

The Brothertown Indian Nation was an amalgamation of a number of Christian Indian converts from the Mohegan, Pequot, Narragansett, Montauk, Tunxis, Wangunk and Niantic tribes. (Note: the names Brotherton and Brothertown have been used interchangeably).

By the end of the 1700's these tribes were poverty stricken, decimated by wars and disease and their lands in New England were being taken from them by the colonists.

Sansom Occom (1723-1792), born in a wigwam, was the most famous Brothertown Indian of the colonial era. He was born in what is now Connecticut, and was a member of the Mohegan tribe. As a young man, he converted to Christianity and became a pupil of the Rev. Eleazer Wheelock, future founder of Dartmouth College. (*Note: if you would like me to further elaborate I will*).

Occom was an ordained Presbyterian minister who preached to Indians and whites. He parted from Wheelock when he learned that Wheelock had abandoned the idea of educating Indians to serve as missionaries to other Indians and was instead using the proceeds of Occom's successful British fundraising trip to establish what is now Dartmouth College..

Shortly before the Revolutionary War, Occom and other Christian Indians, proposed leaving the tribes of their birth to establish their own Christian Indian community. After the Revolution, Occom played a central role in founding what became Brothertown.

In 1784, Reverend Occom accompanied the first group to settle on the Oneida reservation (what is now Deansboro, New York) on land given to them through negotiations with the Oneida Indian Nation. (*Note: if you would like me to further elaborate I will*).

On November 7, 1784, Reverend Occom named the settlement and said the following "But now we proceeded to form into a Body Politick - we named our Town by **the Name of Brotherton**, in Indian Eeyam quittoowaconnuck".

In 1789, the Brothertown Indian Reservation was recognized by the state of New York, The Act of 1789. The Brothertown community in New York lasted for approximately 40 years.

Unfortunately, by the early 1800's Brothertown faced increasing pressure from outsiders encroaching on their land in New York

The members of the tribe farmed the land in the same manner as their non-Indian counterparts. During this time, the group had an elected body of leaders called "Peacemakers" who acted as overseers for the community. The Brothertown Indian tribe was under the supervision of the State of New York, but the tribe's leaders dealt with such matters as purchasing land on which to establish a grist mill and dealing with problems involved with the assignment of land within the settlement.

By 1831, the Federal Government secured land from the Menominee for the "New York Indians," and the Brothertown Indians, Stockbridge Indians, and a portion of the Oneida Indian tribe decided to leave New York. Six Brothertown families consisting of about 40 individuals left

New York for Green Bay in 1831, and over the next 15 years more followed to the Michigan Territory and what is now the State of Wisconsin.

On January 15, 1838, the U.S. concluded a treaty at Buffalo Creek, New York, this treaty would put pressure on the tribe to move once again, this time to Kansas. The move to Wisconsin was still not completed when yet another move was being considered.

The Brothertown Tribe petitioned the Federal Government in 1838 requesting an Act of Congress that would allow them to apportion their reservation lands in Wisconsin to individual members and obtain citizenship. Their petition was granted by the Act of 1839, the reservation land was divided among their members and they were granted United State citizenship. **The Act of 1839 also mandated that the Brothertown Indian tribe's "rights as a tribe or nation" would "cease."**

The Brothertown Indian Nation is presently requesting that Congress reinstate their Federal Recognition as a Tribe.

More about Martin Wiggins:

Lineage of Martin Wiggins to Reverend Samson Occom.

Martin Wiggins was the son of Elizabeth³ (*Paul*) Wiggins; *Samson*² *Paul*, *Christiana*¹ *Occom* (*Paul*), *Samson Occom*. Source: Brothertown Indian Nation.

Martins' father, Ezekiel Wiggins, was born on the Brothertown Reservation (Oneida, New York) in 1805. He and his family were one of the last to leave their home in Oneida, departing in 1846 on their journey to Green Bay in a vessel called *The President*. Ezekiel did not remain in Wisconsin and died on the Indian reservation in Kansas on September 20, 1864.

