

70511 T
S. Occom's account

written by Sept. 17, 1776
Having seen and heard

Several Representations in

England and Scotland, by

~~some~~ gentlemen in America,

Concerning me, and finding many

infirm representations and

gross Mistakes in their Ac-

count, I thought it my

Duty to give a short Plain,

and honest Account of my

Self, that those who may be

deceived may know the

Truth concerning me.

That it is against my mind

to give a History of my ^{life} ~~life~~

which I am a Slave. Yet to do

Justice to myself and to those

who desire to know some

thing of me, and for the Honor

of Religion, I will venture to

give a short Narrative of

my life.

2
From my Birth till I received
the Christian Religion.

I was Born a Heathen and
Brought up in Heathenism,
till I was between 16 & 17 years
of age, at a Place call'd Mohegan
in New London, Connecticut
sett, in New England.
My Parents liv'd a wandering
life, & did all the Indians at
Mohegan, they chiefly depended
upon Hunting, Fishing, & Fowling
~~and~~ for their Living
and had no Connactions with
the English, excepting to
see with them, ~~with the~~ ^{with} me
Trigles, and they strictly
maintain'd and followed their
Heathenish ways, Customs &
Religion, & that there was
Preaching among ^{them} those Indi-
ans, Once a Fortnight in
Summer Season, a Minister

from New London ³ refused to come
up and the Indians, ^{to} attend;
not that they regard-
ed the Christian Religion,
But they had Blankets given
to them every Fall of the year
and for these things they would
attend. And there was ^{for} a
School kept, where I was
quite young, but I believe
there never was one that
ever learnt to read any
thing. - And when I was about
10 years of age there was ^{not}
~~a school again in our~~
~~place.~~ ^{who went} A man ^{refused} to go
about among the Indian
Wigwams, and where ever
he could find the Indian Child,
~~he~~ ^{refused} would make them read; +
but the Indian Child never
to take care to keep out off
his way; - and he used ^{to} take
me some times and make me
say over my Letters, and I be-

believe I Learnt Some of them.
~~Litters~~, But this has look over
too; and all this Time there was
^{not} one amongst us, that made a
~~Christian~~ Profission - ^{of Christianity} Neither
did we cultivate our Land, ^{nor}
keep ^{any} sort of Cattle, except
Dogs, which we used in Hunting,
and dwell in Wigwams, These
are sort of Tents, Covered with
Matts, ~~and these Matts are made~~
of Flax. ~~we~~ And to this Time
we were ~~unacquainted~~ ^{scarcely} acquainted with the
English ~~Tongue~~ ^{Language} in general, ^{though} there
^{were} a few, who understood a little
of ~~the English~~ ^{it} -

From the Time of our Re-
formation till I left Millhealock.

When I was 16 years of age,
we heard a strange Rumor among
the English, that there were ex-
traordinary Ministers Preaching
from Place to Place and that
there was a strange Concern a-
mong the white People. This
was in the Spring of the Year,

But we saw nothing of these⁵
things, till some time in the
Summer, when some Ministers
began to visit us and preach
~~to us~~ the Word of God; and the
Common People ^{also} came frequen-
tly to ~~us~~, and exhorted ^{to the things}
of God, which it pleased the Lord,
as I humbly hope, to bless and
accompany ~~their~~ ^{with} ~~Divine~~ Influences, to the
Conviction and Saving Conversi-
on of a Number of us; Amongst
whom, I was one, that was Impres-
sion'd with the things, ~~which we had heard~~
and these Preachers did not only
come to us, but we ^{frequently} went to their
meetings and Churches. ~~Constant~~
~~ly,~~ After ~~I found~~ ^{was convinced} ~~that~~ ^{of} ~~my~~ ^{sin},
I went to all the meetings I came
at; ~~and~~ continued under Trou-
ble of Mind about 6 Months;
~~and almost as long, I found~~
~~conviction in my mind, had~~
~~at which time~~ began to learn the English
Letters; got me a Primer;
and began to go to my English

