THE ALGONQUIAN SERIES

BY WILLIAM WALLACE TOOKER

III

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The Names Susquehanna and Chesapeake

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THE NAMES SUSQUEHANNA AND CHESAPEAKE

With Historical and Ethnological Notes

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THE NAME SUSQUEHANNA.

IN the endeavor to ascertain the etymologies and significations of the Algonquian place-names, that are scattered so profusely over the eastern portion of the United States, it is absolutely necessary that we should have in hand the earliest forms of spelling, with all their variations, whether in the English, German, or Dutch notation, together with the early records accompanying the

same. If we have these records and variations, we may discover by comparative analysis, and the aid of cognate vocabularies or dictionaries, their hidden significations as understood by the red men. This has been the case with many of the Indian names of places on Long Island, in Virginia, and elsewhere, on which study I have now been engaged for many years; for, by the aid of knowledge gleaned principally from early deeds, wills, and other documents, written by those who, at the time, either understood the language or else employed an interpreter in their transactions with or purchases from the Indians, I

have been able to bring to light the undoubted meaning of many prominent place-names, on which otherwise I would have failed, as many have done previously on the same names—simply for the absence of proper material for such labors.

I will first take up some of the suggestions offered as to the meaning and origin of the well-known name *Susquehanna*, by several very prominent ethnologists and linguists, and then afterward glance into the first recorded bestowal of the name, and learn its bearing—historical, ethnological, and anthropological—on the points mentioned in the foregoing paragraph.

The Rev. John Heckewelder, the Moravian missionary to the Delawares, suggested that it was a corruption of *Quenisch-achachgek-hánne*, "the long reach river." * The fact that Heckewelder failed on this, as well as on the greater number of his place-name etymologies, is nothing to be wondered at. The Delawares among whom he lived had probably forgotten, or else they never knew, its meaning, or why it was bestowed, belonging as it did to another dialect. Moreover, nearly two centuries had passed away when Heckewelder began his inquiries. The passage of these eventful years had covered all

* Trans. Mor. Hist. Soc., p. 264.

traditions, had made many changes in the language, had driven the original *Sasquesahanoughs* from the face of the earth, had bestowed their name on an alien band, and had obliterated all knowledge of the circumstances that had given it birth, and it would probably have remained undiscovered and buried in the mists of the past, but for the information published nearly contemporaneously with the first use of the word, as I shall presently show.*

* The worthlessness of most Indian traditions is indicated by the so-called Indian deed for Gardiners Island, N. Y. (Thompson, Hist. L. I., vol. i. p. 305), where it is stated to have been purchased for "*one large black dog, one gun, a quantity of*

Rev. N. W. Jones, in his Indian Bulletin for 1868, says: "*Susquehanna*—smooth river; from *sooskwa*, it is smooth, and *anna*, a stream." *

The late Dr. Horatio Hale, as well as the late Gen. John S. Clark, both well known for their Iroquoian studies, derived the name from an Iroquoian term, meaning "the Falls people," or "they who live at the

powder and shot, some rum, and a few Dutch blankets," while in Letchford's original draft of the deed, from the "Sachem of *Pommanooc*, *Yovawan* and *Aswaw* his wife," and dated May 3, 1639, the consideration was really "ten coates of trading cloath" (Trans. Amer. Antiq. Soc., vol. vii. p. 207).

* Erroneously derived probably from the Massachusetts (Eliot) *Mooswau*, "to make plain, to smooth, to shave."

Falls." This is an evident error, for the form is without question Algonquian, and applied by Algonkins to an Iroquoian people. Even General Clark remarked of his own derivation that there were a number of things about it which he was unable to account for, and he never saw an Iroquoian scholar who could.*

The late Professor A. L. Guss, in his Early Indian History on the Susquehanna,† by a very long and laborious process, with many quotations from a variety of sources, some of which are not applicable, but are

* Hist. Reg. of Penn., vol i. p. 257.
† Hist. Reg. of Penn., vol. i. pp. 251–268.

employed to bolster up a defective etymology, translates the name as "*Spring-water-Stream-Region-People* or *Brook-stream-land-ers*," deriving the adjectival from *woski*, "new, fresh."

Of the foregoing suggestions, the late Dr. D. G. Brinton * preferred Heckewelder's explanation, "if allowance is made for the softening of the gutturals, which was a phonetic trait of the Unami dialect of the Delaware." But Dr. Brinton, however, few years later † throws them all overboard in the following words: "The derivation of Susquehanna—

* The Lenapé and their Legends, p. 15.