This is part of a letter written by Gracie Abner on May 23, 1859 about Ezekiel Wiggins-- "I think you would like the country better than we did when we com six years ago times have altrred greatly since that day every letter I get from home they say hard times what kind of country is Kansas I think of coming out there but they don't com no one has ventured out but Ezekil Wiggins and he is not sorry that he has got here The last time I saw him he said if he could send for his family he would not go back to Wisconsin again I herd from him last week and he was well and had got done planting and was well satisfied so far but when he gets the news about his son it will make him homesick I think Alick Dick lives up to the Delawares about 40 miles north of us and Ezekil liv about 50 miles south of us we all live a good ways apart Ezekil lives on the new York tract and we on the Miami lands but if we get out land we shall be altogether after awhile I am in hopes." Grace Abner's father was a Pequot Indian, born in Stonington Connecticut, removed to Oneida territory (now New York State) then Wisconsin and his descendants to the reservation in Kansas. On 15 Jul 1863 Grace Abner married William Blakesley in Miami County, Kansas.

Sources:

The Civil War Widows Pension of Martin Wiggins.

The Civil War Service Record of Martin Wiggins.

Bureau of Indian Affairs

"Samson Occom and the Christian Indians of New England"; Written by William DeLoss Love, published 1899.

Letter written by Grace Abner Blakesley; attached to the family tree of Martin Wiggins by his 2nd great grand daughter, Marilyn Johnson..

Brothertown Tribe in the Civil War.

A. Arthur Adams

B. George Baker, George Baldwin, Cyrenus Bostwick, Franklin Bostwick, Henry W.F. Bostwick, George W. Brushel, Samuel Brushel, Erwin C. Bulman, Grisel Bulman.

C. Moses J. Coffeen, Charles Coleman, Thomas M. Commuck , Worthington Commuck, Albert D. Cottrell, John B. Coyhis, Zac Coyhis, Hoel R. Crowell.

D. John Morris DeGroat, Asa D. Dick, Benjamin Dick, Charles W. Dick, David Dick, Edgar Morris Dick, Franklin M. Dick, Hubbard Dick, Jacob Dick, John W. Dick, Lucius C. Dick, Orlando D. Dick, Samuel H. Dick.

F. Merrill Fiddler, Israel Fowler, James D. Fowler, Layton Fowler, Lyman Palmer Fowler, Orin Gridley Fowler, William Fowler.

H. Alexander Hammar, George Hammar, Hamilton Hammar, Henry Hammar, Jarus Hammar, John Hammar, James A Hart, Orville Amon Hart.

J. Daniel E. Jacques, Ansel J. Johnson, George A. Johnson, Henry C. Johnson, Isaac Johnson, Joseph M. Johnson, Lewis Johnson, Loren Murry Johnson, Melville Johnson, Nathaniel H. Johnson, Orlando F. Johnson, Orin Johnson, Oscar Johnson, William H. Johnson and Melville Johnson.

K. Thomas G. Keeville, George Kindness, James H. Kindness, Lewis Kindness and Orlando Kindness.

N. Solomon Niles.

P. David Occom-Paul, Benjamin Palmer, Rhodolphus Paul, John Pendelton, Melancthon Peters, William Peters, Henry Potter.

R. William H. Reed, Aaron Roberts.

S. George F. Sampson, James J. Sampson, Joel J. Sampson, Julius J. Sampson, Elisha N. Schooner, Luther O. Schooner, John Sears, David Shelley, Henry F. Shelley, John Shelley, Lewis A. Shelley, Simon Shelley, Jr. Simon Shelley, Sr., John Simons, John Skeesuck, James Madison Skeesuck, Rufus Seeksuck, Simon Skeesuck, Solomon Skeesuck and Sylvester Skeesuck.

T. Thomas Tokus and Henry Tousey.

W. Aaron Wauby, Lewis F. Wauby, Charles Welch, Cyrus Welch, Hiram Welch, Horace Welch, Leroy Welch, Lewis Welch, Erastus Welch, Jr., Erastus W. Welch, Syranious Welch, William Welch, Jr., Eli Wiggins, Hiram Wiggins, Ira D. Wiggins, Leander Wiggins, **Martin Wiggins** and Romance Wyatt.

Source: Brothertown.