Neighbours frequently for
Assistance in Reading, but went
to no School, and my Neighbours
were very ready to help me —

And when I hear of a Jews of
eyes, I hope I had ^{ad straight} a Discovery
of the way of Salvation through
Jesus ^{Christ}, and was enabled to put my
Trust in him alone for Life &
Salvation. From this Time
the Distress and Burden of my
mind was removed, and I found
Serenity and Pleasure of Soul,
in Loving God. By this time I
just began ~~to~~ to Read in
the New Testament without
Spelling, — and I had a stronger
Desire still to Learn to read
the Word of God, and at the
same Time had an uncommon
Pity and Compassion to my
Poor Brethren according to the
Apostles I used to wish, I was
Capable of Instructing my
poor Kinred. I used to think,
if I could once Learn to Read

I would Instruct ^{the} poor Children
in Reading, - and used frequent-
ly to talk with our Indians con-
cerning Religion. Thus I con-
tinued till I was in my 19 year.
By this Time I could Read a lit-
tle in the Bible. At this Time
my Poor Mother was going to
Lebanon, and having had
Some Knowledge of Mr. Wheelock
and hearing he had a Number
of English ^{scholars} under his Tuition,
I had a great Inclination to go
to him and to be with ^{him} a week
or a Fortnight, and Desired
my Mother to Ask Mr. Wheelock
whether he would take me a little
while to Instruct me in Reading.
Mother did so; and when she
came back, she said Mr.
Wheelock wanted to see me
as soon as possible. So I went
up, thinking I should be back
again in a few Days; when
I got up there, he received me
with kindness and Compassion
and in stead of staying a

Fortnight or 3 weeks, I
Spent 4 years with him.
After I had been with him
Some Time, he began to ac-
quaint his Friends of my
being with him, and his Inten-
tions of Educating me, and
my Circumstances. And the
good People began to give
Some Assistance to Mr. Wheelock,
and gave me some old and some
New Clothes. Then he presented
the Case to the Honorable Com-
missioners at Boston, who were
Commission'd by the Honorable Socie-
ty in London for Propagating
the Gospel among the Indians in
New England and parts adjacent,
and they allowed him 60 £. ~~per~~
~~Ann.~~ in old Tenor, which
was about 6 £. Sterling, and
they continued it 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 years.
I can't tell exactly. While I
was at Mr. Wheelock's, I was
very weakly and my Health
much Impair'd, and at the
End of 4 years, I over strain'd

my Eyes to Degree, I could
not pursue my Studies any
longer; and out of these
4 Years, I lost just about
one Year; - And was obliged
to quit my Studies. ~~at~~

From the Time I left Mr. Wheel-
er till I went ~~to~~ ^{to} Europe.

As soon as I left Mr. Wheel-
er, I endeavored to find some Em-
ployment among the Indians; went
to Nahantuck, thinking they
may want a School Master, but
they ^{had} one; then went to Narragan-
set, and they were indifferent
about a School, and went back
to Mohegan, and heard a Num-
ber of our Indians were going
to Montauk, on Long Island; -
and I went with them, and the
Indians there were very desirous
to have me keep a School among
them, and I consented, and
went back a while to Mohegan,
and some ^{time} in November I went
on the Island, I think it is 17

10
17 years ago last November.
I agreed to keep a school with
them half a year, and left it
with them to give ^{me} what they
pleas'd; and they took upon
to provide food for me, & I had
near 30 Scholars this winter;
I had an evening school too for those
that could not attend my school
— and began to carry ^{on} their meet-
ings; then they had a Minister, one Mr.
Horton, the Scotch Society's Mis-
sionary; but he spent, I think
two thirds of his time at Seene-
cock, 30 Miles from Montauk.
We met together 3 times for Li-
vine worship every Sabbath
and once on ^{every} Tuesday even-
ings. I read the Scriptures
to them and used to expound
upon some particular Pas-
sages in my own Tongue;
Visited the Sick and attended
their Burials. — When the half
year expired, they desired me
to continue with them, which
I complied with, for another

half year, when I had ^{supposed} ~~supposed~~
that, they were urgent to have
me, ~~stay longer~~ so I continued,
till I was ^{married} ~~married~~, ~~amongst them~~
which was about 2 years after
I went there.