† American Antiquarian, vol. viii. p. 381.

several conflicting derivations of this name have been proposed, some of which I have mentioned (above referred to). They are doubtless all wrong, as the etymology given me by the native Delaware, the Rev. Albert S. Anthony, in a recent conversation, would seem beyond question to be the simplest and most obvious. The name as he wrote it in English orthography is *A-theeth-quah-nak*. The *th* is the peculiar sibilant of the Lenapé, compounded of the *s*, and soft *th*, and by the Moravian missionaries were always rendered by the *s*. The word means 'the river with the muddy water.'" Which is to be preferred? The

Delaware rendering of Heckewelder, or the modern Delaware of Anthony? Both derivations, it seems to me, are decidedly far-fetched, and are consequently non-acceptable, and so the same remarks will apply to the last as were given to the first. Furthermore, in all of these suggested etymologies there are altogether too many defects to account for, which even to a layman are enough to cast doubt upon them. Again, it may be affirmed as a fact mentioned by many patient investigators, that an Indian, rather than display his ignorance, if he does not know the meaning of a word, will give one, and the next inquiry will

develop another of an entirely different nature, until the searcher after truth will feel inclined to give it up in despair.

There have been several other suggestions made as to the derivation of the name, but, as they are hardly worth mentioning, I shall leave them and take up the beginning of its annals. We find that nearly three centuries of time, rich in historical events and development of the New World, have elapsed since Captain John Smith, with his companions, numbering altogether thirteen, set sail on the 24th day of July, in the year 1608, from Jamestown on his second voyage of dis-

covery to the head of Chesapeake Bay.*

This undertaking, in its daring and results, fully equaled, if it did not surpass, that of Henry Hudson in discovering the river that bears his name.† In a small barge of hardly two tons, inadequately armed and provisioned; living most of the time on oatmeal and water, and not enough of that; venturing into a

*See Arber's Edition of Smith's Works, for all references to Smith.

† There is some strong circumstantial evidence (see my paper on Manhattan) that Hudson had with him a chart of the river, drawn from relation of the Indians by either Smith or some of his Virginia associates. If this be true, surely Smith's voyage far exceeded that of Hudson.

primeval wilderness sparsely inhabited by the savages, and staying twelve weeks, was in many respects a foolhardy enterprise. Smith, however, was a man inured to war, to privation, of great courage and immense resources. He infused the same spirit into the men under his charge, and thus made the voyage a successful one. After a survey of the various shores and coves of the bay, encountering savages, storms, and sickness, they arrived at what they called the river of Tockwogh, now known as Sassafras River, situated on the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay in Maryland. Here they were environed by the red men in

their canoes, armed and ready in their primitive fashion to resist the weak band of explorers. But it so happened that one savage could speak the dialect of the Powhatan Indians, with which the adventurers were familiar, and through his influence Smith was able to induce the tribe to a friendly intercourse. Afterward the party were conducted to their town, which they found well "palisadoed and covered with the bark of trees, with scaffolds like mounts, breasted with barks very formally." This tribe, who were called Tockwoghs, from a root of a plant which they used for food, * could muster one hundred

* Brinton (Lenapé and their Legends,

able men. Smith, greatly to his surprise, found them in possession of *many hatchets, knives, pieces of iron and brass*, which they said they had purchased from the *Sasquesahanocks*, a mighty people, and mortal enemies of a people called the *Massawomecks*.*

p. 23) suggests the derivation from *Taiachquoan*, "a bridge," a term applied to the Nanticokes by the Delawares, according to Heckewelder, in allusion to their being noted for felling great numbers of trees across streams, to set their traps on. Trumbull's derivation, as above given, is to be preferred (Hist. Mag., 2d Ser. p. 48) for the reason that it is most abundantly confirmed by Captain John Smith, who states that when they were scarce of provision, "others would gather as much *Tockwough* roots in a day as would make them bread a weeke" (Arber's Smith, p. 155).

* See "The Algonquian Terms *Patawomeke* and *Massawomeke*," in this series.

