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Posting:	What does "Willimantic" mean?	Posting 1
Poster:	Swamp Yankee	
Date:	30 March 2006 3:34 PM	

I had always heard that Willimantic was the Native American word for "swiftly flowing river" but Epodunk.com says it derives from Algonquian for "good cedar swamp".

Anybody know anything about this?

Posting:	Re: What does "Willimantic" mean?	Posting 2
Poster:	Ada	
Date:	10 April 2006 10:29 AM	

By a serendipidous coincidence, about three weeks ago I went to a talk here at Cornell in the Kroch Library's Rare and Manuscript Division by Stephanie Fielding, a member of the Mohawk tribe who has an advanced degree in linguistics from MIT and has been working on reviving the Mohawk language. I have e-mailed her with this question. Willimantic is not a Mohawl word, but here is her reply:

" It looks as though Willimantic can mean a couple of things, but who knows for sure. "A good cedar swamp" is one possibility.

This is what J. Hammond Trumbull says: "The first two syllables may stand for winni (varying, in local dialects to wirri, waure, willi, we) "good, fine, pleasant" -- or woweau (wewe, waenu, etc.) "round about," "winding"; and the last two syllables may represent manatuck "a look-out, or a place of observation" (usually a hilltop) -- or, mahantick, manatik, "a cedar swamp"; and consequently, the name, as it comes to us, may be interpreted "a good look out" (designating some bold hill near the river) "good cedar-swamp" -- or "where it winds about a bold hill," or "cedar-swamp."

This was found on page 87-88 of "Indian Names of Places etc., in and on the Borders of Connecticut: With Interpretations of Some of Them."