

The ill-success of the expedition at once stimulated bodies of French soldiery and Canadian Indians to invade the frontier settlements and wreak revenges marked by horrifying massacres and savage ruthlessness. Daniel Ketelhuyt's return home had not yet had the measure of a fortnight, when he and his family and several of his kinsfolk experienced in a most deplorable way the fiendish cruelty and vindictive enmity of the stealthful foe.

His woodcraft and ability to converse in the language of the Indians eminently fitted him for the exigencies of frontier life. At Schaghticoke, he became familiar with the warriors of the small band of savages living and hunting along the banks of the Hoosick River and its tributaries; a remnant of the Pequod tribe, famous in the early history of New England. They had quitted their ancient hunting grounds about the year 1674, and had occupied that part of the province of New York, east of the Hudson, on which the corrupted name now written Schaghticoke was bestowed.

The Earl of Bellamont, adverting to the overtures he had made the Eastern Indians, while visiting Albany as lieutenant-governor of the province, in August, 1700, wrote in October, that year, to the British Board of Trade, saying:

"I am in hopes of bringing the Eastern Indians to come and settle at and about Schackhook with our River Indians; it is a project I have formerly acquainted your lordships with, which if I can accomplish will be of very great use to strengthen our five nations, and annoy the French whenever we have a war with France. Your lordships will find our River Indians [will] make me an overture to that purpose. * * * * Our Schackhook or River Indians were of those Eastern Indians, but were driven from that country by the people of New England twenty-six years ago in the war called King Philip's War. Those Eastern Indians and our River Indians still retain their friendship, and intermarry with each other."

The Schaghticoke Indians, in their conference with the lieutenant-governor, at that time, thus referred to their occupancy of land east of the Hudson:

"It is now six and twenty years since we were almost dead when we left New England, and were first received into this government. Then it was that a tree was planted at Schakkook whose branches are spread that there is a comfortable shade under the leaves of it. We are unanimously resolved to live and die under the shadow of that tree, and pray our father to nourish and have a favorable aspect towards that tree, for you need not apprehend that though our people go out a hunting they will look for another country, since we like that place called Schakkood so well."

The tree which they had planted is now one of wide-spreading branches and has a huge trunk measuring twenty and more feet in circumference. It