Smith was told that the Sasquesahanocks lived upon the chief spring of the largest river that flowed into the bay at its head, known now as the Susquehanna. He was unable to sail or to row his barge up this stream on account of rocks and rapids, a condition still existing. Consequently, he prevailed upon the Tockwogh interpreter, who understood Powhatan, to take another Tockwogh with him who understood the Sasquesahanocks, in order to persuade the latter to come down and visit them, for their languages were different. After waiting several days, as Smith informs us, "sixty of these people came down with

skins, bows, arrows, targets, beads, swords, tobacco, pipes, etc., for presents. Such great and well proportioned men are seldom seen, for they seemed like giants to the English, yea, and to their neighbors, yet seemed of an honest disposition." Smith says: "They are the most strange people of all those countries, both in language and their attire;*

* "Their attire is the skinnes of beares, and wolves, some have cossacks made of beares heads and skinnes, that a mans head goes through the skinnes neck, and the eares of the beare fastened to his shoulders, the nose and teeth hanging downe his breast, another beares face split behind him, and at the end of the nose hung a pawe, the halfe sleeves comming to the elbowes were the neckes of beares, and the armes through the mouth with pawes hanging at their

for their language, it may well beseeme their proportion, sounding from them as it were a great voice in a vault or a cave as an echo. These people are scarce known to Powhatan, or he to them. They can make near 600 able and mighty men, and are palisadoed in their towns to defend them from the *Massawomecks* their mortal enemies." From this description, and the strong guttural sound of their speech, it has been

noses. One had the head of a wolfe hanging in a chaine for a jewell, his tobacco pipe three quarters of a yard long, prettily carved with a bird, a deare, or some such devise at the great end, sufficient to beat out ones braines; with bowes, arrowes, and clubs suitable to their greatnesse."

inferred that they were of the same linguistic stock as the Iroquois, and were the people called by Champlain the *Carantouanais*, who, he says, "is a nation to the south of the *Antouhonorons*, in a very beautiful and rich country, where they are strongly lodged, and are friends with all the other nations except the *Antouhonorons*, from whom they are only three days distant.* Their name

* Rev. Wm. M. Beauchamp, American Antiquarian, vol. xvii. pp. 185, 322, says: "Antouhonorons, as given by Champlain, seems the same as Sonontonhonorons, the Senecas. He describes them merely as allies of the Iroquois, for the league had not long been formed, as having fifteen strong villages . . . Like the Dutch, he may have included all but the Mohawks

Sasquesahanough, *Sasqusahanough*, *Sasquesahanongs*, *Sesquesahamock*, or *Sasquesahanock*, as Smith variously wrote it—the first three appearing on his map of Virginia, and the others in his works—was not a name bestowed by themselves or taken from their language, but was the appellation given them by the Tockwoghs, who were of Algonquian affinity. The statement by Smith, that he found in their hands many

under this name." The late Dr. Horatio Hale (Iroquois Book of Rites, p. 175), says : "The Senecas, who were called by the French *Tsonontouan* or *Sonnontouan*, bore among the Iroquois various names, but all apparently derived from the words which appear in that appellation,—*onǫnta*, hill, and *kowa*, or *kowane*, great."

hatchets, knives, pieces of iron and brass which they had obtained from the *Sasquesahanocks*, all goes to prove the fact, and is corroborative evidence as to my hypothesis, that all of these articles of trade, and also most of those brought down as presents, were booty or plunder, looted in war by the so-called *Sasquesahanocks* from their foes, the *Antouhonorons* and others, who got them originally, in traffic for beaver-skins, from the French, who were then located on the St. Lawrence River. For when Smith parted with them, he says: "We left them at Tockwogh, sorrowing for our departure; yet we promised the next yeare again to

visit them. Many descriptions and discoveries they made us of *Atquanachuck*, *Massawomeck* and other people, signifying they inhabit upon a great water beyond the mountains, which we understood to be some great lake or the river of Canada; and from the French to have their hatchets and other commodities." Bozman * was in doubt about this passage which my suggestion will clear away. He remarks: "From the structure of the above sentence some doubt arises whether 'their hatchets and other commodities by trade' were procured immediately from the French by the *Susquehanocks* them-

* Hist. Maryland, 1837, vol. i. p. 129.

selves, or through the immediate traffick of the *Massawomeks*, or some other northern Indian tribes with the French. The circumstance of a war then existing between the *Susquehanocks* and the *Massawomeks* seems to preclude a supposition of the latter case; but it is possible that, even in case of the war, a few articles of that kind might have been obtained from the *Massawomeks* either by capture or some other means, without supposing a traffick carried on by the *Susquehanocks* with the French in Canada. It has been stated that the French commenced their fur-trade with the Indians on the St. Lawrence about the year

