

This document is not mysterious. I've seen it quoted before.

Dan Griffith was kind enough to get me a copy of the enrolled bill, which I want to share (Thanks, Dan.). There are several interesting historical issues evident here.

Whereas the 1881 school incorporation law referred specifically to people living in one hundred of Sussex County, and did not identify them as Indians, the 1903 law provided for identification of individuals as Nanticoke Indians statewide. There is no reference to tribal organization or corporate identity of any sort, only certification of individuals by a Justice or Notary. It should be noted that notaries were not as numerous as they are today. Has anyone seen a certificate issued pursuant to this law?

Another interesting feature is the reference to migration; apparently this was meant to provide documents that would protect against the operation of Jim Crow laws in other states where these people might not have been identified as Indians.

As usual, webmasters are invited to post this text for public use.

Senate Bill 110

An Act to better establish the identity of a race of people known as the offspring of the Nanticoke Indians

Passed at Dover March 18, 1903

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Delaware in General Assembly met:

Section 1. That the class of people, known as the descendants of the Nanticoke Indians, formerly of Sussex County but at present located in the several counties of the state, desiring to migrate may appear before any Justice of the Peace or Notary Public, of this State, and on the evidence and proof that he or she belongs to, or is a descendant of the Nanticoke Indians, may procure from such Justice of the Peace or Notary Public a certificate reciting such facts.

Section 2. That after the approval of this Act the descendants of the Nanticoke Indians named in Section 1 of this Act shall hereafter be recognized as such within the State of Delaware.

Section 3. This Act shall be deemed a public Act.

Approved this the 23rd day of March AD 1903 John Hunn
Governor

Philip L. Cannon
President of the Senate

Henry L. Anthony
Speaker of the House