1986

Trouble to the eastward: the failure of Anglo-Indian relations in early Maine

Emerson W. Baker

College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences

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TROUBLE TO THE EASTWARD: THE FAILURE OF ANGLO-INDIAN RELATIONS IN EARLY MAINE

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TROUBLE TO THE EASTWARD:
THE FAILURE OF ANGLO-INIAN RELATIONS IN EARLY MAINE

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of History
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Emerson Woods Baker II
1986
APPROVAL SHEET

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Emerson W. Baker

Approved, December 1986

James Axtell
James Whittenburg
Michael McGiffert
John Selby
Alan Taylor
Robert Bradley
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
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In colonial times, residents of southern New England generally referred to the area east of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, as "the Eastward." The southern New Englanders referred to the English residents of Maine as the "Eastern Inhabitants," and called the native population the "Eastern Indians." These vague labels indicate two important facts. First, "eastward" represents a direction that Maine lay from Massachusetts, and suggests the subservient status of Maine to Massachusetts. While the Province of Maine began as an independent colony, in the 1650s Massachusetts annexed the region. The concurrent influx of Massachusetts merchants into Maine insured that the Bay Colony maintained a firm economic grip on Maine as well. The terms "Eastward," "Eastern inhabitants," and "Eastern Indians" are generalized terms, used by southerners to describe a region they knew little about. So, while Massachusetts ruled Maine, many Bay State residents had little knowledge of this northern district.

Massachusetts' firm but uninformed grip on Maine is the crux of the troubles to the eastward. During the last quarter of the seventeenth-century, Massachusetts witnessed numerous eastern troubles, as relations between the English and Indian residents of Maine collapsed. To a large extent, the residents of Maine were responsible for their troubles. However, many of the factors which contributed to deteriorating relations were outside the control of the inhabitants of Maine. The most serious of these problems was that many of the important policy decisions for early Maine were made in Massachusetts, often by people who knew little of the realities of the eastern frontier. In a very real sense, however, the Anglo-Indian disagreements, so prevalent in the seventeenth-century, are still concerns...
today. Maine has only recently settled its hotly disputed Indian land claims case with the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy tribes. And now, just when the wounds of this case are beginning to heal, Federal officials have selected Penobscot tribal lands as a finalist for a nuclear waste dump site. Once again, distant officials have reopened old wounds and threatened an uneasy peace.

The ignorance of early Maine also remains alive today amid the historical community. Despite a rich historical legacy, Maine has been a much neglected area of colonial studies. For example, while the nation celebrates the 400th anniversary of the Roanoake Colony, and even begins preparations for the 400th anniversary of Jamestown, two very early colonies in Maine have rarely received attention outside of the state. The 1604 French settlement on Ste. Croix Island was shortlived but it was the precursor for the settlement of Acadia and the St. Lawrence. Meanwhile, several months after the English arrived in Jamestown in 1607, a colony of Englishmen established themselves at the mouth of the Kennebec River. While the Popham Colony lasted less than a year, it was an important and overlooked step to the settlement of New England.

While this dissertation is meant to increase knowledge of early Maine, it cannot be a cure-all. Maine was a complex region in the seventeenth century, where Indians, English, and French met and interacted. A detailed study of these peoples and their relations would fill several volumes. To simplify matters, this dissertation will largely ignore the French role in Maine, a role which has already been the focus of studies by Kenneth Morrison, Alaric and Gretchen Faulkner, John Reid, and others. Scholars have recently challenged many traditional assumptions about both the native and English populations of early Maine. Today, major reassessments of such topics as trade relations, settlement patterns, and Indian tribal identity continue to evolve as documents are reassessed and added to a growing body of archaeological data. It is impossible to detail all the unpublished scholarship on the leading edge of this story, but the unpublished information available

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suggests that many significant changes in scholarly perceptions of early Maine and its various populations will occur in the near future.

This work would have been impossible without the help of many people. First I would like to thank my committee, James Axtell, James Whittenburg, Michael McGiffert, John Selby, Alan Taylor, and Robert Bradley, for their thoughtful comments and advice. In particular, my dissertation director, James Axtell, has labored to help me become a better historian and a better writer. Arthur Spiess, of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, and Bruce Bourque, of the Maine State Museum, have given many insights into Maine prehistory and shared their unpublished data with me. Any shortcomings in my interpretation of the Maine Indians is in spite of their efforts to inform me. Mark Mastromarino made many helpful editorial comments.

Finally, this dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Peggy. She has spent many hours listening to my hypotheses and proofreading the manuscript. More important, she has put up with the huge time demands the dissertation has made on me, and never complained that her husband spends more time living in the seventeenth-century Kennebec than in twentieth-century Maine.
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines Anglo-Indian relations in seventeenth-century Maine. Previous studies have stressed the failure of the English to understand or get along with the Indians of Maine, without fully examining the background of both sides. This dissertation aims to correct misperceptions of and generalizations about the nature of both native and English societies in early Maine. By using the ethnohistorical perspective, it explores the nature of Anglo-Abenaki interactions and why this relationship broke down.

The focus of Anglo-Indian interaction in early Maine was the fur trade and the land trade. During the seventeenth century, both sides became increasingly dependent upon trade, despite occasional outbreaks of violence. In the 1660s and 1670s, an influx of English settlers and traders increased competition for furs and land, and heightened tensions between cultures. The English growth was particularly rapid in the Sagadahoc region (the area from the Kennebec River to Pemaquid), the center of the fur trade and land trade.

The heightened tensions between the English and the Indians was one of several factors which led to the outbreak of King Philip's War in Maine. While past scholars have correctly identified the bias of English law against the Indians as a cause of war, this prejudice was only one of many factors which led to fighting. While the residents of Maine contributed to the failure of inter-cultural relations, many outside influences contributed to the outbreak of war in 1675. In particular, events and decisions made in Massachusetts greatly influenced affairs in Maine.

King Philip's War marks a crucial turning point in Maine history. The fierce war dragged on from 1675 to 1678, killing and displacing a large percentage of the English and native population of the region. Efforts to rebuild the extensive war damages proved short-lived for the suspicions and hatreds created by King Philip's War led to the outbreak of King William's War in 1688. With the outbreak of King William's War, alliance lines are set and the input of local residents loses importance as for the next sixty years Maine would serve as a theater where English, French, and American players acted out their imperial designs.
TROUBLE TO THE EASTWARD:

THE FAILURE OF ANGLO-INDIAN RELATIONS IN EARLY MAINE
INTRODUCTION

Colonial historians have frequently neglected Maine, despite its significance both as a source of fur, fish, and timber exports and as a center of French, English, and Indian interaction. Nowhere is this neglect more apparent than in ethnohistorical research. In the last thirty years, such scholars as Leach (1958), Vaughan (1965), Jennings (1975), Axtell (1981), and Salisbury (1982) have extensively researched acculturation, Anglo-Indian relations, and King Philip's War in southern New England. The study of the cultural frontier in Maine and New Hampshire, however, has not kept pace. In particular, little has been written on the conflict known as King Philip's War in Maine. While the war in Maine was a separate conflict, it had common roots with Philip's uprising in southern New England. Many Englishmen and Indians participated in both conflicts and the outbreak of war in Massachusetts fueled hostilities in Maine.

King Philip's War marks a crucial turning point in the history of both Indians and English settlers in Maine, for the war devastated the colony. Numerous English towns and Indian villages were destroyed, and many residents were killed or forced to flee the region. English settlers took refuge in Massachusetts while Indians retreated to the French Canadian Indian missions. After King Philip's War, distrust and misunderstanding...
increased between the Indians and the English, and until 1760 Maine served as a bloody battlefield in the four intercolonial conflicts known mistakenly as the "French and Indian Wars." In 1675 Maine was a prospering colony, an active participant in the North Atlantic economy. King Philip's War ended Maine's prosperity and promise and relegated it to the periphery of colonial development. Thus, it is crucial to study Anglo-Indian relations before King Philip's War in Maine, if we wish to understand exactly why this conflagration broke out.

Ethnohistorical research on seventeenth-century Maine has been limited to John Noble's 1970 Master's thesis on King Philip's War, and Kenneth Morrison's 1975 dissertation and other of his works based on the dissertation, including a New England Quarterly article and a recent monograph, The Embattled Northeast: The Elusive Ideal of Alliance in Abenaki-First Nation Relations. Although Morrison's work is a much needed step in the right direction, it suffers from several defects. Morrison provides an important overview of the spirit-world of the Maine Indians. Still, he only vaguely delineates other aspects of Indian life. More information is needed on Indian settlement patterns and tribal structures to understand who they were and why they interacted with the French and the English as they did. Morrison and other scholars have traditionally assumed that the Indians of Maine were all members of the Abenaki tribe, northeastern Algonkian-speakers who inhabited the region between New Hampshire and the Maritime Provinces. Recently, however, several scholars have challenged this assumption. At least four different groups of Indians inhabited Maine in the seventeenth century: Micmac, Etchemin, Almouchiquois,
and Abenaki. While these groups had much in common, each tribe had distinguishing features which influenced how it interacted with the French and English.  

Regardless of which tribe they were studying, historians of the Maine frontier have always had difficulty dealing objectively with the native inhabitants of the region. Many writers have demonstrated a dislike for the Indians, but Kenneth Morrison is a powerful corrective to these historians. Indeed, at times he leans too far in the opposite direction and is biased toward the Indians in his emphasis and interpretation. Ethnohistory is the study of cultural frontiers and of interaction between two peoples. As such, good ethnohistory needs to eliminate bias in order to understand both sides of the frontier. Morrison's failure to closely study the English of Maine unwittingly biased him against them.

A prime example of this partiality is Morrison's portrayal of Maine in the 1670s as a lawless environment. Recent research by Edwin Churchill has indicated that by this time the unstable elements of society were virtually gone, except for sailors and fishermen living on the off-shore islands. Morrison's clear favoritism toward the Indians superficially clarifies extremely complicated issues. He bends over backwards to paint the English as villains of the cultural exchange. However, in reality both sides committed violent acts and both sides suffered extensively as a result of the colonial wars. When Morrison describes the English seizure of Indians just before the outbreak of King William's War, he takes pains to point out that the English seized twenty Indian men, women, and children including some "so old and feeble that they were forced to be carried when ashore on others backs."

