cotter and family gave up everything a few years after his installation to move to the Detroit area and become Wyandot. It must be emphasized that it is not clear whether Tahanata and Tahatonne were two separate names, or spelling variations of the same name.

Abraham Kennedy Smith of Brantford petitioned in 1843 to have lands he purchased from Cotter confirmed. On 13 April 1817 Smith paid Margaret Cotter, mother of Chief Francis Cotter and Nicholas Cotter, Mohawks, for lands near Brantford owned by the family. The chiefs in council validated the sale on 12 May 1817, but none of the Cotters were then present (unusual in land transactions of this nature), suggesting that they had moved away in April 1817 (Indian Affairs, RG10 Series, Vol. 120, 8 November 1843, p. 4834). An Indian Department document specifically stated that sometime before 27 November 1818, Francis Cotter had “gone to Detroit” (Indian Affairs, RG10 Series, Vol. 790, p. 7048). He settled among the Wyandots (Hurons) at Amherstberg, Anderdon Township, Ontario where his son Nicholas was baptized in 1822. Family records give the name of the wife of Francis Cotter as Catherine Brown, a Wyandot of the Turtle Clan. His first son Francis Jr. was said to have been born in 1813 in “Toronto” (which to the Oklahoma informant may have been a generic statement for “Canada”). However the 1843 Wyandot rolls of those moving to Kansas shows Francis Cotter Jr. to be under age 25, so likely born in Anderdon Township. The Cotters were also involved in one way or another with the Wyandot Upper Sandusky settlement (for example Francis was a member of a six man firing squad who executed a convicted murderer in that community); and perhaps the Honey Creek Mohawk settlement at Sandusky, noted earlier, which was established between about 1815 and 1817, associated with both the Senecas and Wyandots (Sturtevant, 1978), as well as his apparent relatives the Brants. All of these were in the Detroit area.

It is clearly established that in 1836 all of the Cotter family were residents of Amherstburg when on 23 September 1836 “F. Cotter” signed a deed which alienated the north and south thirds of the Anderdon Reserve. On 26 September 1836 a group of seven “Warriors” of the Wyandot, not present during the first signing, which included Anthony Cotter, Nicholas Cotter and Francis Cotter, signified their approval of the deal (these and similar documents are found on the Wyandotte-nation.org website).

It may be instructive to look for a reason as to why the Cotter family were able to transfer their allegiance from the Mohawks to the Wyandot so quickly. One could infer that Francis Cotter, although at one time an Upper Mohawk chief, had an ancestral connection to the Wyandot, but his name Tahatonne presumably reverted to a non-chiefly name. It is possible that his mother, as was the case with many Mohawks in the mid to late 18th Century, spent her early years in the “Old Northwest”. We will see that the proposed father of Margaret, the mother of Francis Cotter, was an ambassador to the Huron / Wyandot of the Detroit and Sandusky areas.

There is no evidence that Francis Cotter Sr. was ever a chief of the Wyandot. In effect he gave up a role as a principal chief of the Six Nations to become a “rank and file” member of the Wyandot. He and his family joined the majority of Wyandot, and migrated to Kansas in July 1843 with many of their fellow tribal members from Upper Sandusky, settling on the Wyandotte Purchase in Kansas where Cotter died 29 September 1852 (William Walker Jr. Diary).

As noted above, doubtless upon departure from the Grand River (or perhaps before) Cotter would have been "dehorned" (a form of impeachment), or he voluntarily turned in his wampum credentials - his chiefship removed and given to an available candidate from within the matrilineal family. Since his name was not among the 9 inherited league titles among the Mohawk, it appears that "resigning" from this role as a principal chief did not mean relinquishing his given name. Tahatonne never appears later among the list of chiefs (or warriors) on the Grand River – unless Martin made an error and Tahanata and Tahatonne are the same name. Perhaps it was due to his removal to the Detroit area to join the Wyandots that resulted in Cotter's loss of his Mohawk sachemship. He was clearly frustrated by the factionalism among the Mohawk, and opted for a refuge elsewhere. The obituary informants said that the reason for Nelles' assuming the Tahanata title was due to the "death of the old chief", clearly an error, but understandable since this was the reason for a new chief to be installed in the vast majority of instances. So in essence, Tahanta (Nelles) took on the (possibly largely ceremonial) role of Tahatonne from 1817 until his death in 1896 – being issued that name or a name from within the same family lineage.

Exploring the apparent Mohawk – Wyandot link via the titles Tahatonne / Tahanata may be productive. It is of some interest that by 1750 the Wyandot had three clan groups, the Turtle, Deer and Wolf. The Deer included the Bear, Beaver, Deer, Porcupine and Snake clans. At this time there was a council of chiefs from each clan chosen by clan mothers as with the Six Nations. However an individual was elected from among this group as head chief, and by custom was from Bear clan, but later the Deer clan due to a lack of suitable candidates (Powell, 1880). If this tradition was still active in 1815, perhaps Francis Cotter of the Bear clan was elected to represent the Wyandot faction at Six Nations, as over the years (particularly the late 1650s), the Iroquois had taken Wyandot (Huron) captives and had "adopted" these as Mohawks.

Thus, in relation to the two matrilineally inherited Mohawk Bear Clan associated names which are linked with the Hill, Cotter, and Young – Nelles families:

Astawenserontha = “(He Enters) Wearing Rattles” (Mohawk League sachem name).

Tahatonne = “He is coming to the end of it” (tentative, may be the same name as below).

Tahanata = “Towards His Village” (Mohawk name tied to the above but with an as yet unspecified connection to the Wyandot).

Warner Henry Nelles was born 2 May 1799 so if the Cotters left in April of 1817, and he was installed soon thereafter, Nelles would indeed have been age 17 precisely as the obituary reported. This fact adds external validation to the content of the Nelles obituary.

Hence in April 1817 either Margaret Cotter, and/or other Clan Matrons, or Elizabeth (Young) Nelles, selected a member of the Astawenserontha Bear Clan with “Beaver Tribe” connections (see below) to fill the vacancy. The candidate picked was the second born son of Elizabeth (Young) Nelles, Warner H. Nelles. There is little to suggest that the individual chosen to be a sachem had to be the eldest son. This was true in the case of Seth Hill, but his uncle David Hill was the youngest son.

The Identity of the Beaver Tribe: There are various census lists of the tribes along the Grand River from 1784 to the 1860s (e.g., Johnston, 1964). None include a specifically denoted “Beaver Tribe”. Perhaps the “Beaver Tribe” was an extended family group such those recorded 27 March 1819 (Claus Papers, MG19, F1, Vol. 21, pt.2, p.86) including “Peg Symington Canada” (Lower Mohawks) and the “St. Regis Family” (St. Regis or Akwesasne Mohawk Reserve also comprised of Abenaki and Onondaga). However it is noteworthy that in this document, contemporary with the installation of Nelles, there was no group denominated specifically as “the Beavers” or the “Beaver Tribe”. It is important to note that the terms tribe and clan were generally interchangeable. Typically in the 19th Century and earlier “Tribe” meant what is today termed “Clan”. Today there are only three Mohawk clans / tribes (Turtle, Wolf and Bear). The question is whether there was ever a Beaver tribe / clan grouping among the Mohawks, specifically the Upper Mohawks. Clearly Cotter’s and thus Nelles’ maternal Tribe / Clan was Bear (Astawenserontha), Lower Mohawk according to Seth Newhouse as noted earlier, and the same family grouping as per the Patrick Campbell Diary (1792) also referred to previously, but they may have represented a group with a link in common to a “tribe” known as the “Beavers”.