And continued to instruct them
in the same manner, as I did before.
After I was married a while, I found
there was ^{need} of a support, more than
I needed, while I was single, - and
I made my case known to Mr.
Buell and to Mr. Wheelock, and
also the Needy Circumstances,
and the Desires of these Indians
of my Continuance amongst
them; and Mr. Wheelock and
other Gentlemen, represented
my Circumstances and the Cir-
cumstances, and the Desires of
these Indians of my Continuing
amongst them, and the Com-
missioners were so good as to
grant ^{me} ~~me~~ ^{a year} ~~a year~~ ^{of} ~~of Sterling -
And I kept on in ^{my} service as
usual, yea I had additional
Service; I kept School as I
did before and carried on the~~

Religious Meetings, as often as
I could, and attended the Sick
and their Funerals, and did
what writings they wanted,
and often sat as a Judge
to reconcile and settle their
Matters between them, and
had visitors of Indians, from
all quarters; and, as our
Custom is, we freely entertain
all visitors, ¹¹ And was fetched
often from my Tribe and
from others ^{to} see into
their Affairs both Religious
& Temporal, - Besides my
Domestick Concerns, ¹² And
it pleased the Lord to Increase
my Family fast, and soon
after I was married, Mr Horton
left these Indians, and the
Shenecoche Indians, ¹³ and then
I had the whole Care of these
Indians at Mombauke, and
often visited the Shenecoche

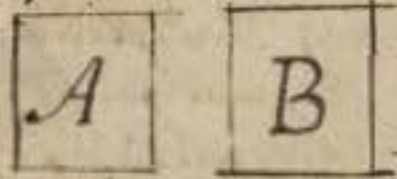
Indians often used to set
out Saturdays towards Night
and ^{come} back again on Mondays.
I have ^{been} obliged to set out from
Home after Sun set, and ride
30 Miles in the Night, to ^{go} see
to the Indians at ~~the beach~~ —

And some Indians at Shenock
sent their Children to my school
at Montauk, I kept one
of them some time, and had
a young Man half year from
Mokegan, a Lad from Na-
nantuck, who was with me
almost a year; ~~and I had~~
~~very little of either of them~~
and had little or nothing
for keeping them.

My Method in the School
was, as soon as the Children
got together, and ~~had~~ took
their proper Seats, I Prayed
with them, then began to
hear them. I generally began

14
(after some of them could spell
and read,) with those that
have got in their Alphabets,
to school, as they were pro-
perly sent, till I go through,
and I obliged them to study
their Books, and to help one
another, when they could not
make out a ^{word} ~~word~~, they
brought to me, and I usu-
ally heard them, in the Sum-
mer Season 8 Times a Day
4 in the morning, and in the
after Noon. - In the Winter
Season 6 Times a Day, As
soon as they could spell, they
were obliged to spell when ever
they wanted to go out, I concluded
did with Prayers, ^{generally} I heard my
Evening Scholars 3 ^{times} ~~times~~,
And as they ^{quit} the School,
every one, that can spell,
is obliged to spell a word,
and to go out ^{separately} one
after another, + I catechised

3 or 4 Times a week ¹⁵ according to the Assembly's School or Catechism, and many Times Proposed Questions of my own, and in my own Tongue. I found soon Difficulty with some Children, who were somewhat Dull, most of these can soon learn to say over their Letters, they distinguish the sounds by the Ear, but their Eyes can't distinguish the Letters, and the way I took to cure them, was by ~~making~~ making an Alphabet on small bits of paper, and glued them on small chips of Cedar after this manner. —