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He then noted that the Androscoggin Indians "retaliated in kind, seizing several English." 3 By implying that the English seized twenty infirm Indians and the Androscoggins took only several presumably able-bodied Englishmen in return, Morrison draws sympathy for the natives. As Bruce Trigger has pointed out, however, sympathy is a facile and unworthy goal, for sympathy does not improve understanding of a culture. Also, when all the documents on this incident are examined, the Indians' violent actions equaled those of the English. The Indians seized numerous men, women, and children, as well as the seventy-year-old trader, Thomas Stevens. 4

If sympathy were a goal, it could easily be drummed up for the English captives as well. Among the captives was Elizabeth Hammond Rowden. She had previously been taken captive by the Indians in 1676 after the Indians killed her husband Richard Hammond and her son Samuel. In 1688 she, along with her family and new husband John Rowden, was again taken. Elizabeth eventually gained her freedom, but John died in captivity. The full accounting of this story does not absolve the English of the seizure of innocent Indians, but it does show that the Indians committed similar acts and that both the Indians and the English suffered from intercultural conflicts. 5

Morrison's anti-English bias led him to ignore the English settlers in Maine. He frequently condemned English actions without fully understanding the cultural tensions in the lives of the colony's early residents. To fully understand Maine's cultural frontier, the English must be studied as closely as the Indians and the French. Recent advances in research on the English of early Maine make it possible to correct misperceptions and


generalizations about the nature of English society. Charles Clark's 1970 *The Eastern Frontier: The Settlement of Northern New England, 1610-1763* led the way for a new generation of historians who have focused attention on seventeenth-century Maine. In his two monographs, John Reid has explored colonial development and governmental relations in Maine. Edwin Churchill has produced the first case study of a seventeenth-century Maine town and shed important light on the early fishing industry. 6

Many current scholars have used archaeology as a tool to improve their understanding of early Maine. This recent archaeological data was largely unavailable to past historians. Trigger, Salisbury, and other ethnohistorians have demonstrated the significance of archaeological information in studying American Indians. Both pre-contact and contact period sites help fill out the picture of native society. Historical archaeology similarly provides a more complete view of English society in early Maine. Recent excavations have been carried out at several English settlements and fur trade posts occupied before and during King Philip's War. Such archaeological investigations improve understanding of English society as well as the nature of Anglo-Indian interactions.

Perhaps some of the most exciting studies of early Maine have been written by historical archaeologists. Alaric and Gretchen Faulkner have explored the early English fishing station at Damariscove as well as the French settlement at Pentagoet. Robert Bradley, Helen Camp and Neill DePaoli have explored the archaeology and history of Pemaquid, an English fishing and trading center which also served as the northern

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defensive line against the French. Work by James Leamon and myself on Arrowsic and other seventeenth-century sites on the Kennebec River has provided important comparisons with research at Pemaquid. Most recently, Faith Harrington's dissertation on the northern fishing industry before 1630 has demonstrated the utility of combining historical archaeology with ethnohistorical approaches. All of this research, done primarily since the mid-1970s, has provided important insights into the English in Maine which are missing from Morrison's research. 7

Morrison's limited attention to the English and Anglo-Indian relations before King Philip's War in Maine led him to overlook the significance of the war and its multiple causes. Morrison suggested that King Philip's War in Maine was predominantly the result of English paranoia and the failure of English law to redress Indian grievances. While these were legitimate issues, they are only part of a progression of factors which contributed to hostilities. Anglo-Indian relations in Maine need to be examined from an ethnohistorical perspective, for the conditions that triggered war existed much earlier than 1675 and can be discovered only through a culturally sensitive understanding of the lifeways of both the Indians and the English. A study of this issue must begin with the early seventeenth century when the English and Indians first established relations.

While the French and English explorers of the early seventeenth century left detailed accounts of their meetings with the natives, few accounts exist for the years after the English established permanent settlements. Still, a wealth of material on English and Indian interaction during this era has been overlooked by scholars. Though there are few documentary references to the Indians during this time, they can be studied through numerous Indian deeds, as well as documentary and archaeological materials on the fur trade. The fur trade and the Indian sale of lands to Englishmen were the focus of interaction between the two cultures. A close examination of these complementary trades not only provides information about cultural interaction but also reveals some of the long term causes of King Philip's War. To understand the fundamental differences between the English and the Indians, and how these differences eventually led to open warfare, one must first examine the cultural backgrounds both sides brought with them to the trading table.
Chapter 1
"A PEOPLE OF NO FIXED ABODE:"

THE INDIANS OF MAINE

After a 1604 visit to the Indian villages on the Penobscot River, Samuel de Champlain claimed that the residents there were "a people with no fixed abode, from what I have discovered and learned from themselves; for they pass the winter sometimes in one place and sometimes in another, wherever they perceive the hunting of wild animals is the best." 1 This mobility, which stemmed from a hunter-gatherer dependence on seasonal resources, was a deep-rooted tradition, practiced by the residents of Maine for thousands of years. However, Champlain's statement has an accuracy beyond the basic geographic and economic facts. To observers in colonial times, and even to some modern scholars, the Indians of Maine are very much a "people with no fixed abode." Though early European visitors to the coast of Maine wrote about their encounters with the natives, much basic information on the tribes was not recorded. 2

For generations, historians did little to improve understanding of the Indians. Early historians such as William Hubbard, James Sullivan and William Williamson were either strongly biased against the Indians or woefully uninformed about them. Most early twentieth-century archaeologists were little more than pot hunters who spread myths about


2 The term tribe is used throughout this dissertation to describe groups of Indians. It should be noted that the term is used in a loose sense, for anthropologists have not yet decided whether or not the Maine Indians conform to the anthropological definition of a tribe.
the first residents of Maine. Only in the past twenty years have scholars set out to correct the enduring body of misinformation compiled on Maine Indians. In 1968 the University of Maine became the first institution in the state to appoint a full-time archaeologist. Other organizations soon followed, so that today a growing number of professional prehistoric archaeologists have made considerable progress in decoding Maine's distant past. Meanwhile historians have begun to examine the native population in historical times, though many pieces of the puzzle are still missing. For example, even the ethnic identities of the natives of Maine remains a hotly debated issue. However, enough of a start has been made to begin fixing these peoples' abode in modern historical perspective.  

To best understand the native inhabitants of Maine one must look at them before the arrival of Europeans. The study of the native population over time gives a sense of their cultural patterns and shows how they adapted to meet the changing challenge of Maine's resources. Unfortunately, the recent strides in prehistoric archaeology have yet to fill in all the gaps in Maine's distant past. A variety of cultures inhabited the region, commencing approximately eleven thousand years ago when Paleoindians moved north, following caribou and other large game which moved north onto the tundra when the glaciers retreated.  

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4 The best discussion of Paleoindians in Maine is in Richard M. Gramley, The Vail Site: A Paleo-Indian Encampment in Maine (Buffalo, New York, 1982).
Approximately nine thousand years ago (9000 B.P.) the Paleoindians gave way to a series of Archaic cultures. Perhaps the best known of these cultures was the "Moorehead Phase" of the Late Archaic however, numerous other fascinating groups flourished in Maine during the approximately 8000-year-long Archaic era. It is not necessary to dwell on these early cultures now. Not only is the exact nature and sequence of cultures still being debated but it is most likely that these peoples were not ancestral to the native residents of Maine at the time of Champlain. In keeping with the long-held anthropological view that radical changes in material culture resulted from population movement, many archaeologists believe that these changes of prehistoric cultures resulted from migration of population, rather than from the local inhabitants' assimilation of different cultural traits. 5

Perhaps the last major cultural shift in Maine's prehistory occurred about 600-700 B.C., when ceramics first appear in Maine sites. The Ceramic Period continued until about 1600 A.D. when European trade goods replaced most Indian-crafted stone tools and ceramics. David Sanger has suggested that European vessels hastened the decline of Indian pottery, a process which began about 1000 A.D., when lightweight birchbark vessels slowly started replacing ceramics. Maine's Ceramic Period peoples exhibited striking cultural diversity. At some unknown date in the Ceramic Period, natives living south of the Kennebec River adopted the agricultural trilogy of corn, beans, and squash, while those

living north of the Kennebec continued to hunt and gather since the cold climate made agriculture impractical. 6

No single subsistence pattern predominated among either the agriculturalists or the hunter-gatherer communities. Since corn agriculture was only marginally viable along the Kennebec, the natives there probably relied more on hunting and gathering for additional subsistence than did their neighbors along the fertile and slightly warmer Saco River Valley. Likewise, those people north of the Kennebec employed a variety of foraging strategies. Ceramic Period people occupied the Turner Farm site (on Blue Hill Bay) year round but over time the amount of use for a specific resource fluctuated greatly. The early Ceramic Period residents of Turner Farm consumed a variety of moose, flounder, and bird, and less seal, beaver, and sturgeon. From 0 A.D. to 1100 A.D., they gradually depended more on bear and sea mink, probably for fur clothes as well as food. After 1100 A.D., they began to rely more heavily on seal and flounder. 7

Although Indians lived at Turner Farm year round, they occupied other coastal sites on a seasonal basis. Ceramic Period sites on Passamaquoddy Bay, on Deer Isle, and at Flye Point on Blue Hill Bay indicate a fall-to-spring occupation. Located three miles inland from Penobscot Bay on a salt pond, the twelth-century Grindle site also represents a late fall to early spring encampment. Beaver and moose predominate among the faunal remains from this site, though the inhabitants did gather some shellfish. Dean Snow (State University of New York at Albany) has suggested that clams and oysters merely broadened the diet and did not play a vital role in subsistence. Bourque has noted that tom cod move

6 Sanger, "The Ceramic Period in Maine," in Sanger, ed., Maine's Archaeological Heritage, 99-115. The possibility of a decline in ceramics starting around 1000 A.D. is still a hypothesis because of the small size of the data base on the issue.

into salt ponds in the winter to spawn, and this may have been another resource utilized in coastal winter camps like the Grindle site.  