Documents signed in the Mohawk Valley in the 18th Century show that in addition to the “big three” among the Mohawk, there were, *several sub – tribes, as the Beaver, the Elk, the Serpent, the Porcupine, and the Fox, as shown by deeds of record, of which the most frequently met is that of the Beaver* (Proceedings of the New York State Historical Society, 1906). In the previous century, a Dutch map of 1614 showed 8 Mohawk villages, and 100 years later there are only three (Snow et al., 1996). In 1634, at a time of great upheavals due to the epidemics, the original 8 had collapsed to 4 settlements. In 1634 Schanatisse had 32 longhouses. This village was situated on a “very high hill” west of Canahoharie Creek. It is supposed to have been the castle of the Beaver tribe – a sub – gens (Ibid). The location fits with the Allen archaeological site, west of modern Canajoharie, and about 2 miles inland (see Snow et al., 1996). However, by the time of Greenhalgh’s visit in 1677, Schanatisse was not recorded. The researchers at the Three Rivers website noted that, *Schanatisse, the Castle of the Beaver Tribe, who apparently joined the Bear Tribe upon the destruction of their Castle.* During the attack by the French 16 February 1693 the three villages on the north side of the River, Caughnawaga, Canagora, and Tionontegen were burned. *A castle on the south side of the Mohawk, said to have been two miles inland, escaped. Presumably it was the village of the Beaver family, but we have nothing further concerning it* (Ibid). The Bear Tribe is associated with Canagora (Canajoharie), or the western (Upper) Castle. Here, if this is correct, the Bear and Beaver merged about 1666, but the Beavers retained some degree of autonomy in the 18th Century, and the Nelles obituary would suggest, perhaps, into the 19th Century.

Although Huron / Wyandot captives were being brought to the country of the Six Nations over an extended period, there was one event which had perhaps the most profound effect and may relate directly to the story here. In 1657 the Mohawks “convinced” an entire tribe of Hurons residing on L’Isle d’Orleans near Quebec City to come and live in Mohawk country. The Bear Tribe (Attignawantan) of the Huron / Wyandot, the once most powerful tribal unit, chose to become Mohawk – perhaps coming to dominate Schanatisse. The Rock Tribe opted to join countrymen among the Onondaga. The Cord Tribe remained to take their chances among the French. As noted earlier, the Deer Tribe joined the Seneca in 1651. The Bear Tribe comprised initially a fourth village among the three already settled by Mohawks (and likely many Huron / Wyandot captives). Apparently these groups may include those who fit into the Young family saga. It was reported that in the 1660s that two thirds of the Caughnawaga Castle along the Mohawk River was comprised of Huron / Wyandot and Algonquin immigrants or captives (see Snow et al., 1996). The record clearly indicates continuing contacts between all Huron – Wyandot descendants. Some Huron / Wyandot, who had joined the Onondagas (Rock Tribe etc.), later lived among the Mohawk in Canada (e.g., Kanawaki; St. Regis - Akwesasne) and some later came to the Mohawk Valley communities, which were clearly a hodge podge, a complex mixture of ethnicities and clans.

Beauchamp, in discussing the aboriginal use of wood in New York, described an artifact, showing a Bear on a wampum *belt which he holds in his paws to avenge the death of some one and he is conferring about it with his brother, the Beaver*. He further noted that a, *Council of War between the tribe of the Bear and that of the Beaver, they are brothers* (Figure 78).

What is interesting and likely relevant here is that the Huron / Wyandot adopted the beaver as their national symbol. Sioui (1999) stated, *It is not unrealistic to say that in both their physical organization and social vision, the Wendats were naturally inclined to take the beaver as their model. This animal was their political emblem* (pp. 93-4). Since at least the days of the early French missions, the Wyandots considered the beaver to represent many concrete and abstract elements of Wyandot life, including the beaver lodge symbolically representing the Wyandot village (Sioui, 1999, p.94). Although they self – identified as the Nation of the Beaver, it does not appear that many if any other nations used that term in reference to Wyandots.

It is the opinion of the present author that the beaver was, considering Sioui’s information, the symbol of the Wyandot and their descendants among the Six Nations – at least among the Mohawk, probably because it was the numerically largest clan.

At the individual level, in the many hundreds of documents the present author has explored relating to the Mohawks, after about 1750 only Nicholas Brant Canadiorha (Captain Joseph Brant’s step – brother) was clearly listed on a deed as “of the Beaver” (Halsey, 1901, p. 158; Lyman Draper Manuscripts). At that time it appears that all Mohawks were, at least at the official level, integrated into either the Turtle, Wolf or Bear Clans. Although Nicholas may have been born of the Beaver Clan probably originally

among the Wyandot descendants, he was affiliated with the Mohawk Bear Clan (e.g., being on a list of Bear Clan members who accompanied Sir William Johnson to Montreal in 1760). His father Brant Canagaradunkwa was of the Bear Clan (Minutes of the Pennsylvania Provincial Council, Vol. 6, 9 July 1754, p. 128), as was Nicholas' wife Margaret (as noted below). It would have been unacceptable for his father to marry someone of the Bear Clan; or for Nicholas himself to marry a woman of the Bear Clan if in fact he was born to the Bear Clan (clan exogamy being expected and the practice generally followed). There were only three official clans, and linking up with the father's clan was probably acceptable under these circumstances (e.g., war parties). Sievertsen (1996) provides examples where sons not only became associated with their father's clan, but also assumed his Mohawk name. Nicholas was born circa 1727, at a time when the Beaver Clan was still formally recognized, particularly at Canajoharie.

As noted above, in a document of 1760, "Nicolas Brant" was described as "of the Beaver". Two documents indicate that this connection was probably to the Huron / Wyandot. On 21 May 1765, John Campbell wrote to Sir William Johnson from Detroit stating that, *Two days ago Nicolas a Mohawk, a Wyandot of Sanduskey, and two Canada Indians came in to me in company with four Chiefs of the Hurons of this place* (JP, Vol. 11, p. 744). On 8 June 1766, the Mohawks showed Sir William Johnson, *the Belts they intended to send to the Huron Nation by one of their Chiefs going that way, namely, Nickus alias Kanadyora* (JP, Vol. 12, p. 122). Hence it would appear that Nicholas Brant was an ambassador to the Huron / Wyandot, doubtless spoke their language, and may have had some unspecified connection with the Huron / Wyandots of Sandusky Ohio, and Detroit (which includes Amherstburg, Anderdon, Ontario).

One interpretation here is that the Cotter - Nelles sachemship may have encompassed a group of Mohawk families all of whom were descendants or relatives of Brant Canagaradunkwa's family (or related Huron / Wyandots), where all three of his (Brant Canagaradunkwa's) wives appear to have had Wyandot links. His first wife (who was the mother of Nicholas), Catharine Tagganakwari, was of a clan not included among the three Mohawk clans which points to her likely having been Wyandot / Huron, particularly with reference to the comments to follow relating to the ancestry of the Brants. His second wife, Christina of the Turtle Clan, was the daughter of Taquayanont, a sachem of the Serpent Clan from Canada (Caughnawaga) residing at Wilden Hook in the Schoharie settlement; and whose family played an important role in Colonial politics as friends of Conrad Weiser. The third spouse was Margaret, the mother of Joseph Brant and Molly Brant, who was supposed to be a descendant of Huron captives, adopted into the Mohawks, on both sides of the family, and who had relatives in Caughnawaga, Canada and among the Cayugas (Kelsay, 1986) - Joseph and his sister Molly adopted their step-father's name.