1600, and had annually continued it (it being found to be very profitable), until this year of Smith's exploration of the Chesapeake, 1608, in which year Champlain also laid the foundation of Quebec." Bozman follows their subsequent history as far as the meager records of the period would permit, and finds that the *Susquehanocks* were at war with the tribes seated on St. Mary's River, when the first Maryland colonists arrived in 1634. He says:* "The *Susquehanocks*, who lived about the head of the bay, were in the practice of making incursions on their neighbors, partly for dominion, and partly

* Hist. Maryland, vol. i. p. 30.

for booty; of which last, women were the most desired by them,"—a record which shows their predatory habits still continued. They became so obnoxious to the Maryland settlers in 1642 that the *Sesquihanowes,* and others named, were proclaimed enemies of the province, and were ordered to be proceeded against by all persons. Treaty was finally concluded with them in 1652; they were therein termed the "Indian nation of *Sasquesahanoghs*" or *Sasquehanagh.**

* Hist. Maryland, vol. ii. p. 683. This treaty surely proves that this nation at that time was of Iroquoian affinity, for the personal names affixed to this treaty, viz., *Sawahegeh, Auroghtareh, Scathuhadigh,*

It will be noticed that all the historical memoranda quoted from both Smith and Bozman furnish strong circumstantial evidence that this nation of savages were famous for despoiling their neighbors both

Ruthehogah, and *Nathheldianeh,* belong to that language without question. The names of the six Susquehanna Sachems, however, as mentioned in 1715 (Col. Hist. N. Y., vol. v. p. 464), viz., *Jayapen*, *Syawpokan*, *Wenalhittonequi*, *Skanondowa*, *Menakahekan*, and *Wassawasku*, with one exception possibly, indicate that the Delawares were mainly in possession of the river. The exception is *Skanondowa*, which has the appearance and sound of being an Iroquoian term, and, if so, this Sachem might have been at the head of a small remnant of the original *Sasquesahanoughs* still located somewhere on the river.

on the north and on the south, and, without a question in my mind, it is this trait that originally gave rise to their significant appellative of *Sasquesahanough*. A stumbling-block in its interpretation has been its modern form of *Susquehanna*, for, as has been noted, this form is one on which all the former interpretations have been based. The termination *-hanna* certainly resembles the Delaware *-hanné*, Massachusetts *-hannet*, "a rapid-flowing stream," but this variation is due to colloquial use by the English without regard for its significance. The term was not primarily—as is the case with nearly all the other names

of rivers on Smith's Map of Virginia—bestowed on the stream now bearing it, but rather indicated a people, as the quotations from Smith and other early authorities bear witness.

The forms of spelling the name on Smith's map, while they do not appear on his printed pages, in no way differ materially from the others in giving their true grammatical structure; that is to say, the termination in *-anough*, or *-anock*, represents the generic formative in the plural form for "men," and it may be translated "people," corresponding to the Narragansett *-ninnuock*, *-ninnuog*, or *-aŭeuck*, which Roger

Williams gives as one of the "general names belonging to all nations," and signifying "men, folk, or people"; it was occasionally used by Eliot in the plural, and with an attributive prefix in the singular for "man"; but the Indians restricted its denotation to men like themselves, of the common or native type, of the speaker's kind, though not necessarily of his tribe or nation.*

When this is accepted fully, as it should be, the whole question becomes more satisfactory and more

* Trumbull, Algonkin Names for Man.

It is paralleled in other dialects, as Delaware *lennowak;* Quinnipiac *renewak;* Massachusetts *ininnuog;* Miami *ahlanuah;* Blackfoot *nenow*, "man."

interesting, not only on account of the present subject, but also as far as other Virginia names are concerned.* Its other constituents, as exhibited in *Sasquesah*, have been very puzzling and vexatious to the many scholars who have studied and essayed in vain to work out the problem presented. This is not strange, for its cognate has been difficult to discover in other kindred dialects. It was only the hidden allusion given by Smith, that these

* Such as *Mona-hassan-anoughs*, "people who dig in the rocks"; *Mona-sukapan-anoughs*, "people who dig ground nuts"; *Chick-aham-min-anoughs*, "coarse-pounded corn-people"; *Toppoh-anoughs*, "the encampment people."