Ceramic Period sites also occur in interior Maine but they are almost always found along a waterway. The acid soils of Maine's inland region allow few bones to survive on these sites. However, their location at rapids and falls suggest an autumn and spring occupation when natives could harvest migrating salmon and other anadromous fish. A large number of Indian names for places on rivers, particularly for falls, are associated with fishing, which reinforces the importance of seasonal fishing expeditions to falls. For example, Amitgonpontook (Lewiston Falls on the Androscoggin River) means a place to catch and process fish. The Amoncongan Falls on the Presumpscot River designate a place to catch alewives, and Quamphegan (the Abenaki word for the falls on the Salmon Falls River) implies that fish were caught there by dipping nets.

Unlike most multi-purpose coastal sites, the Goddard site on Blue Hill Bay was occupied for two specialized functions. From 1000 to 1500 residents dwelt at the site from June to October primarily to hunt seals. In addition, the site served as a center of aboriginal trade between residents of Penobscot Bay and peoples as far away as Newfoundland. Many groups from up and down the coast merged together there for large summer

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9 Sanger, "The Ceramic Period in Maine," 100-10; The most recent excavations in interior Maine have taken place at the Hirundo-Young sites, on Pushaw Stream, about ten miles north of Bangor, Maine. For a report on the site, including an overview of prehistoric archaeology in interior Maine, and the poor preservation of faunal remains see Christopher L. Borstel, Archaeological Investigations at the Young Site, Alton, Maine Occasional Publications in Maine Archaeology, No. 2, (Augusta, Maine, 1982), 1-3, 79-85. Fannie Hardy Eckstorm, Indian Place Names of the Penobscot Valley and the Maine Coast (Orono, Maine, 1974), 149, 160, 186.
meetings. Some of the northern Indians who encamped at Goddard brought pieces of high quality chalcedonies native to the Bay of Fundy, as well as copper which may have also come from the Atlantic Provinces. Pieces of ramah chert, a rock quarried by the Dorset Eskimos of Newfoundland, demonstrate trade ties to a different culture far to the north. Even a Dorset Eskimo burin-like tool has been found. The most spectacular trade artifact from the Goddard site, however, is a Norwegian silver penny, issued between AD 1065 and 1080. This coin probably came from the eleventh-century Norse settlement at L'Anse aux Meadow in Newfoundland or from the Norse colony in Greenland. 10

Despite the presence of their materials at the Goddard site, no evidence suggests that the Norse or the Dorset Eskimos were the first travellers to visit the coast of Maine. Rather, their materials arrived at the Goddard site via an extensive exchange network which ranged along Maine and the Atlantic Provinces. Chalcedonies, North American copper, and the Norse coin travelled through many hands before reaching Blue Hill Bay. 11

Although the Norse probably never visited Maine, European explorers and fishermen occasionally sailed the coast in the sixteenth century. By the early seventeenth century explorers, missionaries, and settlers were describing the natives of Maine. Their accounts somewhat clarify our view of the natives but ambiguities concerning such important factors as political structure, language, and tribal boundaries have confused interpretations even to the present. Historians and archaeologists have muddied the waters considerably by assigning one set of nomenclature to groups which underwent rapid change in the seventeenth-century. Many scholars have underestimated the impact of disease and war which drastically changed tribal organization. To understand tribal structure at the dawn of contact historians should rely primarily upon observations made before the initial attack of these twin demographic disasters in the 1610s.


11 Ibid., 22-25.
The best early observers of native Maine were three Frenchmen, Samuel de Champlain, Marc Lescarbot and Father Pierre Biard. When closely scrutinized, all three agree on the tribal divisions. Champlain, the meticulous geographer and cartographer for the Sieur de Monts' colonizing ventures at St. Croix and Port Royal, provided the bulk of the information. He clearly described that the region from the St. Croix River to the Kennebec River as inhabited by one people, the Etchemins (or Etechemins). On a journey far up the Penobscot River in September 1604 Champlain noted that "so far as we could judge there are few Indians on this river, and these are also Etechemins." Later that month he visited the Kennebec River and noted that "the tribe of Indians at Kennebec is called Etechemins, like those of Norumbega [Penobscot]." Lescarbot, a lawyer turned colonist who rarely ventured from the French settlements and only wrote down his observations several years later, is not as reliable as Biard, who visited tribes from the Kennebec to Nova Scotia. Still, Lescarbot and Biard both verify the tribal distinctions made by Champlain.

While early historians such as James Sullivan (1797) accepted the French statements that the Etchemins lived between the St. John and the Kennebec, most twentieth-century scholars claim that the coast of Maine was the home of the Eastern Abenakis, the Indians who lived there in later colonial times. The Etchemins have been overlooked largely due to the impact of Frank Speck. This respected anthropologist carried out ethnographic fieldwork among the Penobscot Abenakis in the 1910s and sporadically published articles on the Abenakis over the next thirty years. Speck's work on the

12 Biggar, ed., The Works of Samuel de Champlain, 292. The original wording in French is: "et a ce qu'avons peu juger, il y a peu de sauvages en icelle riviere qu'on appelle aussi Etechemins."

13 Ibid., I, 297; The original wording in French is: "une autre riviere appelee Quinibequy.... Ceste nation de sauvages de Quinibequy s'appelle Etechemins, aussi bien que ceux de Norembegue (Penobscot)." Sevigny, Les Abenaquis, 47.

Abenakis, particularly his persuasive arguments for a Wabanaki (Abenaki) confederacy, made it appear that the Abenakis were the only native inhabitants of Maine. So great was Speck's influence that many of his contemporaries and subsequent scholars ignored the Etechemins. Some have even challenged the accuracy of Champlain and Biard, though ethnographers have long held them to be among the more accurate and detailed chroniclers of early America.

Despite Speck's impact, some scholars have reexamined the evidence and concluded that the Etchemins did indeed inhabit coastal Maine in 1600. In 1955 Bernard Hoffman suggested that Champlain's Etchemins were the southern and western branch of a large family of Etchemin tribes which included the Maliseets and Passamaquoddys of eastern Maine and New Brunswick. Hoffman felt that these Etchemins had been frequently confused with the Abenakis, who in 1600 lived not on the coast but on the interior waterways of Maine. Alvin Morrison and Pere-Andre Sevigny built upon Hoffman's theory in the mid 1970s. Morrison uses the term "Western Etchemins" to describe the natives from Mount Desert Island to the Kennebec, and to distinguish them from a seemingly separate tribe of Eastern Etchemins (the modern Maliseets and Passamaquoddys) who lived between Mount Desert and the St. John's River. Sevigny presents a detailed

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critique of early sources and subsequent scholarship in *Les Abenaquis: Habitat et Migrations (17e et 18e siecles)* but the book has not received the attention it deserves. 16

Despite the growing evidence for Hoffman's hypothesis, most current ethnohistorians of northern New England refuse to acknowledge the existence of the Western Etchemins. The most outspoken critic of the Hoffman school is Dean Snow, who sharply attacked it in "The Ethnohistoric Baseline of the Eastern Abenaki," in *Ethnohistory* in 1976. Snow refuses to accept Champlain's terminology, for he hypothesizes that the explorer used the word "Etchemins" as a generic phrase to describe several ethnic groups who shared a similar hunter-gatherer lifestyle. Snow believes that the Indians Champlain met between the Penobscot and the Kennebec were actually Abenakis and that those scholars who believe in the existence of the Western Etchemins have fallen into a semantic trap. As proof of this, Snow notes that Champlain used the term "Armouchiquois" (or Almouchiquois) to describe all the inhabitants from the Kennebec to Cape Cod. Accordingly, modern scholars realize that while all Armouchiquois were agriculturalists

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living in large sedentary villages, they encompassed a variety of ethnic and linguistic divisions. 17

While Armouchiquois is a generic term, the preponderance of evidence refutes Snow's attack. Champlain used the vague term Armouchiquois only to describe distant Indians with whom he had little contact. He gave the very specific label "Souriquois" to the Micmacs, a tribe of hunter-gatherers who shared many cultural similarities with the Etchemins. If the explorer used "Etchemins" as a generalization, surely he would have included the Micmacs under this heading too. Champlain knew the Etchemins well, for the settlement at Saint Croix stood amid their territory and he visited many of their villages from the Kennebec to the St. John's. It is unlikely that an astute observer like Champlain would grossly generalize about people he knew so well.

Further, Champlain cannot be accused of misidentifying the Abenakis as Etchemins, for he locates the Abenakis as well. Some researchers have failed to note this fact, for Champlain did not mention the Abenakis until 1628, when he was well ensconced in Quebec. At this time, a Montagnais chief reported to him that a tribe of Indians calling themselves the "Abenaquiouoit" lived seven or eight days' travel from Quebec. A trip by Champlain's scouts later that summer found the Abenakis, a horticultural tribe living far up the Kennebec in the general vicinity of what later was identified as Norridgewock.