HC. I put these on Letters in order on a Bench, then point to one Letter and bid a Child to take notice

of it, ¹⁶ and then I order the Child
to fetch me the Letter from ^{up} Ben
if he brings the Letter, it is well,
if not he must go again and
again till he brings a right Letter.
When they can bring any
Letters, this way, then I must
jumble them together, and
bid them to set them in Al-
phabetical order, and it is
a Pleasure to them; and they soon
learn their Letters this way.
I frequently Discourse or Exhor-
ted my Scholars, in Religious
matters. — My Method in
our Religious Meetings was
this; Sabbath Morning we
Assemble together about 10 o'clock
and begin with Singing; we
generally sing Dr. Watts's
Psalms or Hymns. I distinguish
read the Psalm or Hymn first,
and then give the meaning of
it, to them, after that Sing, then
Pray, and Sing again after Pray.

17
Then proceed to Read some
selectable portion of Scripture,
and so just give the plain
sense of it, in familiar Discourse
and apply it to them. So ~~then~~
after with Prayers and Sing-
ing. In the after-noon and
Evening we Proceed in the
same Manner, and so in
Wednesday Evening. Some
Time after Mr. Horton left
these Indians, there was
a remarkable revival of
religion among these Indi-
ans, and many were hope-
fully converted to the saving
knowledge of God in Jesus
Christ to be observed, before Mr.
Horton left these Indians
they had some prejudices infused
in their minds, by some
Enthusiastical Exhorters from
New-England, against Mr.
Horton, and many of them

had left him; by this means
he was Discouraged, and had
a Dismission, and was dismiss^{ed}
from these Indians. And being
acquainted with the Custom
of the Indians in New England,
the Name and the Disposition
of the Indians, I took a
mild way to reclaim them,
I opposed them not openly
but let them go on in their
ways, and whenever I
had an opportunity, I
would read such passages
of the Scriptures, as I
thought, would Confound
their Notions. And I would
come to them with all Au-
thority, saying, "thus saith
the Lord"; and by this
means, the Lord was
pleas'd to Bless my work.

19

Endeavour, and they were
reclaimed, and brought to
hear ^{at} most any of the Minis-
ters. ~~—~~ I am now to
give an Account of my
Circumstances and manner
of Living; ~~—~~ I dwell in
a wigwag, a small Hut, ~~framed~~
with small Poles and covered
with Mats made of Flag,
and I was obliged to ~~go~~
twice a year, a boat ~~2~~ mile
Distance, by reason of the
Scarcity of Wood, for in one
Neck of Land they planted
their Corn, and ⁱⁿ another, they
had their wood; and I was
oblig'd to hire my Corn ~~cost~~
and my Hay ~~also~~, and
I got my Ground ~~plow'd~~ every
Year which cost me a boat
^{with} ~~12~~ ¹² an Ox; and I kept
a Cow and a Horse, for
which I paid 2 ^{1/2} ~~1/2~~ every year

1²⁰ work Cannony; And went 19
miles to Mill for every Sift
of meal we used in my family.
I lived or gained with my
Neighbours to go to Mill, with
a Horse or ox Cart, or on
Horse Back, and some time
~~of~~ ^{made} my self. My Family in-
creasing fast, and my visitors
also, I was obliged to contrive
every way to support my
Family; I took all oppor-
tunities, to get some thing,
to feed my Family Daily.
I Planted my own Corn, Po-
tatoes, and Beans; I used to
be out ~~plowing~~ my Corn
some times before Sun Rise
and after my School is
Dismiss, and by this means I
was able to raise my own
Pork, for I was allowed to keep
5 Swine. Some Mornings &
Evenings I would be out with
my Hook and Line to Catch