Sasquesahanoughs were celebrated for having in their possession "booty or spoil obtained in war," that first gave the clew to our study; and this, again, only after repeated and careful reading of the passages. When discovered and search made, it was found that most of the Algonquian vocabularies and dictionaries did not give an equivalent for the English "booty or spoil"; and, where one is given, it is generally derived from elements having a primary signification of either "to catch," "to remove," or "to rob," none of which would apply in this case.* It was

*Trumbull, Best Method, etc., p. 9, says: "It is nearly impossible to find an Indian

discovered, however, in two of the most prominent dialects of the Algonquian family, and both are happily identical in their synthesis, and ample for analytical study. Besides, it is paralleled in one of the most northern dialects with the same primary meaning and grammatical construction—a circumstance of rather unusual occurrence in connection with Indian place-names.

This term for "booty or spoil," in the Massachusetts of Eliot is *Seque-*

name or verb which admits of exact translation by an English name or verb." We know the origin of the English "booty" and its meaning of to-day, which is entirely different from its primary meaning.

*taham ∞ongash.** The main stem *Sequ-*, and its particle *-etah*, are employed by Eliot (with varying inflections and grammatical terminations), such as *Sohquetah-* (Ez. xxxvi. 35), *Sequehtah-* (Is. x. 6), *Sequettah*, etc. (Num. xxxi. 9, 11, 12, 53), *Sequttah-* (2 Chron. xxviii. 15). Its correspondence in the Delaware is *Schiquitehasid*, "booty";† also *Schiquitehasik*, "chips," literally "that which ye have cut to pieces." Cree (Howse, p. 87) *Séekwa-tahúm*, "he beats it into smaller pieces, *e. g.*, loaf-sugar." Here occurs a very

* *Sequ-etah-am-∞-ongash*, "in small pieces-beats-he-his-things." (Num. 31, 32.)

† Modern Delaware, *Schiquinitehasik*, "spoil obtained in war."

strange concatenation of the human mind, occurring in one dialect as "booty"; in another both "booty" and "chips"; and in another, finally, as the acme of sweetness, "loaf-sugar"; but all three primarily denoting the same, viz., "to beat into small pieces," the term being used by metonymy in the Virginia, Delaware, and Massachusetts for "booty or spoil," from the fact that it was customary to break or destroy all articles left behind by a fleeing and vanquished foe. In all of these dialects *-etah* or *-tah* is a characteristic particle of very common use, inserted between the root and formative, in order to denote continuous

action, or the manner of acting or being, implying he beats or batters the object after the manner of the root,* while the root, or stem, *Sesqu-e*,

* Howse, Grammar of the Cree, p. 86; Trumbull, Best Method, etc. The particle is *-etah* or *-tah*, while *-am*, or *-um* is the inflection of the third person. The use of this particle with its prefixes and inflections are quite observable in the Delaware of Zeisberger and of frequent occurrence in the Massachusetts of Eliot, as the following few examples indicate:

Delaware:

Psacqu-iteh-undup, "they crucified him."

Gend-ateh-undup, "Nails drove in."

Pallh-iteh-emen, "to miss the stroke," *i.e.*, "to strike apart."

Cree:

Nuppucke-tahum, "he flattens it by striking."

Tusswéga-tahum, "he expands it by striking."

sohqu-i, sequ-i, Schiqu-i, Séek-wa, signifies "small pieces." From its persistence in Smith's works, the Virginia form *Sasquesah-* undoubtedly shows the sibilant sounds which are not always distinguished in some dialects —a sound which, as some linguists, like Dr. Hale, have observed, is intermediate between *s* and *th*. Eliot sometimes varies the Massachusetts

Péekoo-tahum, "he breaks through it by expanding."

Massachusetts:

Sohsohqu-etah-huk (intensive prefix), "breach on breach breaketh he."

Sasam-atah-whuttuonk, "a scourge."

Tumm-etah-whóog, "they are cut off."