Nicholas Brant's Native name was Canadiorha. To complicate matters, the name among the Mohawk appears to be linked also to the Onondaga. In Evert Wendell's account book (Waterman, 2008) there is an entry of 1698 for an "Onondaga boy", Kanaedeijorhae. The translator of Mohawk names (Gunther Michelson) knew of Canadiorha in later records as a Mohawk, but he concluded that the name should be classified as Onondaga

(see note 269). Nicholas was perhaps a descendant of Huron / Wyandot ancestors perhaps adopted into the Onondaga. This Onondaga boy appears on the Mohawk page, folio 18, page 36. The editor believes that Wendell was in Mohawk country when he made this entry in 1698. If born about 1685 he may have been a brother to Brant Canagaradunkwa's wife Catharine in the maternal line, and she later named a son after her brother. Catharine's mother Maria was one of the most frequently appearing individuals in Wendell's accounts. Both she and her husband Asa Onasiatekha had many entries including lengthy transactions related to their joint and separate trade missions to Canada. It should be noted, however, that there was a Jacob Canadiorha, an Oneida, residing in the Susquehanna River area (Onaquaga). Hence, many Six Nations names have a similar or even exact equivalent among other Iroquoian speaking Nations.

John Norton reported in his diary that Joseph Brant's ancestors on both the mother and father's side were Wyandot (Huron) captives adopted by the Mohawk. Joseph, although a step – son of Brant Canagaradunckwa, adopted Brant's first name as a surname. The Onondaga adopted many Huron after the raids of the 1640s, as did the Mohawk. Joseph Brant's son Joseph also reported to William Allen that his father's step - father was a chief who was denominated an Onondaga Indian (Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Vol. V, "Thanendanegea"). The names Canagaradunckwa (the Indian name of Joseph Brant's step – father) and Canadiorha appear to have disappeared with the deaths of Brant and Nicholas, despite the prominence of both individuals, possibly because both were Wyandot in origin.

In exploring the Wyandot – Onondaga – Mohawk connection, the following observations may or may not be relevant. Among the Onondaga the head chief is Atotarho. Also sachems, but linked as "cousins" and holding a special relationship to Atotarho, are Enneserarenh and Dehatkahthos or Tchatkatons of the Beaver Clan (Hale, 1881). The first "cousin" has a name that resembles the Mohawk Astawenserontha; and the second "cousin" is remotely similar to Tahatonne or Tahanata. This "cousin" relationship being somewhat similar to the relationship between the Mohawk titles being highlighted by the bracket used by George Martin to join them (in 1815).

Nicholas Brant Canadiorha (son of Brant Canagaradunckwa and step – brother to Joseph Brant) had ties at Schoharie (a very multicultural Mohawk settlement led by those from Caughnawaga and likely Huron, as well as Oneidas, River Indians, Tuscaroras, and particularly those from Onaquaga on the Susquehanna River). Here he had one of his children baptised in 1758, and was also a sponsor for a child of his sister Rosina, wife of Aront in the same year, it being noted in the record that Nicholas and Margaret were from Canajoharie (Sievertsen, 1996).

Ultimately the "Beaver Tribe" likely represented a very powerful sub - group among the Mohawk Bear Clan, and may have attained considerable status in the new community – but not forgetting their roots, nor severing their connections to the homeland in Canada, or their distant kin among the Wyandot. Since they were fully adopted Mohawks (and there being relatively few "true" Mohawks), the Huron Bear Tribe may have furnished the lineage for the Astawenserontha sachemship, as well as the closely associated

Tahatonne / Tahanata sachemship which is outside the original Mohawk three from the days of the founding of the League (the Five Nations Confederacy) and may have Wyandot - Onondaga roots. Among the Huron / Wyandot, over the course of time, the Bear phratry (Bear and Deer clans) was linked to the Turtle phratry (Turtle and Beaver clans) via the division into moieties (halves). These terms roughly meaning “side” used by anthropologists to signal divisions or groupings between clans each of which had reciprocal duties (e.g., to condole members of the other “side”). Hence the Bear and Beaver clans were associated from early days (Sioui, 1999, p.115).

There is also archaeological evidence of a link between families of Upper Mohawks, and a group who appeared to place a special emphasis (symbolic or otherwise). First it should be noted that the Wendel Account Book and other sources make it evident that the father of Brant Kanagaradunckwa was Kannonhsedeka one of the two most important Mohawk account holders. The other was Onoghsiadika. The latter’s wife was the sister of Kannonhsedeka. Thus the maternal mother and the paternal father of Nicholas Brant were Beaver Clan members (of Onondaga / Wyandot ancestry). Thus there was a very solid reason for Nicholas and his siblings to feel very much “of the Beavers”. It would not in the least be surprising in these family members and their ancestors literally wore their heritage on their sleeve. At the probably birthplace and ancestral home of Kannonhsedeka and his sister Maria, the wife of Onoghsiadika, Prospect Hill. This site is shown as Tarajiorhees (Upper) Castle on contemporary maps, and was an early component of the Canajoharie Castle complex which extended to Nowadaga Creek. Its “lifespan” was from 1693 to 1755 (with probably a few families remaining here to the time of the American Revolution). There is an associated burial site here with some interesting, or even diagnostic, artifacts (grave goods). Googling “beaver amulets” results in zero hits. However at the Galligan Site #2 there are a minimum of two burials which include as grave goods beaver amulets. Grave 16F has a single (silver) 5 cm beaver amulet with a string of beads. Grave 16G (the proximity suggesting a family relationship) has seven catlinite beavers among a string of beads (Snow, 1995a, pp. 466-7). Clearly those buried in this area of the Cemetery had a “connection” with the beaver. In discussing the Hopewell “mound builders” (c. 200 BC to 400 AD) Fagan (2011) reported that, *We know, from the pendants, of at least nine clans, each with animal or totem associations* (p.214). Hence, these beaver pendants were likely the expression of a strong attachment to a specific clan, and provides cross validation of the Upper Mohawk “beaver connection” that extended to at least the end of the 19th Century – perhaps further.

There is, however, no evidence that the Hill family were Wyandot descendants – but by virtue of the number of Huron among the Mohawks in the 17th Century, this has to be considered a distinct possibility. Their being of the Bear Clan makes it impossible to differentiate Mohawk Bear and Wyandot Bear – at some point they became one. One interesting observation, although somewhat late in time (1890s), which is that one of the Tuscarora Sachems was “Karinyentye” of the Beaver (Chadwick, 1897). This appears to be the same name as Karonghyontye in Mohawk (David Hill’s personal name from the Bear Clan).

To this point there are strong suggestions that the (adoptive?) father of Catharine Young (first wife of Lt. John Young), may have been Nicholas Brant Canadiorha of Wyandot - Beaver ancestry, or a close relative; which would serve to account for the statement in the Nelles obituary. The question now is whether Nicholas' wife Margaret can be shown to have been a member of the Bear Clan Astawenserontha Hill family, and of course whether they had a daughter named Catharine born about 1747.