17 Dean R. Snow, "The Ethnohistoric Baseline of the Eastern Abenaki," Ethnohistory XXIII (1976), 291-306 Snow also argues that by the 1620s, the Abenaki are the only tribe occupying the coast of Maine and he can find no documentary or archaeological evidence for this mass migration which would have to have occurred between 1613 and the early 1620s. The virgin soil epidemics of the 1610s provide a solid rebuttal to Snow on this point, and this issue is examined in chapter 2. Kenneth Morrison attempted to avoid the issue by defining the Abenakis as all the Indians living in the river basins of New Hampshire, Maine, and New Brunswick. Still, he does not deal with Hoffman's hypothesis, indeed, he never uses the term "Etchemins" in his book. It should be pointed out that both Snow and Kenneth Morrison rely heavily on the research of Speck and other Abenaki ethnographers work on the Abenaki, work that has limited use if the modern tribe are not the descendants of the residents of coastal Maine circa 1600. Recently Bourque and Whitehead have been the only scholars to commit themselves in print to supporting Sevigny and Alvin Morrison. See Bruce Bourque and Ruth Whitehead, "Tarrantines and the Introduction of European Trade Goods in the Gulf of Maine," Ethnohistory (in press).
Champlain's 1632 map of New France illustrates his recognition of two distinct tribes, locating the Abenakis in a small area far up the Kennebec River, separate from the Etchemins (Figure 1). 18

Linguistic evidence also supports Champlain's assertions. In Indian Place Names of the Penobscot Valley and the Maine Coast, (1941) Fannie Hardy Eckstorm noted that a surprising number of place names in Maine came from Maliseet (an Etchemin language) rather than from Abenaki. This suggests that at one time ancestors of the Maliseet-Passamaquoddys, or at least a related tribe, lived much further south and west than their twentieth-century home on Passamaquoddy Bay. Among the Maliseet place names used by Champlain was "Kenduskeag," the principal village of Bashabes (or Bessabez), headman of the whole Penobscot drainage. This indicates that Bashabes and his powerful tribe were Etchemins. Unfortunately, the only two surviving Etchemin vocabularies are too short and fragmentary to be of much use in resolving the riddle of the Etchemins. The first, a set of numbers recorded by Lescarbot, all match numbers from other New England languages but in a unique combination. The other vocabulary apparently came from Indians around Pemaquid, who were followers of Bashabes. Frank Siebert thinks that it is composed primarily of Eastern Abenaki dialect with some Maliseet-Passamaquoddy words, along

18 Sevigny, Les Abenaquis. 64. Champlain's description of the location of the Abenakis was as follows: "nation de Sauvages qui sont comme au midy de nostre habitation environ de 7 a 8 journées, appeles Obenaquiooit qui cultivent les terres." Charles P. Otis, ed., Voyages of Samuel de Champlain (Boston, 1880) Vol. I, 296, 299, Vol. II, 175.
with a few others of unknown origin. Hoffman disagrees, believing the vocabulary represents either an ancestor of Maliseet-Passamaquoddy or a related extinct language. 19

Further support for the Hoffman hypothesis has recently come from archaeological work. Petersen's and Hamilton's 1984 study of Woodland period ceramics and associated perishable fiber industries (such as cordage and twined basketry) noted that the Ceramic Period residents of New England's northern interior adopted distinctly different cord twists and twine wefts from their coastal contemporaries. While such a distinction may appear insignificant, research has shown that virtually all members of the same cultural group chose the same twist or weft, and that the group stayed with that preference for centuries. Based on this evidence alone Petersen and Hamilton suggest that different populations occupied coastal and interior Maine during most of the Ceramic period. This split may well represent proto-Etchemins on the coast, and proto-Abenakis in the interior. 20

When closely examined, the evidence indicates that in the Ceramic and the early Contact periods, the Etchemins were coastal hunters. Their neighbors in interior Maine were the Abenakis, a people who grew corn. The few references to the Abenakis at this time, combined with the paucity of archaeological work in the Maine interior, means that

19 Fannie Hardy Eckstorm, Indian Place Names of the Penobscot Valley and the Maine Coast (Orono, Maine, 1941), xxvi, 15, 117; Hoffman, "Souriquois, Etechemin, and Kwedech," 67-68; One vocabulary was written down by Lescarbot. The more interesting one appears in Samuel Purchas, "The Description of the Country of Mawooshen Discovered by the English in the Yeere 1602 3. 5. 6. 7. 8. and 9. In Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes Samuel Purchas, Ed. (Glascow, 1902), XIX, 400-5. Though the account was not published until 1625, Snow has put forward a strong argument that the account was based on interviews made about 1605 by James Rosier and Samuel Purchas of the five Indians captured by Weymouth near the St. George River. Snow, however, uses the accounts for just their demographic material and overlooks the vocabulary. See Snow, "The Ethnohistoric Baseline," 298; Snow, The Archaeology of New England, 35-37. Frank Siebert, "Review of Indian Place-Names of the Penobscot Valley and the Maine Coast, by Fannie Hardy Eckstorm," New England Quarterly vol. XVI (1943), 506; Ives Goddard, "Eastern Algonquian Languages," Bruce Trigger, ed., Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. XV, Northeast (Washington, D.C., 1978), 146.

little is known about the Abenakis in 1600. In the cold Maine climate, corn agriculture could not have been extensive, so hunting and gathering probably were major Abenaki activities as well. The Abenakis and related tribes probably occupied much of the interior of northern New England, and they seem to represent that largely unknown group which some scholars have labelled as "Western Abenakis." 21

The Etechemins, however, had many neighbors besides the Abenakis. North and east of Maine, in present-day Nova Scotia lived the Micmacs, another tribe of hunter-gatherers whose lifestyle closely paralleled that of the Etechemins. South of the Kennebec River lived the Indians Champlain, Biard, and Lescarbot called the "Armouchiquois," a general term used to identify the Patuxets and Massachusetts, sedentary agriculturalists who lived in large villages from southern Maine to Cape Cod. 22

Unfortunately, tribal divisions in the land of the Armouchiquois are rather confusing. The Indians on the Chouacoet (Saco) River, who grew corn and lived in large villages, were most likely a northern branch of the Patuxets, the corn-growing villagers of Massachusetts Bay. But what about the area between the Saco and Kennebec, a large tract of land which included Casco Bay and the Androscoggin River? There were many substantial villages of corn-growing Indians on the Androscoggin, a river which flows into the Kennebec at Merrymeeting Bay. The Androscoggin Indians, led by Marchin, were close allies of the Chouacoets, a tribe led by Olmechin. From these economic and political


Figure 2. Approximate tribal locations circa 1600
ties it is apparent why the French described them as Armouchiquois, but their tribal identity could have been Etchemins, Patuxets, or indeed Abenakis. 23

Such vagaries remind scholars of the fragmentary and uneven nature of primary sources on early contact in Maine. Researchers must use these reports with care, not only because of huge gaps in data but because the authors wrote these reports in the early seventeenth century, a time when there had been at least intermittent contact between the natives and Europeans for about a hundred years. Scholars know little about the sixteenth-century visits of explorers and fishermen to the coast of Maine, but this interaction may have profoundly affected Indian society and economy before the seventeenth century. 24

The early seventeenth-century writers reported only what they saw, and few met with the Indians beyond ceremonial encounters. European perceptions of these formal meetings often diverged from reality. James Rosier wrote in his account of the 1605 Weymouth expedition that the Etchemins "show great reverence to their king, and are in great subjection to their governors." The writings of other observers and the work of recent scholars have proven Rosier wrong. The Indian sagamores ruled only by consensus, and their "King" Bashabes acted only as first sagamore among many equals. Rosier based his statement only on several formal encounters with Indians, at a time when the natives would have united behind their leaders to conceal tribal divisions to outsiders, therefore increasing their collective bargaining power in the fur trade. To this impression, Rosier unconsciously


added his own background as a member of the well-ordered, hierarchical English society.

Personal biases and inaccuracies frequently slip into all accounts of Maine Indians. Often the observer wrote his account many years after his visit to Maine, and in the ensuing years important details had been forgotten. Some authors wrote propaganda pamphlets which deliberately misled readers in an attempt to convince them of the importance of America and the writer's project. No professional ethnographers visited early Maine. Even the Jesuits, the group which showed the most interest in the Etchemins and which provided the most accurate depictions of Indian society, were convinced of their own cultural superiority.

Researchers may supplement early writings with the work of twentieth-century ethnographers who studied the Micmacs, Maliseet-Passamaquoddys, Abenakis, and other Northeastern Algonquin tribes. This needs to be done with the greatest of care, however, for the surviving members of these tribes have undergone a metamorphosis since contact. While ethnographers have been impressed by the accuracy of tribal folklore and the persistence of tribal traditions in the face of change, oral traditions which survive from the contact era frequently received embellishments before their retelling to anthropologists at the turn of the twentieth century. Some scholars have closely related the Abenaki folklore collected by Speck with the descriptions of Champlain and Biard, a critical mistake considering that the French had observed the Etchemins, not the Abenakis. Since the

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26 Jennings, *The Invasion of America*, 56-57, 73-84.
Abenakis dwelt in the interior and grew some corn, their culture may have differed significantly from that of their coastal, non-horticultural neighbors, the Etchemins. 27

Kenneth Morrison, who worked extensively with ethnographic evidence, bailed out of this problem by defining the Abenakis as the entire native population inhabiting the river basins of New Hampshire, Maine, and New Brunswick. Although this generalized nomenclature blurs significant tribal distinctions, it does have some merits. All of these Indians were Northern Algonquians who spoke related languages and drew largely upon a common pool of mythical and cultural beliefs. Indeed, the twentieth-century Indians of northern New England who have kept oral traditions alive come from largely polyglot tribes, formed from the survivors of colonial wars and diseases. As such, even when an ethnographer felt that he recorded an Abenaki tale there is no telling the specific origins of the legend. 28

Though it is not directly applicable to the Western Etchemins who disappeared as a tribe by 1620, details of tribal folklore, lifeways, and material culture often provide comparative insights into the Etchemins as well as valuable information on the Abenakis who took their place as the dominant tribe in coastal Maine. Most of this information was recorded in the early twentieth century by Frank Speck, Fannie Hardy Eckstorm and other anthropologists. Some of this data can be "upstreamed" (the process of working backwards from the ethnographic present to the historical record) to help reconstruct past cultures.

27 Using Abenaki folklore about Roger's raid on St. Francis, Gordon Day has demonstrated that oral tradition is often a trustworthy complement to historical data. See Day, "Oral Tradition as Complement" Ethnohistory XIX (1972), 99-108. Kenneth Morrison in particular has relied heavily upon ethnographic materials in his publications.