From this last comes our adopted Tomahawk (= *Tumm-etah-whó-uk*, animate, "that (he) which cuts off."

forms with the same sound, viz., *Sukqueithausu* (Dan. ii. 44), "it shall break to pieces"; *Sukquhthamun* (Dan. ii. 35), "broken to pieces"; *Tumehtham* (Is. x. 33), "to lop, to cut." Thus we have every sound accounted for—hence *Sasquesahanough*, "a people of booty, or spoil obtained in war." *

* Dr. A. F. Chamberlain, a scholarly student of the language (Language of the Mississagees of Scugog, p. 12), makes this observation: "The exact reproduction of the actual pronunciation of many of the American Indians is a matter of considerable difficulty; even where the vowel and consonantal sounds are comparatively simple, a variation in the utterance of the same word by the same individual on different occasions has been frequently noted, and

In addition, the foregoing analysis proves that the language of the Virginia Indians, as noted also by the late Dr. J. H. Trumbull, was nearly identical with that of the tribes of southern New England, and that the Powhatan and Massachusetts did not differ more from each other than either differed from the Delaware.

Finally, it may be stated that the Indians did not generalize. Their names were invariably descriptive, and what was more natural than that a primitive people should apply this name to another that brought

certain letters fail to be clearly distinguished from certain others."

them articles obtained by plundering an enemy? Booty, such as they had never seen before, and that was far superior to anything they manufactured, fixed the fact in their minds to the exclusion of everything else. The name, years afterward, was applied to another people, and to a large extent of territory, so the *Susquehanna Country* became widely known, and the subject of disputes and treaties for many years. With that story we have nothing to do, as it has no bearing whatever on our subject. It must be remembered, at the time the name is first heard spoken, William Penn had not seen the

light of day, his parents had not even been born; Hudson had not seen the river that bears his name; the Dutch settlement on the Island of Manhattan did not begin until eight years later; the Plymouth Colony had not been dreamed of. Champlain, at the north, was exploring the country contemporaneously with Smith, and the two accounts of the northern tribes agree with each other wonderfully. Smith's Map of Virginia, wonderful in its topographical aspects, was the means of perpetuating the local names through the various cartographers who followed him. Hence, as the settlements of the

country began to spread, Smith's names, as he heard them uttered by the savage, more or less imperfectly, were retained for all future time.

This essay on the name Susquehanna was printed in the American Antiquarian for September, 1893, vol. xv. pp. 286–291. It has been revised and rewritten for the present publication. During the past seven years, as my studies have progressed and new evidence has come to light, I have become more and more impressed with the derivation herewith presented.

THE NAME CHESAPEAKE.

THIS name is famed in the annals of American history for more reasons than one, and being such there is a special reason why its true origin and meaning should be known and shown to the satisfaction of those interested in the subject as well as in the name. Until doubts had been expressed as to the etymologies heretofore given, I had not

looked into the origin of the name, and when search had been made I found there were some good reasons for that doubt as herein set forth.

Rev. John Heckewelder, the Moravian missionary, in his Names which the Lenni Lennape, or Delaware Indians, gave to Rivers, Streams, and Localities within the States of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and Virgina, with their Significations,* says: "Chesapeake corrupted from *Tschiswapeki*, or *K'tschischwapeeki*, compounded of *kitschi*, signifying highly salted,

*Trans. of the Moravian Hist. Society, 1872, p. 275.

and *peek*, a body of standing water, a pond, a bay."

The late J. Hammond Trumbull, the eminent Algonquian scholar, in an opinion expressed about thirty years ago, agreed with Heckewelder in the above interpretation and said he should have due credit for it, and further remarks:* "*Chesapeake*—written *Chesapeack*, *Chesupioca*, *Cheesapiacke*, etc.—is the equivalent of the Massachusetts *K'che-seippog*, Abnaki *K'tsi-sou-bekou*, a great salt water, a great sea or bay."†

* Hist. Mag., N. S., vol. vii., 1870, p. 48.

† Bozman, quoting Burk's Hist. of Virginia, vol. i. p. 61, who cites Stith,

In searching for memoranda relating to the first appearance of the name on the pages of history, and its early forms of spelling and bestowal, abundant historical data can be produced, which reveal the fact that the foregoing far-fetched process of derivation is an error, and that the name in its aboriginal sense and

says: "In the Indian language, the word *Chesapeake* is said to signify *Mother of Waters*. The obvious application of this name to the great bay so called, would seem to intimate, that the Indian nation must have taken their name from their situation near the Chesapeake Bay" (Hist. Maryland, vol. i. p. 61). This has been the trouble with all historians in interpreting Indian names; there has been always too much guesswork, like calling the Mississippi the "Father of Waters."

