

MACONAQUA—FRANCES SLOCUM PART ONE

CHILD OF TWO WORLDS

WHEN?
1773-1847



EVENT
The kidnapping of five-year-old Frances

WHERE? Began in
Wilkes-Barre, Pa

VOCABULARY
Haudenasaunee

Looking for a new place to live, Jonathan Slocum brought his wife, Ruth, and their children, Giles, William, Isaac, Mary, Ebenezer, Frances, Joseph, and baby Jonathan from Rhode Island to live in the Wyoming Valley (Kashatus). The Quaker family committed to peaceful relations with their neighbors found frontier life challenging especially in an area that was in dispute between the colonies of Pennsylvania and Connecticut plus the claims of the Haudenosaunee on the same land. When the American Revolution broke out in 1775, it wasn't long before tensions boiled over into armed conflict that engulfed the Slocums.



Five-year-old Frances Slocum is kidnapped by a Delaware Indian at right as her mother pleads for her life.

Since the Slocums were determined to live in peace, and believing they had little to fear, they were among the first to return to the valley after the Wyoming Massacre had occurred in early July 1778. Returning to their farm near the corner of what is now East North Street and Pennsylvania Avenue in August, they continued taking care of their crops (Lottick). Around noon on November 2 the unexpected attack came. Three Delaware Indians had been watching

the family from the forest. Jonathan, Giles, and William had left the house to work in nearby fields when they heard a shot. That shot took the life of Nathan Kingsley who, along with his brother Wareham, had taken refuge with the Slocums after their father was killed during the Wyoming Massacre. Wareham was grabbed by one of the Natives who took him into the woods. Mrs. Slocum quickly scooped up infant Jonathan and told Ebenezer and five-year-old Frances to remain hidden in the house while she ran to the edge of the swamp with ten-year-old Mary who had her little brother Joseph with her (Lottick).

The two children in the house were found by the Natives. When Mrs. Slocum saw the children being taken, she came out from her hiding place to plead with the Delaware to let them go. "Please, the boy is lame and will be of no use to thee," she reasoned. They took Frances, her little red-haired five-year-old daughter, instead. With Wareham over the shoulder of one warrior, and Frances over the shoulder of another, they disappeared into the forest. The men came running from the fields when the shot rang out and began to search frantically for the abducted children. Soldiers from nearby Fort Wilkes-Barre also joined in but no one was able to find the Natives.

Frances had been abducted and eventually given to an elderly Delaware couple to raise as a replacement child for their daughter who had died. In part two, you will read about how Frances eventually became known as Little Bear or Maconaquah. (Note: some spelling is as Maconaquah.)

ONLINE RESOURCES

[Frances Slocum](#)

PRINT RESOURCES

Lottick, Sally Teller. *Bridging Change A Wyoming Valley Sketchbook*. Wilkes-Barre, PA: Wyoming Historical and Geological Society. 1992.

Kashatus, William. *Valley With A Heart*. Luzerne County, PA: Luzerne County Historical Society and Luzerne County Community College. 2012.