



Lushootseed Name(s): Ge-Gah-Ha, Mary Whea-Kadim

English Name(s): Mary, Mary Shelton, Mary Brown

Birth/Death: abt. 1852 – 1928

- Ge-Gah-Ha (Mary) was a member of the “high born” Whea-Kadim family who lived at the permanent village of TSEHT-skluhks, east of the present town of Langley at Sandy Point. The leader of this village did not sign the 1855 Treaty of Point Elliot, nor did he relocate his family to the reservation. Though raised at TSEHT-skluhks, Mary was born at a seasonal camp at Dines Point on Holmes Harbor, where the family would catch and prepare fish for use during the winter months.

- Mary was wed to a colonial settler named Joseph Brown, a wayward Portuguese Whaler, when she was 13 years old. Residents of Sandy Point were told was that the village leader, Whea-Kadim, would accept Brown as a son-in-law but set a condition. Mary, given a head start, would paddle a canoe southward along the shore as fast as she could, pursued by Brown. The spot of land where Brown overtook Mary would become her dowry - he overtook her at Sandy Point.
- As with other bi-racial families, Mary and Joseph's children were raised in a multi-lingual, multi-cultural environment. Together with an Asian, European, and Snohomish workforce, Mary and Joseph built the first major maritime center on South Whidbey. Complete with their four-story home which also served as a hotel, the center was known as Brown's Point. They owned over 160

acres on the upper bluffs, establishing sizeable agricultural, logging, and brush camp operations.

- Mary's many roles included: food cultivator/gatherer, livestock tender, milk processor, hostess, cook, launderer, mother, grandmother, and lighthouse attendant. Mary was respected by her colonial settler neighbors for her work ethic and knowledge of the local environment. Seasonal travelers who came by passenger ferry from Everett and Seattle to camp and recreate at Brown's Point and Maple Cove would purchase her milk and fresh produce.
- Several of Mary's sons worked with the Bureau of Indian Affairs as undercover agents to thwart the illegal sale of liquor and opium on tribal reservations throughout the Pacific Northwest in the early 1900's.

- In her obituary it was noted that Mary was known for caring for members of her tribe in the Holmes Harbor area.