28 Morrison, Embattled Northeast. 5. An examination of the chapters on the Micmacs, Maliseet-Passamaquoddys, Eastern Abenakis, and Western Abenakis shows the many cultural traits shared by these tribes. In his current research, Bruce Bourque has noted that much tribal realignment took place during historic times. For example, the group known today as the Penobscot Abenakis were an unorganized group of survivors from the Indian wars, drawn from several tribes. They were formed into the modern Penobscot tribe in the eighteenth century, by Massachusetts officials looking for an appropriate authority to sign a peace treaty. Bruce Bourque, personal communication to the author, January 1985.
Upstreaming requires extreme ethnohistorical sensitivity to the subject matter. In general, upstreamed data should only be trusted when corroborative evidence exists in the documentary or archaeological record. Still, when examined with caution, ethnographic material and European accounts provide a wealth of specific information about the native population in the early seventeenth century. 29

Many early authors depict a seasonal, migratory economy for the Etchemins which agrees with archaeological evidence from the Ceramic Period. The Jesuit priest Pierre Biard discussed Etchemins foraging patterns in great detail. "From the month of May up to the middle of September, they are free from all anxiety about their food; for the cod are upon the coast, and all kinds of fish and shell fish." 30 Sometimes they ventured into open water in large groups to harpoon whales, probably in a fashion similar to that which their ancestors had used in fishing for giant swordfish and sturgeon. Deer, beaver, pigeons, partridges, hares, and other game frequently complemented the seafood in their diet. In September they camped upriver to catch spawning eels and then in October and November they hunted for beaver, deer and other game. Toward December the Etchemins moved onto salt water bays (like the Grindle site) and fished for turtles and spawning tom cod. During


the great game hunt (from February to mid-March) beaver, moose, otter, bear, caribou, deer and the like fell to skilled Etchemin hunters. However, late winter was also a starving time, for even accomplished hunters failed when the elements conspired against them. In mud or soft, unfrozen snow, the Etchemins could not pursue game or put their dogs to the chase. 31

Biard worried about the Etchemins during starving times, particularly when he watched what he considered gluttonous gorging of the summer's surfeit of food. One tribesman told Biard that his concerns were groundless. "It is all the same to us," he said, "we shall stand it well enough: we spend seven and eight days, even ten sometimes without eating anything, yet we do not die." 32 Occasionally they set aside food for the winter, building storehouses for preserving smoked meat, roots, acorns and other non-perishable goods, but the mobile Etchemins rarely utilized this safety net. During the summer and early fall when they had surplus food, the Etchemins lived on the coast. However, by late winter when they needed food, they had pursued game inland, far away from food stored on the shore. 33

Starving times ended in the middle of March, when fish began spawning in the streams. After the March smelting season came the sweet showers of April and sturgeon, salmon, herring, and a multitude of waterfowl nesting on the coastal rocks and islands. The huge schools of fish so amazed Biard that he claimed that the water "swarms with them. Anyone who has not seen it can scarcely believe it. You cannot put your hand in the water without encountering them." 34


33 Ibid.

34 Ibid., 79-81. The Abenakis valued fowl not only for meat, but also for their eggs.
Despite the cyclical nature of the Etchemins' existence, it was by no means monotonous. Due to minor variations in animal migration and climate, the exact days and locations of hunting for a specific resource might vary from year to year. Groups would often split up to take advantage of several available resources. When John Smith visited Penobscot Bay in the summer of 1616, he noted that some Indians fished on the islands, while others hunted the woods for deer and beaver. The archaeological evidence supports this observation. In the late Ceramic Period, some groups lived on the coast year-round while others spent winters in the interior or on the shore lands within the intertidal zone or .

The Indians of Maine traveled in small kin-related bands which served as the basic unit in tribal organization. In these communal extended families all members shared labor and its fruits. Work in the band was divided along sex lines with specific tasks for males and females of all ages. Regardless of their social standing all band members apparently shared their food and possessions, a fact that amazed European observers reared in individualistic capitalistic societies. Rosier explained that "if you give anything to one of them, he will distribute part to everyone of the rest." Biard said that "these savages are extremely liberal toward each other; no one is willing to enjoy any good fortune by himself, but makes his friends sharers in the larger part of it."  

The material goods that the Etchemins and Abenakis fashioned and shared with each other were made of stone, wood, and bone. Although their material culture was technologically inferior to the European, the highly skilled native craftsmen produced finished products necessary for tribal survival, as well as works of art. Indian material


culture was a practical blending of craftsmanship with available resources. For example, the tribe developed several means of transporting themselves across Maine. For most of the year they relied on the birchbark canoe, an ideal method of transportation along the waterways and portages of the region. Artisans constructed the durable, seaworthy, and lightweight canoe from local materials, often decorating them with triangles, double curves, and other designs. In the winter when frozen rivers made canoe travel impossible, the Etchemins made snowshoes, a simple but effective tool which enabled them to move camp and hunt even in deep snow. 38

The Indians also designed their housing with both ease of construction and utility in mind. House frames consisted of saplings bent in a semicircle and supported in postholes. Workers lashed furs and sheets of bark to the frame, leaving only a small hole in the middle of the roof for a chimney. These surprisingly weatherproof shelters suited the Etchemin lifestyle. Constantly moving, they needed to construct shelters quickly. Biard noted that once they arrived at a new site, the natives constructed their shelters within two hours. In the summer, they made the houses broad and long to let cool breezes pass through them, whereas in the winter they built smaller round houses. Even though they did not look substantial, the houses were "very warm in there around that little fire, even in the rigors of the winter." 39 To keep themselves warm the Indians donned clothes made of skins of bear, lynx, seals, and other animals. In these and other ways the natives lived in relative harmony with their environment. 40


To the Indians, the environment meant more than just their physical surroundings. It is impossible to discuss any aspect of native life without placing it in the context of their all-pervasive spirit world. Though some colonial descriptions mention the spirit world of the Abenakis and the Etchemins, the work of twentieth-century ethnographers among the Abenakis, Micmacs, and other similar tribes leads to a better understanding of this aspect of Indian culture. Although each eastern Algonquian tribe had different myths, legends, and beliefs, they drew largely from a common cultural reservoir. All the animals, the forces of nature around them, and even their material possessions had "manitou" or spirit-power, a life of their own. The Abenakis made no distinction between natural and supernatural. Rather, all belonged to one cosmos.  

The canoe demonstrates the complex relationship between the natural and supernatural aspects of native society. The Abenakis often decorated their canoes with double curves, a popular artistic motif which represented their deeply held beliefs in unity and the balance between the forces of nature. They also put family totems on the canoe. These totems consisted of symbols or representations of special animals from which an Abenaki band claimed descent or associated with a legendary family hero. Totems also marked boundaries of family hunting territories, and served as a collective name for members of the particular band. A simple but highly effective means of transportation, the canoe had spiritual as well as practical implications.  

The Abenakis credited Gluskap (or Gluskabe), their legendary hero, as the inventor of the canoe. In countless Abenaki legends, this Christ-like figure transformed nature and

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41 Kenneth Morrison has written at length on the spiritual life of the Abenaki in The Embattled Northeast, 42-101, which in turn is based largely on his dissertation, "The People of the Dawn," 11-47. Though Morrison's work is rich in detail and understanding, he sometimes accepts Abenaki myths and ethnographical information which has little or no documented basis.

invented material goods which helped the Abenakis subsist. Not only did Gluskap invent the canoe, but he created rivers, he brought tobacco and he slew such mythical enemies of the Abenakis as the giant frog and the monster moose. His tales also taught the Abenakis moral values and proper social behavior. Gluskap represented the bond between the environment and the spirit world, and with his powers he molded the Abenakis' habitat. Legends suggest that he was part of nature itself, for they claim he was the grandson of a woodchuck and the nephew of a turtle. 43

The tales of Gluskap, along with other tribal myths and traditions, were preserved by the shaman. A man of religious as well as political power, the shaman acted as a tribal intermediary between the human and spiritual parts of the Indian world. As spiritual leader of the community's syncretic religion, the shaman played a vital role in the web of Abenaki existence. The shaman marshalled Kta'hando, the spiritual power given the Abenakis by Gluskap. He healed with medicinal herbs and with spells, interpreted the dreams and omens which the tribe put much faith in, acted as a reservoir of knowledge, and served as a role model for proper religious and social behavior. 44

The shaman presided over sacred rituals which Europeans did not consider religious, such as the hunt. As the Abenakis and other Eastern Algonquian peoples were a part of nature, myths and folklore described the horrible penalties for not respecting the rights of other creatures. In one tale, Gluskap went to great lengths to trap all game and catch all fish for his grandmother. While his grandmother appreciated his kindness, she reminded Gluskap that if he caught all the creatures there would be nothing left for future generations of Indians to eat. The Indians could take what they needed to survive but they


must respect the animal which gave its life so they might live. They performed elaborate rituals before the hunt, and after a kill they treated the bones with reverence so that the "keepers of the game," the animals' spirits, would continue to look kindly upon the band. An Indian who treated game with disrespect ran the risk of falling in the disfavor of the keeper of the game, who would no longer allow his creatures to give themselves up to the tribe's hunters. Thus the spirit world helped to harmonize Indian society with nature, at the same time enforcing restrictions which kept their ecology in relative balance. 45

In reading about the Eastern Algonquian lifestyle, so closely tied to its environment, some scholars have overemphasized the idyllic qualities of pre-contact native society. Neal Salisbury harks back to a past when "Indians had never gone hungry or otherwise wanting." 46 The northeastern Algonquians did not live in an idealized Arcadia. They accepted both summer feasts and winter fasts as a normal part of their life. Testimonies of starving times noted by seventeenth-century Europeans are confirmed by the archaeological record. Evidence from a Ceramic Period winter camp near the Goddard site indicates that the population probably had only enough food for bare subsistence. Snow suggests that winter consumption of shellfish, low in nutritional value, may be evidence of a population which had little alternative to starvation. Kenneth Morrison has pointed out that the threat of famine not only permeated Abenaki legends but also affected their social relationships, which included many provisions for the care of widows and orphans. 47

45 Morrison, The Embattled Northeast, 61, 65; Speck, "Penobscot Tales," 27-28; For a comparative study of the importance of Indian-animal relations and the spirit world, see Calvin Martin, Keepers of the Game: Indian-Animal Relationships and the Fur Trade (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1978), 27-39, 69-93. Martin's argument for a "holy war of extermination" against the beaver is far fetched and poorly documented. However, he brilliantly describes the close relationship between Northern Algonquian hunter-gatherers (particularly the Micmacs and Ojibwas), their spirit world, their environment, and the hunt.