fish, and in the Fall of
year and in the Spring I
kept my Gun, for we lived
very handy for fowl, and I
was very expert with Gun,
and fed my Family with
Fowls, I could more than pay
for my Powder & Shot, with
Feathers; At other Times I
bound Boops for Eastham
People, Made wooden spoons
and Ladles, Staked Guns, &
worked on Cedar to make Pails,
Piggins, and Charret, &c. &
Beside all these Difficulties
I met with adverse Providence
I bought a Mare, had it but
a little while, and she fell into
the Quick Sands and Died, After
a while Bought another, I kept
her about half Year, and she was
gone, and I never ^{have} heard nor
seen her from that Day to
this; it was suppose some
Rogue stole her. I never got

another ²² and ^{skay} Died with a Big
Temper, and lost of all I bought
a young Mare, and kept
her till she had one Colt, and
she broke her Leg and Died,
and Profanly after the Colt
Died also. In the whole I
lost 5 Horse Kind; all these
Losses helped to pull me down;
and by this Time I got greatly
in Debt, and acquainted my
Circumstances to some of my
Friends, and they Represented
my Case to the Commissioners
of Boston, and Interceded with
them for me, and they ^{have} pleased
to Vote 15^s for my Help; and
soon after sent a Letter to my
good Friend at New London,
acquainting him, that they
had superseded their Vote; &
my Friends were so good as to
represent my Need of Circum^{stances}
still to them, and they were so
good at last, as to Vote 15^s
and sent it, for which I am

Very thankful; ²³ and ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{Mr.} Buell
was kind as to write in my
behalf to the gentlemen of Bos-
ton; and he told me, they
were much Displeas'd with
him; and heerd also once
and again, that they Blamed
me for being Extravagant; I
cant conceive how these gentle-
men ^{should} ~~would~~ have me live. I am rea-
dy to their Ignorance, and would
wish they had Changed Circumstances
with me but one Month, that
they may know, by experience
what my Case really was; but
I am now fully Convinced, that it
was not Ignorance, For I believ
it can be proved to the world, that
these same Gentlemen, gave a
young Missionary, a single
man, one Hundred Pounds, for
one year, and fifty Pounds for
an Interpreter, and thirty Pounds
for an Introducer, so it cost them
over a Hundred & Eighty Pounds,
in one single year, and they
sent too where there was no
Need of a Missionary.]

Now ²⁴ you see what difference
they made between ^{me} and other
Missionaries; they gave me
180 Pounds for 12 years Service,
which they gave for one years
Service in another Mission.
In my Service (I speak like a
fool, but I am constrained)
I was my own Interpreter
I was both a School master,
and Minister to the Indians,
yea I was their Ear, Eye &
Hand, as well as Mouth; I
leave it with ^{you} world, as wish
ed as it is, to Judge, whether
I ought not to have had half
as much, they gave a young
man just mentioned, which
would have been but 50 years;
and if they ought to have
given me that, I am not under
any obligations to them, I owe
them nothing at all; How could
can be the Reason, that they

used me after ^{this} manner; I ²⁵
Can't think of any thing, but
this as a poor Indian Boy
said, who was Bound out to
an English Family, and
he used to Drive Plow for a
young man, and he whipt
and Beat him almost every
Day, and the young man
found fault with him, and
Complained of him to his master
and the poor Boy was Called to
answer for him ^{self} before his
master, and he was asked
what it was he did, that he
was so Complained of and beat
almost every Day; He said,
he did not know, but he supposed
it was, because he could not ^{do any}
better; but says he, I Drive as
well as I know ^{how} and at other
times he Beats me, because he
wants ^{to} beat me; but says
he ^{believes} he Beats ^{me} for the most of the
time, because I am an In-
dian. ✕

So I am ²⁶ ready to say, ¹⁹⁸ they have
taken ^{me} this, because I can't instruct
the Indians so well as other
missionaries; but I can assure
them I have endeavored to teach
them as well as I ^{know} how; but I
must say, "I believe, it is,
because I am a poor Indian."
I can't help that God has
made me so; I did not make
myself so.

(123 to 148)