It stands to reason that John Young would marry into an acculturated and prominent family (marriage was transacted as a way to economic or political advancement) of Canajoharie. None in that vicinity meets the criteria better than the Brant family of Canajoharie (Upper Mohawk Castle), and further afield the Hill family of Tiononderoge (Lower Mohawk Castle). In the 1789 deed of sale for Ft. Hunter, Captain Joseph Brant signed to represent the Canajoharie Mohawks and Captain David Hill (noted in the 1792 Campbell Diary) did the same for the Ft. Hunter Mohawks.

At the time of his marriage to Catharine circa 1765-7, John Young, later lieutenant of the Six Nation Indian Department, resided at Canajoharie on property owned by his father Adam on the Van Horne Tract among the Mohawk settlements between Ft. Hendrick opposite the mouth of East Canada Creek, and the most westerly cluster at Indian Castle. However it is important to note that proximity was one of the major determining factors in selecting a marriage partner. It was most typical to marry neighbors, generally close ones at that – certainly among the Palatine Germans of the Mohawk Valley (Jones, 1986). Young resided among the Canajoharie Mohawks at the Upper Castle. It was 36 miles to the Ft. Hunter Lower Castle. While finding a marriage partner who was residing in the latter location was certainly possible, it was somewhat improbable – although the previously noted pre-Revolution association between the Young family and the Ft. Hunter Mohawks, likely the Hill family, needs to be explained.

The above suggests that it was very likely that Catharine was also residing at Canajoharie in the 1760s. The Johnson Papers make note that by 1755 Nicholas Brant was in the process of building a house near Ft. Hendrick in Canajoharie (Upper Castle), perhaps to join his father who had moved there about 1753.

It was the acculturated Mohawks who tended to be scrupulous about ensuring that each child was baptized (whether the event would be recorded by the minister is another matter), and tended to accept or encourage their children's marriages to prominent White men – the Brants and Hills being the most sterling example of this tendency in the Mohawk Valley and in the early days along the Grand River. An unnamed daughter of Brant Canagaradunckwa married Sir William Johnson and had two sons by him (noted in the will of Sir William), one of whom, Lt. Brant Johnson, married a white woman. Joseph Brant's sister Molly Brant also married Sir William Johnson. Esther Hill married Epaph. Lord Phelps, and Mary Hill married William Kennedy Smith (see Faux, 2002).

As to Isaac Brant and Paulus Shagoyadiyostha, they may have been two of the unrecorded children of Nicholas Brant. Concerning Paulus, what may be important to note is that the present author, based on circumstantial evidence, prior to realizing that Paulus had

inherited the Karonghyontye title, had already included him among the children of Nicholas Brant. It is probable that Nicholas named a child after someone who appears to have been his best friend. For example in 1763 Paulus Petersen and Nicolaes Brandt wrote a joint letter to Sir William Johnson stating that George Klock had threatened to kill Brant, the father of Nicholas. A similar letter on 6 March 1766 was also written by “Nicklass” and Paulus (JP, Vol. 5, pp. 57-58).

Nicholas / Nicus / Nickus etc. was the step – brother of Captain Joseph Brant Thayendinagea. Joseph was the head Upper Mohawk chief during the Revolution, Captain in the Six Nations Indian Department, a friend and colleague of John Young, and approved the grant of land on the Reserve for Young in 1787. Their friendship is reflected, perhaps, in the fact that John Young named his youngest son Joseph (born 1782), Joseph Brant witnessed the sale of John’s Loyalist land grant at the Head of the Lake to Richard Beasley in 1803, and John’s being a witness to almost every deed signed at Councils at the Grand River (as well as the Council minutes) to the time of his death.

In summary, Nickus (Nicholas etc. Canadiorha) was of the “Beaver Tribe” (Mohawk, but originally Wyandot) which could be the connection noted in the Nelles obituary (via the large extended Beaver Tribe family members among the Upper Mohawks whose representative among the Principal Chiefs was Tahatonne / Tahanata of the Bear Clan).

Oral History Evidence

Almost a year after this manuscript was presented to the family members present at the Young Reunion in July 2009, Tom Nelson was going through some old correspondence to find information on some of his Hines ancestors (who have no known link with the Wyandots). He found a reference from 2002 that, while meaning nothing to him at the time, takes on some significance in light of the present study concerning the Wyandot connection. An elderly distant relative in Fulton, New York named Bill Hines recalled, *Also my father says his father or great grandfather was chief of the winedot tribe in canada.* He further said, without any prompting, that ultimately these “winedot”, *moved to the west to where the Apaches or Cherokees lived.* The recollection does not have any tie to the Hines family, so Tom believes that, *This is an example of family history being passed between relations and then getting distorted as applying to one family line, when it was another. This would have been a reference to the Six Nations ancestry in the YOUNG family through Celestia having married Charles Harrison HINES who was a first cousin of Bill’s father.* Further that, *This has to be in reference to Warner NELLES being made a Chief of the Beavers (which was of Wyandot origin) –* (Tom Nelson, personal communication, 23 March 2010). Informants on the Six Nations Reserve have told the author that there are still to this day families on the Six Nations Reserve who recognize their connection to the Wyandot.

Tahatonne and Tahanata – Astawenserontha Bear Tribe / Clan: If John Young married the above Catharine then, based on the status of her grandson Warner Henry Nelles, it is evident that Catharine’s mother must have been of the Astawenserontha Bear Tribe / Clan lineage.

In the Johnson Papers there is an entry written 14 August 1761 in Johnson's "Detroit Journal", stating that Nickus the Mohawk, with his party encamped here last night. He told me he expected White Hame [White Hans, Johannes Crine], his uncle, would be up with us in a day or two (JP, Vol. 13, p. 240). Johannes Crine (aka "White Hans") was baptized 28 January 1722 to Kryn (Crine) and Anna at the Albany Reformed Dutch Church. Nickus Brant Canadiorha's mother was Catharine (wife of Brant Canadaradunckwa). The above-mentioned Crine Anaquendahonji and Anna had a daughter Catharine who was baptized on 21 June 1712 at the Schenectady Reformed Dutch Church. The birthdate of this Catharine must have been about 1711. Since the first child of Brant Canadaradunckwa and Catharine was baptized 12 February 1721, she was clearly not the mother of Brant Canadiorha – unless Catharine was 8 or so years old at the time of her baptism (entirely possible).

The Native name of Catharine, wife of Brant Canadaradunckwa, was Tagganakwari (Sievertsen, 1996). A child named Catherine Tejoqueetsjveni was baptized 4 July 1703 at Albany to Asa (Onasiadikha) and Maria. The later is a reasonable phonetic equivalent of the former (taking into consideration probable spelling errors) of the name recorded later. Asa was a sachem of Canajoharie in 1713 (DRCHNY, Vol. 5, p.372). So if White Hans was not the biological uncle to Nicholas Canadiorha in the maternal lineage, it can be asked whether the informant meant the paternal lineage of Nicholas. The lineage of his father Brant is known, his mother being Marie Senehanawith from Canada; not the Crine family of Anna and Kryn Anequendahonji, who in the long list of baptized children did not have a son named Brant, nor any circumstantial evidence to suggest such a link. This then leaves one option.