46 Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 49.

Documentary and archaeological evidence also demonstrates that the natives of Maine had fought battles for generations before the arrival of Europeans. Archaeological data attest to a deep-rooted tradition of conflict. Excavation of a Ceramic Period cemetery at the Goddard site revealed one skeleton with a projectile point embedded in its pelvis, and another with a femur pierced by a projectile point. Western Etchemins frequently warred with Micmacs, and John Smith noted that they both sometimes warred with the Massachusetts. 48

Though Maine before contact was not a timeless utopia, contact with Europeans escalated the forces of change and brought disaster to a once orderly society. The Etchemins and Abenakis and their ancestors had constantly adapted in response to stimuli in their environment and society. When resources varied, they adapted their food gathering activities to the change. They moved seasonally to take full advantage of their environment. Over the ages native society in Maine became increasingly complex and diverse. Paleoindians wandered the Arctic-like Maine tundra in small groups, hunting for late pleistocene game. Compared to later societies, their life cycle was relatively simple but the harsh climate offered few alternatives. The Ceramic Period descendants of the Paleoindians utilized diverse subsistence patterns. Sometimes they lived in small bands to facilitate their hunting for moose and deer. At other times they gathered on the coast in large groups where they could fish as well as communicate and trade with distant tribes. The natives of Maine were neither noble savages in Arcadia nor ignoble savages in an American purgatory. They were just people living a lifestyle which differed radically from that of their European invaders.

48 Bourque and Cox, "The Goddard Site," 17; Smith, "A Description of New England," 242; Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 66-67; Steven Cox, "The Blue Hill Bay Survey," 29; Snow, Archaeology of New England, 178-82; Speck, Penobscot Man, 44, 97; Morrison "People of the Dawn, 36-37. Inter-tribal warfare will be discussed at length in chapter 2.
Chapter 2

"WE FOUND THEM A PEOPLE OF EXCEEDING GOOD INTENTION:"

THE CONTACT ERA

The encounters with Europeans initiated in the sixteenth century and regularized in the early seventeenth century did not immediately destroy native traditional lifeways. Instead, during the contact era the process of change and adaptation, always a part of native society, greatly accelerated. The early chroniclers of the natives of northern New England allow a glimpse of Indian society as it entered this era of change.

The first recorded meeting between the Etchemins and Europeans was in 1524, when Giovanni da Verrazzano explored the coast of New England. He found the natives much less friendly than the "gentle" Indians to the south, going so far as to call them "rude and barbarous." The Etchemins were leary of trading pelts with Verrazzano, and would do so only from a distance. They "stood upon the rocks," wrote Verrazzano, "from which they lowered down by a cord to our boats beneath whatever they had to barter, continually crying out to us not to come nearer, and instantly demanding from us that which was to be given in exchange; they took from us only knives, fish hooks and sharpened steel." 1

The behavior of the Etchemins in this meeting has led scholars to suggest they had previous contact with Europeans, either fishermen or explorers such as Joao


Alvarez Fagundes. Kenneth Morrison has suggested they kept their distance from Verrazzano's crew because the natives had either witnessed or heard of violent acts performed by Europeans in similar trade encounters. Since many natives were killed, captured or injured during such early meetings, Morrison and other historians have assumed that the unfriendly reception of Verrazzano had a basis in previous gatherings. Historians commonly use such negative evidence because they are eager to squeeze as much information as they can out of the few brief reports of culture contact. However, this argument displays a distinct pro-Indian bias. To carry this logic to its extreme, everytime the natives were friendly to a European visitor, one would have to assume they had previously had a friendly meeting with Europeans.

Still, other aspects of the Etchemins' behavior, aside from their fear, suggests previous encounters with Europeans. Their discretion in their purchases demonstrates that they were seasoned traders. Verrazzano could not impress them with beads and toys; instead they wanted only quality goods made of iron. This contrasts most sharply with the natives of southern New England, who were amazed by all European goods.

Several other explorers reached the coast of Maine in the sixteenth century but in general there seems to have been little direct contact between natives and Europeans. David Ingram probably travelled through Maine in 1568. After being stranded on the Gulf of Mexico, Ingram made a long walk across North America but he painted a vague

3 "The Relation of David Ingram," Sailors' Narratives, ed. George P. Winship, 28-29; Snow, Archaeology of New England, 61-62; Snow, "Abenaki Fur Trade," 3-11; Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 52-54. Not only is this attitude biased but it is ethnocentric, for it assumes that the Europeans had to be responsible for native emotions. The Indians become one-dimensional players who merely respond to European actions, rather than having motives of their own. There may have been many reasons for the apparent native hostility. If this was an initial encounter with Europeans, it is understandable that the Indians would be agitated, scared and a bit curious. Verrazzano sailed in a large ship, several miles inland, invading native territory. Under such circumstances, a hostile, or at least cautious attitude is understandable.

4 "To the King of France," Sailors' Narratives, ed. George P. Winship, 21-22; Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 52-54.
and unreliable picture of New England. Simon Fernando (1579), John Walker (1580), and Etienne Bellenger (1583) all briefly reconnoitered along the Gulf of Maine but they apparently made little contact with the natives on these short trips. 5

Although John Walker did not meet Indians when he voyaged up the Penobscot, he found "in an Indian house... above iii C. (300) drye hides, where of the most part were eighteene foote by the squire." 6 George Peckham confirmed that these large hides were moose: "There is also a kinde of Beaste, much bigger then an Oxe, whose hyde is more then 18. foote long, of which sorte a Countriman of ours, one Walker a Sea man, who was uppon that coast, did for a trueth reporte, in the presence of divers honorable and worshipful persons, that he and his company did find in one Cottage above 240 Hides. which they brought away and solde in Fraunce for xl. shillings an hyde." 7 This huge stockpile of furs on the Penobscot would have been more than was necessary for Indian clothes and suggests that the Etchemins on the Penobscot were involved either directly or indirectly in the European fur trade. 8

The next recorded meeting occurred during the Gosnold voyage of 1602, but John Brereton's account of that meeting proves that intermittent trade continued through the sixteenth century. The expedition met a European shallop manned by Indians and


equipped with a mast, a sail and an iron anchor. Brereton noted that the Indians could pilot the vessel quite well and that one of them was fully clad in European clothes, including a "waistcoat and breeches of black serge, made after our sea-fashion, hose and shoes on his feet." 9 How the Indians came into possession of the shallop was unclear but the natives indicated that Basques had recently been fishing and trading along the coast. These natives knew of Newfoundland and the fishing station at Placentia, and they spoke some "Christian words," a further indication that they had direct contact with Basques or other Newfoundland fishermen.10

After the Gosnold expedition accounts of meetings between Etchemins and Europeans become increasingly common as both the French and English began extensive activity in the region. The Waymouth expedition of 1605 typifies the early contact between the natives of Maine and the English. James Rosier, who chronicled the voyage, claimed that "we found them a people of exceeding good intention, quick understanding and ready capacity." 11 At first Waymouth and his crew treated the Indians with kindness. When two canoes of Indians made an initial encounter on May 30, Waymouth gave them many European goods, including bracelets, rings, peacock feathers, pipes, combs, glasses, and knives. Once trading began, Waymouth continued to be generous. The natives responded by giving the English some tobacco and bringing many pelts to truck. On June 1, Waymouth and his crew went ashore to trade with a group of twenty-eight natives. They received forty prime beaver skins, in addition to


otter, sable, and other small skins, for four or five shillings worth of what Rosier regarded as "trifles." 12

Kenneth Morrison has implied that Waymouth treated the Etchemins unfairly because the explorer felt that he got by far the better end of the deal. However, Waymouth offered what he considered to be cheap merchandise however the Indians had no regular source of such items. The Etchemins traded merely some skins, one of their most plentiful resources, for what they considered to be priceless treasurers. Indeed, both Waymouth and the Etchemins must have thought they outsmarted their trade partners. 13

Despite their initial friendship, relations between the English and the natives soon deteriorated as suspicions developed on both sides. When Waymouth invited two Indians to sleep on board, the Indians accepted the accommodations only after an Englishman volunteered to go ashore and sleep with the natives. Another sign of mistrust may have been the care the Etchemins took care to keep their women away from the English. Some scholars have suggested that this behavior demonstrates that the natives knew of violent European encounters with Indians, particularly mistreatment of women, and feared similar treatment of their women. While this is a distinct possibility, it is argued largely from negative evidence and fails to take into account the cultural factors that may have dictated the presence or absence of women in the meetings. 14

Likewise, Waymouth soon became suspicious of the Etchemins when he ventured to New Harbor to trade, only to find an assembly of almost three hundred well-armed warriors. After this incident, the explorer and his crew decided to capture

12 Ibid., 114-19.
several Indians and return with them to England. Bringing natives back to England had been an apparent goal of the expedition from the start. Indeed, Waymouth's friendliness toward the Etchemins may have been aimed at convincing several natives to return with him voluntarily. Unfortunately, after what Waymouth considered an attempted ambush at New Harbor, he abandoned any thought of convincing natives to leave peacefully and planned their deliberate kidnapping. When the natives arrived to trade, five of them were captured, including Skidwarres and Nahanada (or Tahanedo), a local sachem. The Etchemins thought that the five had been killed, not just captured, so they tried in vain to trick Englishmen into captivity. Ironically, the Etchemins' clumsy attempts at retaliation merely strengthened Waymouth's belief in their treachery. Thus the Waymouth expedition, which began amid high hopes, ended with increased animosity and distrust between the English and the natives. 15

Nahanda and two other captured natives were returned to Maine the next year by English explorers making further reconnaissances of the Maine coast. These voyages and the kidnappings were part of an English plan to establish a settlement in Maine. The English felt that by capturing natives, bringing them to England, and "Anglicizing" them, they would assure Etchemin friendship and gain ideal guides and interpreters to be sent back to Maine with the colonists. Led by George Popham and accompanied by Skidwarres, a colonizing expedition of 120 men reached Maine in 1607 and soon established itself at the mouth of the Kennebec River.

