



# Land claim and Native American literature

Native American writings are swelling the shelves in bookstores and libraries. Here is a brief guide to tales of the life and culture of the native people, one of the fastest-growing subject areas in literature today.

## The land claims

*The Oneida Land Claims: A Legal History*, by George Shattuck (Syracuse University Press, 1971). The best account of the long struggle of the Oneida Indian Nation to use the American court system to reclaim its land. Shattuck, a Syracuse lawyer, represented the Oneida Nation from 1965-1977, and won a landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1974 that has had an impact on other land claim cases.

## Classics/Historical

*Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West*, by Dee Alexander Brown (Rinehart & Winston, 1971). A look at the white man's invasion of Indian land between 1860 and 1890, focusing on the Battle of Wounded Knee Creek of 1890.

*The Oneida Experience: Two Perspectives*, edited by Jack Campisi and Laurence M. Hauptman (Syracuse University Press, 1988). A look at the Oneidas of Wisconsin.

*The Iroquois in the American Revolution*, by Barbara Graymont (Chelsea House, 1989). Was cited as a source in the 1985 U.S. Supreme Court decision that upheld a land claim of the Oneida Indian Nation.

*Founding Fathers*, by Charles Meister. This book recounts the vital contributions of Native Americans to the founding of the United States.

*Wampum Belts & Peace Trees*, by Gregory Schaaf and George Morgan, describes Native American and Revolutionary diplomacy.

## Collections

*New Voices from the Longhouse, An Anthology of Contemporary Iroquois Writing*, edited by Joseph Bruchac (Greenfield Review Press, 1991). Essays, non-fiction, poetry, short stories, poems and more by 29 new and established writers, historians and storytellers.

*Growing Up Native American*, edited by Paul Riley (William Morris and Co., 1993). Fiction and essays by 22 writers from the 1800s to the 1990s.

## General

*Mankiller: A Chief and Her People*, written by Michael Wallis (St. Martin's Press, 1993). Autobiography of Wilma Mankiller, the first woman to lead a major tribe, the Cherokee Nation. An activist who grew up in Oklahoma, Mankiller was re-elected to a four-year term as principal chief in 1991.

*Indian Giver and Native Roots*, both by James Weatherford, recount the ways Indians have enriched America.

*Lakota Woman*, by Mary Crow Dog with Richard Erdoes (Grove Press, 1991). Mary's life as a Sioux, mother and feminist. Winner of the American Book Award.

## For young adults

*The Iroquois*, by Barbara Graymont (Chelsea House, 1988). A look at the significant places the Iroquois have held in our society, and historical and current issues and conflicts facing the tribe. Part of the *Indians of North America* series.

## For children

*The Oneida*, by Jill Duvall (Children's Press, Chicago, 1991). The story of the Oneida Indian Nation.





# Securing the Future

## Tomorrow...

...is an exciting word for the people of the Oneida Nation.

A word that carries with it a great deal of potential and a great deal of responsibility.



As we continue to grow and prosper, we look forward to the prospect of tomorrow.

It is a time that stretches ahead hundreds of years and millions of acres.

A time — we envision — when our land will be restored to the health, abundance and prosperity enjoyed in the days of our tribal ancestors.

A time when we will coexist peacefully with our Indian and non-Indian neighbors, secure in the possession of our ancient Homelands.

For the Oneida people, tomorrow is something that begins today.

As a people rich in tradition, we are that every decision we make must not take into account the next generation, the next seven generations, as well. As we are a seventh generation to our ancestors, someone tomorrow will be a seventh generation to those of us alive today.

A secure existence for each seventh generation is critically dependent upon every decision made by those who come before.

One of the most pressing questions for our Oneida people today is whether future generations will have enough land for survival.

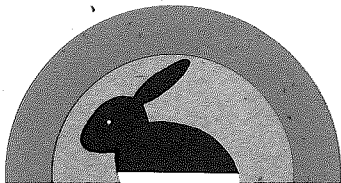
Because our population is growing, we continue to search for ways to live not only in the next seven generations without losing our cultural heritage and dignity.



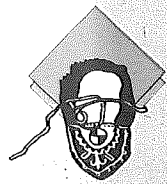
As the *Haudenosaunee*, the "people of the longhouse," we have existed on this land since the beginning of human memory. Our culture is among the most ancient and continually existing cultures in the world.