A thorough exploration of the genealogy shows that the correct information must be that **White Hans Crine was the uncle of Nicholas' wife Margaret**, and hence she was the daughter of Aaron Oseraghet Hill and Margaret Crine (and thus a sister of David Hill Karonghyontye, Captain Aaron Hill Kanonraron, and Mary Hill Katehriunigh). The clerk may have missed the subtleties – as the recording of accurate genealogical relationships of Mohawks was not typical except by traders when money was involved. No other interpretation remotely fits. Captain Aaron Hill Kanonraron (brother of Captain David Hill) stated, in his own words, that White Hans was his uncle. Thus, in this case Aaron Jr.'s mother was the elder Margaret, daughter of Kryn Anequendahonji and Anna, and the sister of Johannes Crine (White Hans) (Sievertsen, 1996).

It would be helpful to obtain evidence as to the name of Margaret Hill, the wife of Nicus Brant and ensure that she is of the Bear Clan Astawenserontha family.

Verification that the wife noted in the 14 February 1792 entry in Campbell's diary is named Catharine and that her mother was Margaret could come from documents created three years earlier - one of the two July 1789 deeds of sale to the Lower Mohawk lands at Ft. Hunter and the Upper Mohawk lands on the Van Horne Patent at Canajoharie, both sites being situated along the Mohawk River in New York State. These deeds of sale were signed at Niagara by all or most of the principal men and women formerly of both

the Upper and Lower Mohawk “Castles”. Most of those present signed their Native names to the Ft. Hunter deed, although in many cases someone else added in their baptismal and white surnames. Unfortunately most of those noted in the Canajoharie deed had their names recorded by a clerk (even Joseph Brant’s Native name was added by someone else who made a hash of his Mohawk name).

It is noteworthy that a signator to the Ft. Hunter Lower Mohawk deed of 9 July 1789 is:

kayadontyi
[p]leggy yanng

[Click here](#) to see this signature in context and use the magnification feature to see this entry at the top left. The name appears to be Peggy (a diminutive for Margaret) – although the first letter is just a guess. The second name appears to be “yanng” which is surely just an eccentric way of writing “young”. She signs immediately before the children of her proposed uncle Johannes Crine. There are two possibilities here:

1) Peggy married a man with the surname Young:

There were two men with the surname Young that would best fit time, place and circumstances; however there were numerous males with the surname Young residing in the Canajoharie and Ft. Hunter regions. The name of the wife of Lt. Frederick Young (circa 1733-1777) was Catharine Schumacher (widow of Melchior Bell) who he married in 1762. A daughter Dorothy was born in 1764 to the couple and at that point there is no further information about the family of Frederick other than he had a son who died in 1779 without issue. There was no record of his wife being apprehended in 1777 as was the case with the wife of John Young, even though the two men left together. It is likely that Frederick was a widower, or his wife had already left for Canada. Peggy could have been a second undocumented wife to either Frederick or John. If the latter then she would be the woman mentioned in the Campbell Diary. This does seem to be a long stretch in the “maybe department”. She might more likely be the widow of John’s uncle Frederick who died in 1777.

2) Peggy young may mean “young peggy”:

Peggy appears to have signed the deed with her own full name and in her own handwriting (not worrying about capitalization – as was the case with written Mohawk) – although this is not certain. It could be argued that she meant to imply “young peggy”, as among the Mohawks formerly of Ft. Hunter there was, for example, a “Lydia” and an “Old Lydia” and a “young Brant” as seen in the 1789 deed. In other records from earlier years there was a Brant Senior, Old Brant; there is also Abraham Major and Abraham Minor. “Little” and “big” were also used to differentiate individuals with the same first name – “the Elder” and “the Younger” are also seen. However names such as say “Gideon young” and “Gideon old” being employed to identify two individuals with the same first name appear to be rare, recalled by the author in only one document where in 1795, “Young Brant” was written as “Brant Young” (Wisconsin State Historical Society,

Lyman Draper Manuscripts, Series F, Vol. 15, p.215) so there is at least precedent. However if Peggy was writing her own name, it is difficult to know what she meant.

There were other women with the name Margaret apparently alive at the time. A candidate is Margaret the widow of Captain Daniel (possible daughter of Margaret Crine and Aaron Hill). Five years earlier at Lachine in 1784 she submitted her claims for wartime losses, including 72 acres at Ft. Hunter. Unless she had died in the interval she would surely have signed the 1789 deed. In addition she was one of the few Mohawks who could write in English (Sivertsen, 1996). Hence it is reasonable to assert that Peggy was more likely Captain Daniel's widow (who she may have married circa 1766 after the death of her husband Nicholas Brant). As noted above, Captain Daniel separated from his wife Margaret in 1766 to take up with one of his wife's close kin. This "new person" could have been Margaret "the younger", mother of Catharine. The circumstances here are far from clear.

Also found in the Seth Newhouse Manuscript noted earlier is Kayadontyi (the Native name used by "peggy" in the 1789 Ft. Hunter deed) – but the name is also claimed by one Turtle Clan and one Wolf Clan family. Reg Henry translated the name as, "Her Body Floats By". Hence the conclusion here is that **the mother of Catharine Young was Margaret (Hill) Brant Kayadontyi**. This statement gains further momentum when recalling that David Hill's sister selected her son as the successor to her brother (viz Campbell Diary). Thus she was alive in November 1790. Margaret Kayadontyi is the only Mohawk with the baptismal name Margaret to sign the 1789 Ft. Hunter Deed.

Margaret "young" may also be the daughter of John (son of Seth) and Mary (daughter of Aaron) who appears to have married Paulus Sahonwadi (d. 1787) and secondly Nicholas Cotter.

If Catharine was in attendance at Niagara when the principal men and women of both villages sold their interest to Jelles Fonda, as would be likely, she will probably be found among those from Canajoharie (her place of residence at the time of the Revolution). There is no Catharine with a name found among the Astawenserontha family on the Ft. Hunter deed. Among the Canajoharie Upper Mohawks there is a Katharin Kayakhon whose name is beside a symbol (totem) of the Bear Clan. [Click here](#) to view this item. All of the women's names were written by a clerk, so even if she did write, there will be no surname. This was true for other Mohawks such as the first female signator, Gonwatsijayenni Wari (Wolf totem). This is Mary Brant Johnson (see DCB, Konwatsiatsiaieni, online). The next individual was Hester Davis Sakagoha of the Wolf Clan on the same list but again no suranme. It turns out the Kayakhon is a name from the Astawenserontha Bear Clan family. Thus, while the evidence is not direct, it would appear reasonable to assert that **the wife of John Young, Catharine, was Catharine Kayakhon**. Based on the translation of the name by Philip Henhawk (personal communication, 7 March 2011), Kayakhon means, "She Breaks / Cuts All of Them". [Click here](#) for the specifics of the translation.

It is perhaps important to note that many genealogical studies do not probe to this depth when the evidence is acceptable as is. The present author has extended the reach more out of the desire to be 100% sure. However when working in what amounts to “ethnic genealogy”, at the time under consideration, “certainty” in relation to the identity of a female ancestor is often unattainable.

The evidence strongly suggests that Margaret Brant and Mary Hill Katehriunigh were sisters. This would also explain why Lt. John Young’s uncles were residing in homes owned by the Ft. Hunter Mohawks on the Mohawk Flats in 1780 – if whites were going to occupy the homes the occupants had deserted to fight for the British, it was better to seek tenants among those who had a family connection. After the death of her husband (prior to 1768) and perhaps cohabiting with Captain Daniel, it would make sense that she would have returned to her birthplace and the home of all her siblings, the Mohawk Flats at Ft. Hunter, and so would have been a signor to the 1789 Ft. Hunter deed. The only Catharine to file a claim for lands was a Katerine who was residing at Niagara 22 April 1784. Her claim included a house worth 80 pounds (only one other Mohawk in either village had a house worth this much), and 60 acres of land - only the three Hill brothers and their sister Mary of Ft. Hunter had more. The documents do not indicate whether the house and land were at Ft. Hunter or Canajoharie. It could have been property located near Ft. Hendrick, possibly inherited by Catharine Young from her father (see Faux, 2002).