Relations between the natives and the Popham (or Sagadahoc) Colony of 1607 progressed in a fashion similar to that witnessed during the Waymouth expedition. At first English and Etchemins got along fairly well but suspicion and hatred soon overcame trust and friendship. George Popham, leader of the colony, realized that in order for the colony to succeed, it needed to establish amicable relations with the natives. Friendly

natives assured not only the safety of the settlement but also the fur trade, a major economic motive for the colony. With these goals in mind, Popham made strong efforts to keep on friendly terms with the natives. On several occasions in the fall of 1607, sagamores and their retinues visited the fledgeling settlement at the mouth of the Kennebec, where the colonists acted as friendly hosts. On one occasion, Popham treated Nahanada, Skidwarres, and several other sachems to two days of feasts and entertainment. When they left, he gave them presents of iron knives and copper beads. Popham further promised to visit their chief, Bashabes, on the Penobscot River and bring more gifts. Popham seems to have been well regarded by the English and Etchemins alike. Sir Ferdinando Gorges considered him "an honest man, but old, otherwise a discrete, careful man." 16 The French Jesuit, Father Pierre Biard, who formed his opinion of Popham after talking to the Etchemins, considered him "a very honest man, who got along remarkably well with the natives of the country." 17

Solid relations with the natives were developing until Popham died during the winter of 1607-8. It was a mild winter in Maine and Popham was the only casualty but his death proved fatal to the entire colony. Raleigh Gilbert, a rash young man who had little care or concern for the natives, succeeded Popham. Ferdinando Gorges characterized Gilbert as "desirious of supremacy, and rule . . . headstrong, and of small judgement and experience." 18 Once Gilbert took command of the colony, relations with the Etchemins soured. The Etchemins later told Biard that once Gilbert took over, the English "changed their tactics. They drove the savages away without

16 Henry O. Thayer, ed. The Sagadahoc Colony (Portland, Maine, 1892), 81-82, 134-36; Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 92-94.


18 Thayer, ed., The Sagadahoc Colony, 134-36
ceremony; they beat, maltreated, and misused them outrageously and without restraint."

It probably did not take much abuse to turn the Etchemins against the English. Any signs of harsh treatment must have reminded them of George Waymouth's capture of Nahanda, Skidwarres and the others. Though Nahanda returned to Maine in 1606, and Skidwarres followed with the Popham colonists in 1607, they tended to worsen matters for the colonists, rather than improve them. Admittedly, when the colonists first approached Nahanda's settlement, the tribe greeted the English with open arms but this seems to have been more a response to Skidwarre's return than a sign of great fondness for the English. Rather than aiding the colonists, Nahanda and Skidwarres quickly deserted them and returned to their tribes. From this position, they served as a constant reminder that no matter how friendly the English seemed, they could quickly turn to deceit and treachery. When Raleigh Gilbert assumed leadership and changed English policy, Etchemin fears were swiftly justified. In response to Gilbert's unyielding policy, the Indians refused to approach the settlement. They broke off all trade with the English and even killed eleven fishermen.

Historians have traditionally attributed the downfall of the Popham Colony to an inhospitable environment, coupled with a loss of leadership. When supply ships arrived in the summer of 1608, Raleigh Gilbert learned of a rich inheritance in England and decided to return to manage the estate. Without a suitable leader and disenchanted with the Maine wilderness, the rest of the settlers also returned to England on the supply ships. This interpretation only looks at one aspect of poor leadership and hostile environment, for under the rash direction of Raleigh Gilbert, the natives made the environment quite hostile indeed. Unable to venture out of their fort for fear of Indian attack, or to trade for

19 Thwaites, ed., Jesuit Relations, II, 45.
20 Ibid., II, 47; Thayer, ed., The Sagadahoc Colony, 137; Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 90-93.
furs, the colony had a bleak future. Thus it was no surprise when all the colonists beat a quick retreat to England. 21

The Popham Colony failed but settlers had noted the rich supplies of furs and fish in the mid-coastal region of Maine. Although fifteen years would pass before the English again established a year-round settlement in Maine, they continued to visit the coast and trade with the natives on a regular basis. By 1610, fishermen employed by Francis Popham were annually visiting Monhegan Island, and other Europeans soon followed. 22

The French, not the English, have left the best record of their encounters with the natives of Maine and the Maritime Provinces. Until England's proliferation of voyages in the opening years of the seventeenth century, France had been content to limit her American activity to the Newfoundland fishing grounds. However, with increased English activity, the French realized they needed permanent colonies to reaffirm French title to the region. In 1604 the Sieur de Monts, acting under a royal charter, initiated French colonies by settling a small island in the mouth of the St. Croix river. While the island seemed to be in a strategic military position, and on a key route to the interior, the French could not have picked a worse site for settlement. The island had little arable land, virtually no fresh water, and suffered constant battering from the elements since it was located far out in the river. During one miserable year on the hostile wind-swept island, at least thirty-five colonists died. At this point, the French realized their mistake, and moved the colony across the Bay of Fundy to a more favorable site, Port Royal, Nova Scotia. This again proved a shortlived venture, for in 1607, when de Monts'
exclusive trading rights were removed by his king, he and his men abandoned the settlement. 23

Even after the departure of de Monts, the French maintained a presence in the region. Fishermen and traders visited, and in 1610 the French resettled Port Royal. Three years later, Father Pierre Biard, and several other Jesuit missionaries formed a settlement on Mount Desert Island. Yet again French colonizing efforts met with tragedy. In 1613 Samuel Argall, acting under commission of Governor Thomas Dale of Virginia, sailed north to Acadia, captured the French settlers and burned their settlement. 24

Though their presence in the region was occasional and fleeting, the French had much more amicable relations with the natives than did the English. As trading partners of the Micmacs and Etchemins, the French rapidly became firm allies of these tribes. The Etchemins and Micmacs had apparently been trading with the French and other Europeans long before the French settled in Acadia. Trade goods first trickled into Maine in the sixteenth century. Though some may have come from European explorers and fishermen, evidence suggests that few Europeans visited Maine in the sixteenth century, certainly not enough to explain the large amount of European goods noted there by Brereton, Pring and other visitors in the first years of the seventeenth century. Most European goods came through distant trade ties, either via the French on the St. Lawrence or European fishermen in Newfoundland. Apparently the Etchemins frequently traveled up the Penobscot and Kennebec to the St. Lawrence, for in 1603 Champlain found them at the Montagnais village at Tadoussac, a major Indian


trading center. The Etchemins, allied with the Montagnais and Algonquians, were celebrating a victory over their mutual enemy, the Iroquois. These Etchemins apparently came not only to fight the Iroquois but also to trade furs. When exactly they began to tap into the fur trade of the St. Lawrence is impossible to say but the Etchemins were still doing it around 1610, when Samuel Purchas noted that they had been trading with the French on the St. Lawrence "for a long time." 25

A more significant trade developed between the Europeans and the natives of New England when the Micmacs began acting as "middlemen." The Micmacs apparently visited Newfoundland where they traded furs with the Basques and other European fishermen. From these distant points, trade goods followed long-established prehistoric trade routes to Maine. A Norse penny, as well as lithic materials from as far away as Labrador, followed similar paths to reach the Ceramic Period camp on Blue Hill Bay now known as the Goddard site. This trade relationship was remarkable because the Micmacs and Etchemins used European shallops to carry out trade in the Gulf of Maine. Gosnold's encounter with natives in Basque shallops had been no isolated incident, for Lescarbot and Champlain noted them several times in 1606. One, spotted by Lescarbot about forty leagues off Cape Breton, had a moose painted on its sail. In 1607 the Sagadahoc colonists met a native shallop, and so too did Henry Hudson in 1609. By the early 1600s, the Micmacs and Etchemins had become the "middlemen" in a large trade nexus. Receiving their goods from Europeans on the St. Lawrence and from

Newfoundland, they proceeded to trade European goods to their neighbors as far south as Massachusetts Bay. 26

The term "middleman" needs further definition because many scholars use it far too loosely. Middleman implies an intermediary status in a capitalist economy, yet the Micmacs and Etchemins did not see their role in the fur trade in this classic capitalist interpretation. To the natives, trade traditionally operated on several levels. First, it represented a chance to acquire goods normally unavailable to them. Second, it represented reciprocal gift giving, which cemented friendship and alliance between two individuals or bands. Trade was not acquisitive in nature. Indeed, in reciprocal gift exchanges, and in redistributive gift givings, natives often attempted to get the worst end of a trade, not the best. To give more and better gifts than one received in return meant that you were a wealthier and more important person than your partner in the trade. 27

The term middleman suggests that the Micmacs, Iroquois, and other Indian tribes who enjoyed their middleman status were capitalist in mindset that is, they acted as middlemen to acquire goods. However, this makes little sense, given traditional native values and lifeways. Natives did not possess a capitalist mentality. The recent work on the Hudson's Bay Company's fur trade by Arthur Ray and Donald Freeman provides important information on native trading mentality. While the Indians of Hudson's Bay drove hard bargains and sought the best deal among competing fur buyers, they did not always demonstrate conventional European economic behavior. The Indians wanted better quality goods, but did not feel they should be charged more for the improved product. Instead, they felt that products of poor quality should never have been sold to them. Even


more telling was the native response to increased prices. When the Hudson's Bay Company raised the price they would pay for a beaver skin, they did so in anticipation that the Indians would bring in more furs to trade. Instead, the Indians brought in fewer furs because fewer furs were needed to obtain the same amount of goods they had received in the past. Even if they did acquire some elements of a capitalist mindset, the natives had little use for surplus trade items. 28