application, like the greater number of other Virginia names of Smith in their present applications, did not belong primarily to the great bay which now retains the name. There is probably no necessity to search for any earlier form of the name. (In fact it is doubted if any earlier can be found * than

* This is also the conclusion of Justin Winsor (Narr. and Crit. Hist. America, vol. iii. p. 167), who says: "There seem to have been visits of the Spaniards to the Chesapeake at an early day (1566–1573). And they may have made a temporary settlement (1570) on the Rappahannock (Robert Greenhow in C. Robinson's Discoveries in the West, p. 487, basing on Barcia's Ensayo Chronologico; Historical Magazine, iii. 268, 318; J. G. Shea, in Beach's Indian Miscellany). In the map

that on the map drawn by De Bry, accompanying Hariot's Narrative of the First Plantation in Virginia in 1585, where we find the name designating a palisadoed village of a tribe of Indians, and thereon misprinted *Ehesepiooc*, instead of *Chesepiooc*, the correct form applied also to the bay which bounds the

which De Bry gave with the several editions of Hariot in 1590, the bay appears as "Chesepiooc Sinus"; but in the more general maps, shortly after, the name Chesepiooc, or some form of it, is applied rather widely to some bay on the coast, as by Wytfliet's in 1597, or earlier still by Thomas Hood, 1592, where the "B. de S. Maria" of the Spaniards, if intended for the Chesapeake, is given an outline as vague as the rest of the neighboring coast, where it appears as shown in the sketch in

country on the north. Sir Ralph Lane, the Commander of Sir Walter Raleigh's Roanoke Colony, says: * "To the Northward: our farthest was to a Town of the *Chesapeacks* from Roanoack 130 myles." † Smith also says: "The

chapter vi. between the Figs. 1 and 2. It may be, as Stephens contends (Historical and Geographical Notes), that not before Smith were the entangling Asian coast-lines thoroughly eliminated from this region; but certainly there was no wholly recognizable delineation of the bay till Smith recorded the results of the explorations which he describes in his General Histories, Chs. v. and vi. Smith indicates by crosses on the affluents of the bay the limits of his own observations."

* Arber's Smith, p. 312.

† Bozman (Hist. Maryland, vol. i. p. 61.): "To the North they advanced one hundred

Chesapeacks are able to make 100, [men]. *Of this last place, the Bay beareth the name.*" * From these quotations, which can be further multiplied, it will be observed that the term designated the locality where a tribe of Indians lived and not the bay. Nothing can be stronger than Smith's remarks "Of this last place (*Che-sape-ack*) the Bay beareth the name." Again the name in its locative termination *-ooc*, or *-ack*, shows it to have been originally applied to "land, place,

and thirty miles to the Chesapeakes, a nation of Indians seated on a small river now called Elizabeth, which falls into the great bay of Chesapeake below Norfolk."

* *Ibid.*, pp. 51, 347.

or country" and not to a body of water.

The terminal generic *peek* of Heckewelder, or *pog* of Trumbull, which denotes "standing water, or water at rest, a pond," would never have been used by an Indian to describe the turbulent waters of Chesapeake Bay. Trumbull shows this in his Names in Connecticut, and I am surprised he should have used Eliot's *seippog* (St. James iii. 12) as an illustration or parallel, for this means simply "salt-water," or "brackish-water," without the extended meaning to which he assigns it, just the same as *nunnipog*, in same verse means "fresh-water." Eliot invari-

ably uses *salt kehtoh*, for the "salt sea." Neither does the term contain the radical for "sour" or "salt," as used dialectically by the Indians of that section. *Chesapeack*, according to Sir Ralph Lane, was evidently first heard spoken by him among the Indians of North Carolina, with whom the Roanoke colonists first came in contact. In my Discovery of *Chaunis Temoatan* (= the salt-making town) of 1586,* I show conclusively that in the dialect of this tribe *chaun* was the equivalent for "salt," paralleled by the Pamticough *chuwon;* Delaware

*American Antiquarian, vol. xvii. pp. 1–15.

schwon; Massachusetts *sean;* Otchipwe *siwan;* Cree *sḗwun;* Powhatan *sawwone*, "salt"—an exposition that entirely upsets the salt derivation of Chesapeake. Now the question arises, what are the phonetic elements embodied in its early notations? Hariot's map gives us *Chesepi-ooc;* Percy,* *Che-supi-oc;* Smith,† *Chis-siapi-acke.*‡ "Where landing at *Che-sipi-acke*, the people shot at us." § "The Brooke of *Chi-sapeack.*" ‖ "We sayld up a narrow river up the country of the *Chisape-ack*," etc. The prefix *che* is

* Arber's Smith, p. lx.

