

Treaty Week Primer #1: Whose land are we on?

Here is a brief overview of the Nations whose territory Waterdown/Hamilton currently occupies:

- Waterdown is located within the Treaty Territory of the [Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation](#), an Ojibwe/Anishinaabe Nation. It was this Nation that the Crown concluded the highly problematic Treaty No.3 (1792) which Europeans saw as allowing for unrestricted settlement of the region. Currently the Mississaugas of the Credit Nation is based in a reserve outside of Hagersville and is governed by an elected Chief and Council.



- The Haudenosaunee Confederacy (a.k.a. The Six Nations or Iroquois Confederacy¹) also used this territory - there were Seneca (one of the nations within the Confederacy) communities in Flamborough. While their homeland is located along the southern shores of Lake Ontario, the Haudenosaunee exist in 17 reserve communities that stretch from Ontario along the St. Lawrence. The largest of these is the Six Nations of the Grand River, a large territory that encompasses 6-miles on either side of the Grand River from its source to Lake Erie. The occupation of this territory was recognized by Lieutenant Governor Haldimand following the American Revolution (The Haudenosaunee were allies of the Crown during this conflict).² Only 4.6% of the original territory remains intact - if you have heard about [1492 Land Back Lane](#) this is the history being referenced.

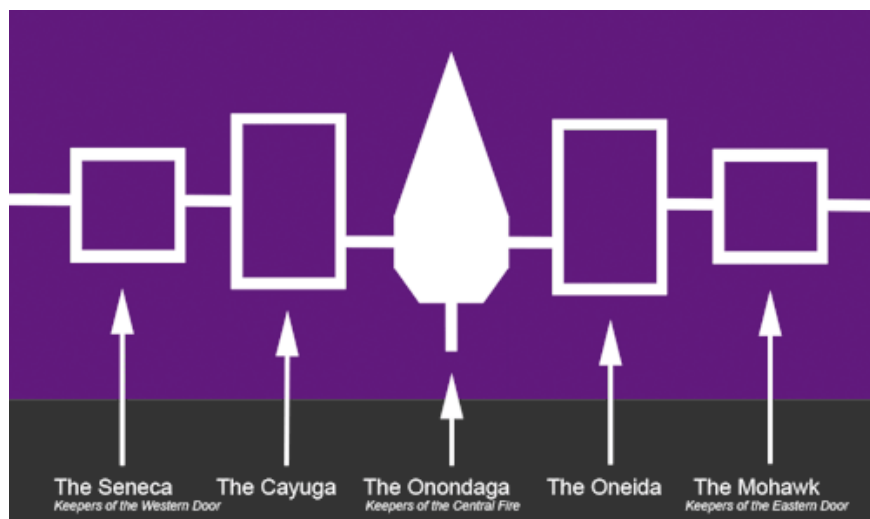
¹ This identifier is no longer used.

² This territory is sometime referred to as the *Haldimand Tract*. However, Lieutenant Governor Simcoe attested that the Six Nations were only allowed to use the *Haldimand Tract* rather than own or exercise sovereignty over it. His policies allowed blocks of the *Haldimand Tract* to be illegally tendered, seized, and/or sold without consent of the Haudenosaunee Council of Chiefs or proceeds of any leases to go back to the Six Nations' community.

This resource is based on my knowledge as of November 2022. It is continually being updated.

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- The Haudenosaunee Confederacy considers itself the world's oldest functioning democracy. In 1924 the Canadian Government tried to overthrow the Confederacy, installing the Elected System imposed by the Indian Act - this is why there are two recognized governments (Elected Council recognized by the Government of Canada, the Council of Chiefs by the community).
 - A great resource to learn more about the Haudenosaunee can be found here: <https://earthtotables.org/essays/haudeonsaunee-primer/>
 - The Haudenosaunee Confederacy is comprised of many nations, most notably the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk and Tuscarora Nations.



The Hiawatha Flag, based off of the ancient Hiawatha Wampum, is an important symbol of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

- Huron/Wendat - This Nation's territory was located to the north of Waterdown and they also made use of this territory. The 17th century Beaver Wars erupted in this region following the entry of European Nations into Indigenous political relationships. The Huron/Wendat had relationships with the French Crown while the Haudenosaunee were linked to the Dutch and British. The Huron/Wendat Nation was dispersed - largely fleeing to the outskirts of Quebec City (where they remain today).
- The Neutral Nation (sometimes called the Attiwonderonk - this was the name used by one of their enemies and translates to "those who speak funny") inhabited the land Waterdown/Flamborough is on now - there are neutral village sites dotted across Flamborough (big ones in Freelon, Westover, Carlisle, Troy & Waterdown). During the 17th century Beaver Wars the Neutral Nation did not take a side (hence the name) and was destroyed in the ensuing violence.

- It would be the Mississauga Nation that would come into the land following the destruction of the Neutral. Dr. Alan Corbiere provides a lesson about the Beaver Wars here: <https://youtu.be/iU42AAqpgzI>
- Metis - The [Métis](#) emerged from relationships between Europeans and Indigenous People as a distinct Indigenous people and nation in the historic Northwest during the late 18th century.