

# A Repatriation Story:



## The Return of the Miami National Council Journals

19<sup>th</sup> National Tribal Preservation Conference

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Diane Hunter, THPO

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma



Myaamionki: The lands in which the Miami have and continue to live. These areas include our heritage landscape in the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan, as well as our lands in present day Kansas and Oklahoma.

# 1860 National Council Journal

- ◆ 1860-1862
- ◆ 18 councils
- ◆ Also includes texts of letters sent to Agents, a transcript of a presentation of Agent Colton and following verbatim discussion with Naapihšinka, 1860 allotment list
- ◆ Primarily in the hand of AG McKensie, clerk of the Miami Nation



# “1870-1895” National Council Journal



- ◆ Latest date is actually 1910
- ◆ Similar in content to first book, with an added emphasis on land use and management
- ◆ Primarily in the hand of Thomas Richardville, but also includes minutes and notes from Hannah R. McManaman and Harley Palmer

# taaniši aapwe piitookiki?

*How did they bring the books back?*



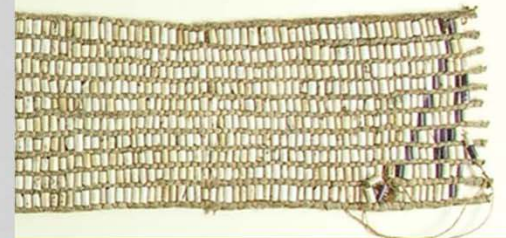
- ◆ Chiefs Olds and Leonard had copies of 1 of the 2 journals
- ◆ Secured digital copies of both journals in 2008
- ◆ Through analysis tribal leaders, researchers, and lawyers recognized that these were governmental documents
- ◆ Petition to National NAGPRA
  - ◆ Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990)

# NAGPRA and Records



- ◆ Cultural Patrimony: “An object having ongoing **historical**, traditional, **or cultural importance** central to the Native American group or culture itself, rather than property owned by an individual Native American, and which, therefore, **cannot be alienated, appropriated, or conveyed by any individual** regardless of whether or not the individual is a member...and such object **shall have been considered inalienable** by such Native American group at the time the object was separated from such group.”

# kiilahkwaakani Recordkeeping Before Books





# The Impact of the Loss of Records




“They possessed formerly a large number of belts and pipes illustrative of different events in their history. Two boxes containing these were burnt accidentally at the time of Harmar’s defeat, and with them went their early history and traditions... and to the loss of the chests alluded to they attribute their ignorance of their early history.”

C.C. Trowbridge, 1825



# kiilahkwaakana-> wiintaakana

## *From Belts to Books*



What do these books tell us about ourselves?

- ◆ Important Record of Allotment

- ◆ For research into Kansas Allotment

- ◆ record of political and social chaos post-1846

- ◆ For research into Oklahoma Allotment

- ◆ record of political and social coherency in Indian Territory

- ◆ Important Record of Continuance of Governance

- ◆ & of our government-to-government relationship with the United States

- ◆ & of our transition to mixed gender councils

- ◆ A prominent place secured by women in governance



Photo by Karen L. Baldwin

# For More Info Visit



- ◆ MHMA on Facebook

- ◆ <https://www.facebook.com/myaamiaarchive/>

- ◆ Myaamia Lands Website

- ◆ [myaamionki.org](http://myaamionki.org)

- ◆ Myaamia Community Blog

- ◆ [myaamiahistory.wordpress.com](http://myaamiahistory.wordpress.com)

**neewe!**