If, as intimated above, John Young was related to both the Brants and the Hills via his wife, a reasonable question is whether there is evidence of a continuing affiliation with these families along the Grand River. The fact that Joseph Brant was a witness to the sale of John Young’s Loyalist grant at the Head of the Lake has already been noted, as has John’s attendance and signature as witness to almost every Six Nations document from the first days of settlement until he death in 1812. Furthermore, the youngest son of Joseph Brant, John Brant, was elected to the House of Assembly in 1832, *with the support of settlers on the Six Nations’ lands, especially Warner Nelles, an election official* (Herring, 1998, p.57). Furthermore on 17 September 1791 in the William Nelles Account Book there is an entry, *Aaron Hill Capt David Son to Wm Nelles.* This debt was discharged by John Young at an unspecified date (Toronto Public Library, Baldwin Room).

In summary:

- 1) The Beaver Tribe / Clan comes from the Wyandot “branch” of the Upper Mohawks, from the descendants of Brant Canagaradunckwa.
- 2) The Mohawk Bear Tribe / Clan Astawenserontha – Tahatonne / Tahanata link is via the Hill family. This interpretation appears to be consistent with the weight of evidence.

The tie is via Mary and Margaret, both head women of the Astawenserontha Bear Tribe / Clan, apparent sisters, daughters of Aaron Hill Oseragheté and Margaret Crine (Green).

Mary Hill (Lower Mohawk), wife of Johannes (son of Seth Sr.), was ultimately entitled to choose the Astawenserontha successor circa 1790 or 1795 (by which time her sister may have been deceased), and her son Seth Hill got the nod. Subsequently an unknown descendant or descendants of Margaret or Mary had the right to select a candidate to fill the associated Tahatonne then Tahanata Bear Tribe / Clan Upper Mohawk titles (Francis Cotter then Warner Henry Nelles). There may have been some political reasons for this split, relating to the perception of a segment of the Mohawk community led by elements of the Astawenserontha family members linked to the Wyandot, that they were the victims of discrimination as Upper Mohawks.

Since Margaret Hill Brant's eldest adopted daughter, and Mary Hill's eldest biological daughter, Catharine Young (wife of Lt. John Young) had died (circa 1796), Catharine's proposed half sister Margaret Cotter selected her son Francis to be installed with the sachemship, and likely used his personal name Tahatonne. When Cotter was "dehorned" in 1817, or simply left to join the Wyandot, it is possible that as a parting gesture Margaret Cotter chose her nephew Warner H. Nelles as her son's successor (there being no evidence that she lost her status as Clan Matron). Otherwise the right to choose the successor of the Tahatonne/Tahanata sachemship may have gone directly to Margaret's nieces (Catharines) daughter Elizabeth (Young) Nelles. It is important to emphasize that there is no direct evidence showing the specific relationship between the Cotters and the Youngs. All that can be offered are reasonable assumptions.

Beaver Tribe Scattered 1817 – 1896: The above obituary of Warner H. Nelles stated that to the time of his death he was still recognized as chief, but that the Beaver Tribe "is greatly scattered". It may be the large extended family of the Mohawk Beaver group, Upper Mohawks, descendants of Brant Canagaradunckwa (and Wyandot faction), for whom a special sachemship was created. Many of this family / group had chosen to settle at Sandusky prior to the raising up of Cotter. When Nelles was installed, the diminishing number of remaining members of the Beaver Tribe moved to Amherstburg near Detroit in Ontario, as well as Upper Sandusky, and Honey Creek in Ohio. All of these were Wyandot and Seneca – Mohawk settlements. Most eventually moved west to allotments in Kansas and Oklahoma. As an example, his mother's apparent kin, Thomas Brant and siblings, were already residing in the Sandusky area before Warner H. Nelles was installed.

Others were to follow scattering throughout the succeeding years. Documented surnames of Mohawks residing in the Sandusky – Detroit area include Cotter, Brant, Battise, Garlow and Bumberry, names (with the exception of Cotter) still known also at Six Nations. The origin of the David Young among the Wyandot is unknown. In a list of Upper Mohawk property holders at the Grand River, 3 January 1843, there was a notation beside the name David Froman, "Sandusky" (RG10, Vol. 140, p.170338). David Froman was residing among the Wyandot at Wyandotte, Kansas on 14 June 1844 (Miller, 1881). So indeed, the word "scattered" would seem to apply.

The present author is well aware that the above linkage involves some speculation, but there simply does not seem to be any other way to explain all of the available data – no

further documentation is expected since the author has exhausted most or all of the available sources.

The Installation Procedure: To close with reference to the last clause in the Nelles obituary, it is perhaps noteworthy that the obituary informants were entirely accurate in their reporting of the manner of installing a new chief among the Six Nations (further external validation). During what is termed the Condolence Ceremony, when the new chief is "raised up", the string or strings of wampum are used as a sacred emblem to "crown" the candidate chief, Warner H. Nelles, hence the Condoling Chiefs **threw over his head** the wampum. In looking at the images of both David Hill (1776 – [click here](#)) and Flying Sky (1793 – [click here](#)) noted above, they are wearing wampum (most white, some purple), in their hair, cascading down from the top. Each has three strings, with the leather end being prominent in one string. Both wear this wampum on the right side of their head, with two strings in front of the ear. The design is virtually identical to # 57 *String containing a chief's name* (p.349) also with three strings (Beauchamp, 1901). The new chief keeps the wampum strings as *their certificate of office* (Tehanetorens, 1983, p.5) – and in the early days this seems to have meant actually wearing the wampum, as a badge, where it could be most readily seen and identified. It appears that David and Flying Sky 1793 wore the wampum strings on their head, at least during formal occasions – which would tangibly denote their chiefly status – representing the “horns of office”. The fact that the Chiefs placed the wampum over Nelles’ head during the installation ceremony fits well with the descriptions of his above maternal kin when presiding at official functions.

At this point it may be helpful to note the general uses of wampum in Native American societies. Wampum are shell beads made from the whelk, generally from sources along the Atlantic Coast. There are two colors, white (signifying something positive), and purple (which can have a more negative connotation such death in its use in mourning rituals). Wampum has been used as currency, and had a set value. The Six Nations use it to make strings for use in communicating messages and in the Condolence Ritual (more on this later). Another use is to weave the wampum beads into long belts composed of figures such as a tree in order to symbolize something, and to be used a mnemonic device to recall the specifics of a treaty or obligation of some kind. Basically wampum had a very high degree of symbolic as well as monetary value.