We still remember the earliest doings of human beings. Our roots go deep in the lands where we live. We have a great love for our country, our birthplace.

We walk about with a great respect, for this earth is sacred to us.







# Celebrating the present

## Today...

Most of the 16,000 members of our Oneida Nation live in one of three Oneida communities.

Having had much of our original 5 million acres taken from us before, during and after the American War for Independence, many of us were forced to flee from upstate New York for lack of land on which to survive.

As a result, roughly 11,000 Oneidas call Green Bay, Wis., home. Another 3,800 are based in Thames, in Ontario, Canada, and about 1,100 Oneidas live in upstate New York.



The Oneida Nation today is a testament to the strength and resilience of our people. Despite the hardships we have suffered, as a people we are strong and growing stronger.

We can be found in all walks of life and occupations. We are steelworkers and storekeepers, actors and artisans, physicians and schoolteachers, doctors and lawyers.

Many of us have served in the United States Armed Forces. In fact, Oneidas have served with honor and distinction in

every major conflict in which the U.S. has been involved.

Yet at the same time, as a people bound by our rich history, we struggle with the winds of change. While many Oneidas continue to preserve the traditional ways, others seek to move forward on the momentum of progress.

In 1988, the United States Congress passed the Federal Indian Gaming Act. This law allowed Nations like ours to develop gaming operations on federal Indian reserve land. While not everyone favors this form of enterprise, it has proven to be a way for our Oneida people to recoup some of what was lost.

Using gaming profits, we have sought to diversify and invest in our people. Gaming revenues have helped fund a number of economic development projects, from child care centers and senior housing to career and education programs.

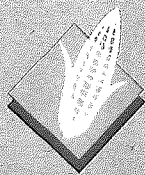
Some other diversification efforts include lean beef cattle farming, environmental laboratory testing, hotel and restaurant hospitality services, convenience stores, gas stations, shopping centers and traditional native food processing and distribution. In addition, we have initiated ambitious programs to develop the infrastructure, including water and sewer systems for both Oneida and non-Oneida people residing on our lands.



The benefits from successful gaming are not limited only to the Oneida people.







# Honoring the past

## Yesterday...

For the proud people of our Oneida Indian Nation, it's a time stretching back a thousand years and 5 million acres.

A time, some eight centuries before New York was a state, when a few thousand of our people farmed, nurtured and protected our vast Homelands across the territory now called upstate New York.

A time when we coexisted peacefully as one of the Five Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy.

We are the people of the Oneida Nation, *On^yote A:ka* in our native tongue. The word literally means "people of the standing stone." We draw our name from the legend that tells how a large stone would mysteriously appear each time we moved one of our villages, pointing us to a place where the land was good for farming.

Once, the Oneida Homelands spanned 5 million acres in upstate New York — from the St. Lawrence River in the north to the Pennsylvania border in the south, from the shores of Lake Ontario in the west to the foothills of the Adirondacks in the east.

Then, we survived by hunting, fishing and farming. The men ranged over the vast territory that was our tribal hunting grounds, taking only as many bear, deer, beaver and elk as we needed to survive. Women tended the fields, which were abundant with "the three sisters," corn, beans and squash planted together in one

were often 30- to 40-foot-long, and were shared by as many as five or six families. A single village contained many longhouses.

After 15 or 20 years, when the land grew tired of farming and the longhouses began to decay, we would move to a new place to give the earth a rest.

Living so close together created a strong sense of community. Elders were treated with great respect, passing along traditional ways to younger tribal members. Today's concepts of crime and punishment were virtually non-existent. When someone did something that hurt someone else, the community banded together to help the offender learn what was right.

This sense of community among our people extended to the other native people of the eastern woodlands. Around the 17th century, the five tribes inhabiting what is now upstate New York banded together to form the Five Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy. The Confederacy consisted of the Mohawks, the Oneidas, the Onondagas, the Cayugas and the Senecas. Later, the Tuscaroras joined the Confederacy, increasing the number to Six Nations.

Though many people are familiar with the term Six Nations, Iroquois people often use the Indian word *Haudenosaunee* instead. Literally meaning "people of the longhouse," *Haudenosaunee* represents both the shelters in which we lived and the location of the various tribes across

