Native American Land Deed (1680)

This handwritten manuscript is property deed between the Delaware Indian Sachem Meghaeksitt and a colonist, Ephraim Herman. The document reveals the nature of the goods acceptable to Native Americans in exchange for land and also the way in which they became entwined in the highly developed English legal system for securing personal ownership of lands "for Ever."

Know all men by these presents and I Meghaeksitt Cheef Sachem of Cohansy and Naturall owner of all ye Land Laying between Ducke Creeke by ye Indians called Quinquingo Cipus and Appoqueneme Creeke in ye Delowar River, haue for and in Consideracn of too halfe Anchers of drinkck, one blankt one matsocte, twoo Acxxes, twoo knyves, twoo double handfulls of powder, two barrs of Lead and one kittle, before ye Ensigning and Delivery hereof to my full Sattisfaction and Content to mee in hand paid & delivered by Ephraim herman of New Castle in Delowar, Bargained Sould Assigned Transported and made ouer & doe by these presents fully clearly and absolutely for my Selfe and my heirs & assignes Bagaine Sell assigne Transports & make ouer unto the sd: Ephraim herman his heirs and Assignes all that tract or parcell of Land wth: the marrishes thereunto adjoyning Scituate Lying and being on ye West syde of Delloware River, att the mouth thereof, beginning att a Creeke, neare ye Land of Morris Liston by ye Indians called winsacco and Soe up along ye sd: Creek Trought ye Cedar Swamp to ye head thereof and from ye sd: head of ye Cedar Swamp upon a Lyne downe threav ye woods to ducke Creek as far as the Land formerly taken up by William Sharpe and now possessed by Christopher Ellitt, and from thence downe the sd: Ducke Creeke to a Creeke in ye marsh wch: Strycckes toward ye Land of fabian Orme, and from ye head of ye sd: Creek Cros the Marsh Easterly by ye End of ye sd: fabians Island to ye River Syde wch: place ye Indians caall Appoqueneme where ye sd: Indians doe use to hall ouer their Canoos into sd: ducke Creek, and from thence up ye River to the first mentioned Creeke called Winsacco, To haue and to hold the sd: Land and Marrishes etc: bounded as aforesd: wth: all and Singular ye appurtenances, as also all ye Right and Tytle of him ye sd: Mechaecksitt & his heirs and all other Indians Rights therein, unto the sd Ephraim Herman his heirs and Assigns for Ever. In Wittnesse and Confirmacon whereof hee ye sd: Machaecksitt hat hereunto Sett his hand and Seale in ye prescence of Justice Pieter Alrichs Justice Johanne De Haes, Captn: Edmund Cantwell and Caspares herman whoe all of them understand ye Indian Speech att New Castle in Delowar this first day of November in ye 32th Yeare of his Maytis: Raigne Annoq Dom 1680

was Subcrybed:
Witneses & Interpreters
The marke of
Present
Pieter Alrichs- Mechaeksit X the Indian
J: D'haes-Sachem (Seale)
Edm: Cantwell Caspr: herman-