The fact that Nelles still had the wampum strings supports the idea that it was a sachemship for life, and that he was not “dehorned” by the Clan Matrons despite his apparent lack of participation, probably since it was not one of the ancient Bear Clan sachemships. This would explain why Tahanata (or the surname Nelles) does not appear among any documents signed by the chiefs in Council – Nelles left the Grand River in the 1820s; nor does it (or Tahatonne) occur among any of the Astawenserontha “Warriors Names” in the Seth Newhouse Manuscript. It appears to be in a class by itself, and was likely chosen from among Wyandot - related names associated with the Bear Tribe to be used for political reasons only at the time (circa 1814) when factionalism was tearing apart the fabric of Mohawk society at the Grand River. It did not seem to work as planned since, as noted above the first-known office holder, Francis Cotter, left the Six

Nations of the Grand River to become a member of the Wyandot Nation; and many or most of the malcontents moved west over time to ultimately reside in the adjoining Seneca and Wyandot Reservations of the Quapaw Agency in Oklahoma. Furthermore the successor of the sachemship, Warner H. Nelles, was also unable to carry out his duties due to his residential situation, having moved to St. Catarines.

Admixture in the Lineage of Catharine Young -

The genealogical (plus genetic evidence discussed elsewhere) taken as a whole strongly suggests that Catharine Hill was highly admixed. It is possible that she was more biologically European than Native American. Her maternal great uncle was “White Hans” Crine (Green), a “whitish Indian”. Also her first cousin at the time of the War of 1812 was known as Chief John “Blue Eyed” Green Aronghyengtha. Recalling the Campbell Diary’s description of the blended European and Indian heritage of David Hill, uncle to Catharine. Campbell stated, *I do not remember to have seen an instance where a white man and an Indian woman did not produce handsome and well looking children The famous and handsome Captain David, and the present Mr. Brant, afford striking instances of this kind* (1793, p.225). [Click here](#) to see a picture of the facial features of David Hill. In addition, a justice of the peace recorded that Catharine’s youngest son Joseph had “grey eyes” and “brown hair” when he signed an oath of allegiance to the Crown in order to secure his land grant in Vaughan Township (Reaman, 1971, p.31). Jacob, one of the sons of Joseph Brant, was also reported as having blue eyes (this observation by William Allen who owned a portrait of Jacob as reported by Kelsay, 1986, p.713, note 13). Hence it is clear that even Joseph Brant (as well as his wife Catharine) must have carried a recessive blue eye allele, attesting to the significant admixture in most or all Mohawks at the time.

Over the years frequent comments have been made to the effect that many of the pictures of the earlier generations of this branch of the Young family strongly hint at some percentage of Native American. [Click here](#) to see some examples. This data is, however, highly subjective, and the phenotype (what is seen in the mirror) may not necessarily reflect the genotype (biological heritage). However, based on the sum total of available evidence, the author has concluded that the pictorial representations of facial features reflect the documented admixed Mohawk - Wyandot and European genetic ancestry of these Young and Nelles descendants.

Integration of Genetic and Genealogical Data –

On a personal note, the author has been wrestling with this matter for 35 years during which time considerable flip-flopping in relation to the alternatives has occurred. However, with each foray into a “new view”, inevitably there is a return to the original perspective – Catharine Hill Kayakhon was the mother of the four children of Lt. John Young. No other genealogical hypothesis fits the data convincingly. It was hoped that the truth would manifest itself via the new genome scan technology which can in some cases either prove or disprove or support or fail to support a genealogical record or an

oral tradition. It has been a great disappointment that the genetic testing still leaves much uncertainty – at least to this point in time.

The data most clearly and convincingly supports the hypothesis that Catharine was the biological daughter of Mary Hill Kateriunigh and an unknown white man.

Based on the weight of evidence accumulated by testing a number of descendants of Lt. John Young with three or more methods used to detect the presence of, percentage of, and specific location of, Native American ancestry there is little doubt that Catharine was Native American. [Click here](#) for the extensive study of the matter. However, the overall picture is one where if her parents were both of Native American heritage (although admixed on the mother's side), we would expect to see more substantive evidence – for example a larger number and size of segments that are Native American in individuals such as Lawrence Young who is only 5 generations removed from Lt. John and Catharine. The genetic and genealogical evidence would dovetail considerably better if Catharine's biological father was European. Based on the life and times, and on the respective histories of the Brant and Johnson families, this hypothesis could easily be reconciled with the data.

Granted that there was overwhelming evidence of admixture in the maternal line of Catharine, but the genealogical data needs to be reconciled with the genetic test findings. While the findings in some descendants of the Lt. John Young line of indisputable Native American heritage is convincing, the absolute percentages are not.

Essentially there are a series of “holes” in both the genealogical and the genetic records. What can, however, be said with a high degree of certainty is that Catharine was a descendant of the Hill family in the maternal line and her descendants were in the line of succession for the title of the Bear Clan / Tribe, Astawenserontha sachemship, and a linked title specific to the Wyandots among the Mohawks.

If perchance Catharine's biological father was a White man, then the genetic findings would make “perfect” sense. Much of the genealogical data could also be explained if perchance a prominent Euro-American was father to Catharine, and that her mother Mary was pregnant when she married John son of Seth on 1 January 1747; and that the baptism reflected social not biological reality – and was overwritten where Hans and Maria was replaced with Nicus and Margaretje. She was being accepted into the Brant family, who had a special relationship with one non-Native male, Sir William Johnson.

Sir William Johnson?:

There is another persuasive interpretation worthy of consideration. We might accept that Catharine, daughter of Mary Hill, was baptized 3 June 1747 at the Schenectady Reformed Dutch Church. As noted, Mary Hill was perhaps already pregnant when she married John (Johannes) or may have already given birth to Catharine sometime earlier, the paternal side is in question and there is no independent evidence of Catharine's father (Johannes appears to have been a step-father, and Nicholas an adoptive father). This

situation is parallel to what the present author has encountered with a Scottish ancestor, and here the decision was to only focus on the maternal side due to biological realities. There are multiple sources of evidence pointing to Mary Hill as being the birth mother of Catharine. The genetics findings (see above) leave open the possibility that the father of Catharine was a white man (not uncommon among Mohawks at this time).

Considering the documented behaviour of one Sir William Johnson among the Mohawk women at this time, he must be considered as a prime candidate. One respected author (Wallace, 1945) estimated the number of illegitimate children of William Johnson at 100! Others have questioned this figure (Jennings, 2000). However there is no known genealogical evidence to offer solid leads as to a paternal candidate. A John Young descendant who matches an autosomal DNA segment with someone in this Johnson family would “seal the deal”. A reading of the references to Aaron Hill Oseragheté in the Johnson Papers shows a strong connection between Aaron and Sir William Johnson, despite the fact that Aaron was often a thorn in his side. This dynamic is certainly consistent with Johnson being a paramour to one of Aaron’s daughters as was the case with the Brant family and one or two of Brant Kanagaradunckwa’s daughters (sisters to Nicholas Brant).

A possible hint at a little daughter residing at Canajoharie is seen in a letter from Joseph Chew in 1749, expressing that he “hopes ‘the young Ladys at the [Indian] Castle are well’ and sends his ‘Compliments to little Miss Michael at the Mohaw[k]s & madam Curl’d locks at Conejesharry’ [Canajoharie] (O’Toole, 2005, p. 106). It is at least possible that the latter girl is a small child of Sir William.

It is perhaps noteworthy that 14 September 1765 (about the time John and Catharine were likely married), there is the following reference in the Accounts of John Butler charged to Sir William Johnson (JP, Vol. 13, p. 511):

To 1 gallon of Rum & a Cagg to Cattreen the Squa
To 2 shillings Cash to Johannes of Conajohary

This amount of alcohol was typical of that expended at a wedding. It is precisely what each parent gave in the wedding of Adam Young and Catharine Elizabeth Schrembling where Theobald Young and Hendrick Schrembling made separate purchases for this amount of alcohol (see Campbell Account Books, Schenectady, NY at the Archives in Albany), and it is difficult to see this as anything other than a very unusual gift by Sir William to a Mohawk woman. The next entry suggests that Catreen was residing at Canajohary.