† *Ibid.*, p. 5.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 346.

‖ *Ibid.*, p. 430.

undoubtedly, as Dr. Trumbull suggests, the same as the Massachusetts *k'che* "great, principal, chief." The second component, *sepi*, *supi*, or *sipi*, however, is not "salt water," but the parallel of the Massachusetts and other Algonquian dialects, *sepu*, or *seip*, "a river," *i. e.*, "extended water," * which with its locative affix *-ack*, or *-ock*, "land or country,"

* "River, Mass. *sip-u*, *sīp*; Abn. *sipu*; Chip. *sibi*, etc. From the root *sīp*, 'stretching, extending,' hence to be long. In the Massachusetts dialect *sipi* (*Sepe*, Eliot) is used adverbially for 'long' or 'extended,' in time or place; *e. g.*, *sepe-pomantum*, 'he long lives,' is 'long lived, stricken in years,' Gen. xxiv. 1; *sepe-kodtantumup*, 'he had long desired,' etc., Luke xxiii. 8; *sepohtae*, 'long continuing,' Jer. xx. 23" (Trumbull, The Algonkin Verb).

gives us as synthesis of *K'che-sepi-ack*, "country on a great river"; while Newport's* *Ches-sipi-an* = "people of the great river." This term for river, *sepi*, appears in other composite Indian names, so that it is not a rarity to find it in that connection. For instance, we find recorded in the archives of the State of New York† as a former name of one of the streams in the town of Jamaica, L. I., "the great river *Massepi*," not only corresponding to, but antedating for some years the far better known "great river *Mississippi*," as it is often called. The Long Island

* Arber's Smith, p. lxiv.

† Col. Hist. N. Y., vol. xiv. p. 505.

Massepi, now known as Thurston's Creek, is the largest stream in that section, and the name was evidently a familiar one at the date of its record, July 1, 1657, as it is mentioned in connection with an order for mowing the meadows thereabouts. Again, as it antedates the greater river *Mississippi*, it cannot be claimed that it originated from the name of that stream, for the recorder never heard of it. Winsor says of the greater: * "We do not hear of the *Mississippi* by name until 1665, when it was in intercourse with various Algonquian tribes on Lake Superior, that the name of the 'great

* Cartier to Frontenac, p. 199.

water,' of which the Savages had so often spoken, took form in the phonetic rendering of Allouez as *Missipi*, in his enumeration of the tribes which were said to live along its banks. The priest was inclined from what he heard of that stream to suppose that it entered the Sea of Virginia, as the Chesapeake and its neighboring oceanic waters were sometimes called." Therefore, in considering this question, it must be remembered that to an Indian mind, his own country and possessions were always greater in his estimation than others of which he had no knowledge. The " brooke or creeke of *Chi-sape-ack*," or Elizabeth River,

as now designated, where Lane found their principal palisadoed town located, was the largest stream in their possession, hence the name. When Hariot, in making up his map, bestowed the name of the village on the river to the greater water beyond, as *Chesepiooc Sinus*, he did it without any consideration whatever for its primary signification or bestowal (Massachusetts Bay took its name afterward in precisely the same manner), and this designation being repeated by every map-maker—French, Spanish, Dutch, and English—who followed Hariot, as inspection of the early maps clearly indicates, it is no wonder that

the name became finally identified with the bay only. Tyndall's chart of Virginia * gives the name of the town *Chi-sapi-ack*, while the bay is not designated by name. The copy of the map discovered in the General Archives of Simancas, Spain,† designated the bay only *Che-sepi-ock*. Smith's Map of Virginia, however, on account of its wider distribution and completeness, probably has as great a share in this perpetuation as any, and so the name has been bequeathed to us as a memorial of an extinct tribe and a departed nation.

* See Brown's Genesis of the U. S., facing p. 184.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 456.

At the special request of Mr. Philip A. Bruce, Secretary of the Virginia Historical Society of Richmond, Va., who was not satisfied with the origin and meaning of the name heretofore proposed, I prepared this study of the name Chesapeake in 1895, and it was printed in The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, for the same year (vol. iii. pp. 86–88).