The fact that three of the four children of Lt. John Young and Catharine named one of their children William is perhaps a coincidence, but worthy of note.

Going back to the information showing John Young’s two uncles residing on what appears to be Hill property during the Revolution, the connection between the Young and

Hill family could relate to someone other than Mary Hill Kateriunigh – although it would be difficult to oust the latter from the candidate list.

CONCLUSION:

Interpretation in Light of the Above Evidence - First it is important to note that the incompleteness of the record sources from the various communities of the Mohawk Valley and the Grand River Valley (e.g., baptismal and marriage registers), it has been necessary to rely on the material that retains a “fuzzy” quality and is at times open to more than one interpretation. Hence, as is true of much genealogical work, it is possible to derive a family tree which is likely correct – but it has to be admitted here that it may never be possible to put forward a completely definitive version of Catharine Young’s ancestry.

The major aim of the present study was to explore the evidence relating to the ancestry of Catharine, the mother of all four children of Lt. John Young – Abraham Young, John Young Jr., Elizabeth (Young) Nelles, and Joseph Young. Based on the “preponderance of evidence”, and on a “balance of probabilities”, although I am not so sure about “beyond a reasonable doubt”, **the mother of Lt. John Young’s children was Catharine Brant Hill Kayakhon (1747 – circa 1796), adopted daughter of Nicholas Brant Canadiorha (a Mohawk sachem of the Wyandot Beaver Tribe / Clan) and biological daughter of Mary Hill Kateriunigh (Mohawk Bear Tribe / Clan, Astawenserontha family) and a European male, the most likely candidate being Sir William Johnson.**

It is important to note that Captain Joseph Brant Thayendenagea took the surname Brant from the given name of his step – father Brant Canagaradunckwa. He was the step – brother of Nicholas Brant Canadiorha, and **Catharine Young was Joseph Brant’s step – niece.** Therefore while there is a family connection between the families of John Young and Joseph Brant, it is clearly not biological.

More Conservative Interpretation – If one were to be perfectly frank about the data, and put aside the natural tendency to want the fruits of one’s research to yield a detailed genealogy of distant ancestors, the following must be considered. There are “gaps” in the information stream that can be filled, but by sometimes something of a Procrustean fit.

Hence if we were to look at only what can be said with relative certainty a more “bare bones” interpretation in relation to Catharine Young emerges:

- a) The surname of Catharine, first wife of John Young, is unknown.
- b) Catharine was, at least in the maternal line, of Six Nations Indian ancestry.
- c) Catharine was of the Mohawk Bear Clan, Astawenserontha family, linked to the Hill family formerly of Ft. Hunter. The evidence shows that a tie predates the Revolution and the death of Catharine.
- d) A Mohawk Bear Clan chiefly title, Tahanata, meaning **Towards his village**, is associated with the family. It came to the Young – Nelles

family in 1817 when Warner H. Nelles was raised up in this name by the Six Nations in Council.

- e) There is a relationship in the maternal line with the former holder of the title, Chief Francis Cotter Tahatonne, of the Upper (Canajoharie) Mohawks who in 1817 joined the Wyandot of Anderdon Township. His father was a white man, and his mother Margaret was listed in one document as a Lower (Ft. Hunter) Mohawk.

ADDENDUM re the Astawenserontha Green, Hill and Brant Family and Names Pertaining to the Present Study:

The following names follow different paths of “certainty”. Generally those who were from the Lower Mohawk Village at Ft. Hunter are the best documented and hence there is little to no doubt about the identifications. However when it comes to the generation which moves to the Upper Mohawk Village at Canajoharie, the level of confidence in the identifications goes down correspondingly.

- a) Descendants of Margaret Crine (Green) Konwatyennih, daughter of Anna, daughter of Eva Jawaandasse –

Lower Mohawk

- 1) Margaret (Hill) Brant Kayadontyi (Later Upper Mohawk), adoptive mother of Catharine Kayakhon below, and whose adoptive grandson became Chief Tahanata (Warner H. Nelles), successor to Chief Tahatonne (Francis Cotter) in 1817.
- 2) Mary Hill Kateriunigh whose son Seth Hill Kanenkaregowagh became Bear Clan Chief Astawenserontha before 1800, and whose grandson became Chief Francis Cotter Tahatonne, lined to Principal Chief Astawenserontha with a bracket in the George Martin List of Chiefs. In 1817 another grandson Warner H. Nelles Tahanata inherited the Tahatonne position. She was the biological mother of Catharine Kayakhon.
- 3) Aaron Hill Kanonraron
- 4) Catharine Hill
- 5) John Hill Oteroughyanente
- 6) Peter Hill
- 7) David Hill Karonghyontye (Astawenserontha)

- b) Descendants of Margaret (Hill) Brant (proposed) –

Upper Mohawk

- 1) Catharine (Brant-Hill-Johnson) Young Kayakhon (adopted) whose grandson Warner H. Nelles became Tahanata (1817-1896), succeeding his

cousin Francis Cotter Tahatonne who gave up the title in 1817 to join the Wyandot in Anderdon Township, Ontario.

- 2) Paulus Brant Shagoyadiyostha (Karonghyontye?)
- 3) Lawrence Brant
- 4) Susanna Brant
- 5) Rachel Brant

ADDENDUM re Name Karonghyontye:

It is of interest that the name Karonghyontye or “Flying Sky” appears to have been a high status name among other Six Nations and other First Nations groups. Here are some examples harvested from the Internet:

- 1) Mohawk of Kanawaki. One Louis Karoniontie “Flying Sky” (born circa 1820) was a prominent man among the “Iroquois” in Quebec (Gerin, 1899/00).
- 2) Oneida of Oneida Castle, New York. In the Joseph O. Powless diary he notes that on 16 July 1831, “Flying Sky, an important man” died (Elsewhere Joseph Karonghyontye).
- 3) Tuscarora of New York. Chadwick (1897) listed Karinyentya as a Beaver Clan Tuscarora title that was not found on the Six Nations Reserve. Karinyentya is clearly the Tuscarora version of “Flying Sky”.
- 4) Ojibways of Cass Lake. Among this non – Iroquoian people, a chief of the band was Maw-je-ke-jik (Flying Sky) and whose photo was taken in 1863.

ADDENDUM re Name Tahanata and Tahatonne:

- 1) The title represented by the name Tahanata (which came to the fore when Francis Cotter Tahatonne left for Wyandot territory) remained in the Young – Nelles family until 1896 at which point it appears to have become extinct. One reason is that Nelles left the Grand River soon after assuming the title (although his father Warner Sr. was a frequent attendee at Six Nations Councils); another is that there would seem to have been few families in the Grand River area to comprise a cohesive unit for the Beaver “tribe”; and a further matter was that there was no one remaining in the female line of the Nelles or closely related families to assume the role of Clan Mother. So the name and title were effectively lost to the Six Nations virtually from the moment Nelles was raised up as Tahanata.
- 2) The “Wyandot connection” assumes a degree of significance here to the extent that the author has expanded the relevant

information included in a manuscript available by [clicking here](#). While there is substantial repetition of what is included in the present paper, new findings and interpretations are constantly being added to this more focused study.

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