Like the natives of northern Canada, the Micmacs and Etchemins were migratory hunters and gatherers. With seasonal homes, these mobile people had to be able to carry most of their possessions with them from camp to camp. Under these circumstances, the Indians could never trade for more than they could carry in their canoes, nor could they possess more than they could readily move. This meant that there was a relatively fixed amount of goods needed by a tribe. After each male tribe member had a gun, blanket, knife, kettle, clothes, and a few other minor European goods, they would have more than met their needs. Certainly, some replacements would be necessary on account of breakage. Some goods would also be lost when they were interred as grave goods. To date only three definite contact period burials have been found in Maine. All three were buried with copper sheeting and wampumpeague, but no other grave goods. While the sheeting does represent trade goods in the form of reworked copper kettles, this is a relatively small amount when compared to more southerly contemporary burial grounds, such as Burr's Hill, a seventeenth-century Wampanoag burial ground in Rhode Island. Clearly

archaeologists need to excavate many more contact period burials before scholars can
determine the nature, extent, and significance of grave goods in Maine. 29

Contact period burials and settlement sites could shed much light on the
development of the fur trade and the role of native middlemen in the early contact era. The
recent research of Bruce Bourque and Ruth Whitehead has opened new avenues of research
by stressing the importance of middlemen in the Maine fur trade. The presence of native
middlemen explains several discrepancies in the documentary record. If few
Europeans visited the coast of Maine in the sixteenth century, why did John Walker note so
many trade pelts? And how did the natives noted by Rosier and other early seventeenth
century explorers get their abundance of European items? Clearly, some Indians were
going trade goods on the St. Lawrence and at Newfoundland and then distributing
them along native trade networks. 30

This pattern also explains the different reactions of natives to early seventeenth-
century explorers. Some seemed very familiar with Europeans, while others had little or
no knowledge of them. Probably the Indians Waymouth met in 1605 had heard of
Europeans from their neighbors who had already encountered them. They may also
have seen European goods for which other Etchemins had traded. Rosier's description of
the natives, however, indicates that Indians living around the St. George River were
unaccustomed to Europeans. They marvelled at the English who fished with a net,
indicating they had never seen European seamen before. Though they knew the English

29 For details on contact period burials in Maine, see Camp, Excavations at Pemaquid, 75-
77; Warren K. Morehead, Archaeology of Maine (Andover, Mass.: 1922), 145; Warren K.
New England, January, 1924. One other possible contact period burial was found on the
shore of Blue Hill Bay in 1899 by a team of archaeologists from the Smithsonian. The
skeleton was found in a full suit of armor. See Arthur E. Spiess, "A Skeleton in Armor: An
Unknown Chapter in Maine Archaeology," Maine Archaeology Society Bulletin, XXII,

30 Bourque and Whitehead, "Tarrentines and the Introduction of European Trade Goods in
the Gulf of Maine," 19-22.
wanted furs, they seemed unaware of trading practices and goods. They had never before seen such a relatively common trade item as a shirt. And while in future years Indians would demand alcohol in trade, these Indians were unacquainted with it and after sampling aqua vitae they would not drink it. Further, Rosier does not mention the Indians having any European goods or clothes. These Indians present a stark contrast to those encountered by Gosnold in 1602, who sailed a Basque shallop, wore European clothes, and seemed well versed in trade practices. The first group of Indians had only received European goods from their northern neighbors, while the Indians in the Basque shallop were some of the "middlemen" of the trade. 31

It is difficult to fully assess the impact of trade and trade goods upon the native culture of Maine. Francis Jennings and other historians have suggested that the advent of European goods quickly destroyed traditional native crafts and lifeways. While European goods did bring rapid change, these scholars have tended to overemphasize the rate of change. Many trade goods were used in traditional ways. For example, copper kettles replaced more fragile vessels made of pottery or birchbark. Sometimes copper kettles were cut up and their pieces fashioned into projectile points or other traditional items. Just because an Indian owned European goods did not mean that he began to think or live like a European. During the contact period the fur trade made its greatest impact on native society in less direct ways. 32

Disease, introduced to the native population by European traders, caused the most abrupt change in Indian society. The effect of disease on the natives of northern New England has been relatively overlooked by researchers. Though Sherburne Cook titles his study The Indian Population of New England in the Seventeenth Century, he limits his demographic analysis to the tribes south of the Saco River. Even Kenneth Morrison, who

32 Jennings, The Invasion of America, 39-42.
devotes an entire monograph to the Abenakis, spends only a brief paragraph on the impact of disease, yet it was a major force for change for the Etchemins in the first two decades of the seventeenth century. 33

Population estimates for Maine before contact vary. Clearly the region supported a sparse population during the Paleo-Indian and Early Archaic eras but after this time favorable changes in climate and the growth of natural resources probably increased the land's carrying capacity. Prehistoric and contact period demography has been an area of much scholarly debate for it is difficult to take late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century native censuses and extrapolate an estimate for earlier times. The pioneer in Indian demography was James Mooney, who published Aboriginal Population of America North of Mexico in 1928. Mooney believed that the native population of Maine in 1600 was approximately 3,000. For many years, researchers based all subsequent calculations on Mooney's methodology. Recently, however, scholars have been revising Mooney's estimates upwards, realizing that he did not fully take into account the high levels of Indian mortality during "virgin soil epidemics." These epidemics swept through native society soon after European contact, killing as much as ninety percent of native populations in some areas, for the Indians had virtually no resistance to European strains of disease.34

Recently Dean Snow has revised Mooney's estimates upwards to 11,900. He bases his estimate on a detailed account of the location and size of Maine Indian villages provided by five Etchemins kidnapped by the Waymouth expedition in 1605. Mooney overlooked this important source first published in 1625 in Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrims. The data derived from Purchas include the names of all Indian villages from the


Saco to Penobscot rivers, the number of men in each village, the number of houses, and the name of the local sagamore. Purchas lists twenty-one villages, ranging in size from 8 to 160 houses. Snow assumes that adult men made up thirty percent of the population. Using these figures, Snow finds these villages ranged in size from 130 to 1,100 individuals, with an average village holding roughly 500 people, or just under 8 people per house.35

This first Maine Indian "census," taken before the earliest known epidemic, suggests that the natives far up the Kennebec and Androscoggin Rivers migrated much less than those on the Penobscot. Both Champlain and Smith attested to the fact that the Kennebec and Androscoggin Indians planted corn. Purchas' population data confirms the presence of large villages (often a sign of agriculture) up the Kennebec and Androscoggin rivers. The many settlements on these rivers were generally larger than the settlements on the Penobscot and further inland. Ketangheanycko (probably Waterville), located far up the Kennebec, had 330 men, and other interior villages were even larger. The presence of large villages, many miles distant from the resources of the ocean, suggests that the residents (either Almouchiquois or Abenakis) had a strong commitment to agriculture and migrated less than the Penobscot Etchemins. 36

Fortunately Dean Snow has grasped the significance of disease on the native of Maine, and his research, combined with documentary evidence, provides a baseline for Etchemin population decline. The detailed "census" was not published until 1625, but it was based on information compiled around 1605. It indicates that roughly ten to twelve thousand Etchemins lived between Casco Bay and Penobscot Bay. South of them on the Saco River, Patuxets lived in large sedentary villages. The observations of Champlain and others indicate the extent of the native population at the turn of the seventeenth century.


Two waves of plague swept through Maine in the early seventeenth century and both devastated the population. While the natives of North America could fend off the advances of the French and English in the early seventeenth century, they had no defense against, no immunity to, the microbes the Europeans brought with them. Even childhood diseases, such as chicken pox and measles, proved fatal to adult natives. As a result, shortly after contact with Europeans, lethal virgin soil epidemics swept through the native population.

The natives of Maine and the Atlantic Provinces first suffered from an epidemic about 1611. Biard noted that "they are astonished and often complain that since the French mingle with and carry on trade with them, they are dying fast and the population is thinning out . . . One by one the different coasts according as they have begun to traffic with us, have been more reduced by disease." These outbreaks, probably pleurisy and dysentery, ravaged the lands north of the Androscoggin River, the southern limit of French trade and influence. In one Micmac village alone, sixty persons (the majority of residents) died in a single season.

The Indians of southern New England did not suffer from this early outbreak, but they felt the full weight of the pandemic of 1616-1619. The epidemic hit hardest around Massachusetts Bay, whence it quickly spread through the densely populated Patuxet and Massachusetts villages. Yet the outbreak of disease also reached natives as far north as the mid-coastal region of Maine. Visitor after visitor to the coast of New England described the grisly remains of plague. While living near the once populous village of Chouacoet in the


38 Thwaites, ed., Jesuit Relations, III, 110.

39 Thwaites, ed., Jesuit Relations, I, 177; III, 110; Arthur E. Spiess and Bruce D. Spiess, "New England Indian Pandemic of 1616-1622: Cause and Archaeological Implications," unpublished manuscript in possession of author, 12; Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 58.
winter of 1616, Richard Vines noted that "the country was in a manner left void of inhabitants." 40 Three years later, when Thomas Dermer sailed south from Monhegan Island he echoed Vines' sentiments, finding "some ancient plantations, not long since populous now utterly void; in other places a remnant remains, but not free of sickness." 41

It is difficult to tell from the sparse and varied descriptions, some written many years after the fact, the exact nature of these epidemics. Scholars have traditionally suggested diseases ranging from plague to smallpox or yellow fever. Recently, two new possibilities have been put forth. Noting the widespread presence of pig bones at early seventeenth-century Indian sites, Billee Hornbeck has suggested that Indians may have died from trichinosis, contracted from eating diseased pork. Alternatively, Arthur and Bruce Spiess suggest hepatitis as a cause. The observations of John Smith suggest that a combination of these diagnoses is correct. He wrote that "they had three plagues in three

40 Though Vines' journal of the trip does not survive, Sir Ferdinando Gorges later wrote an account based on the journal. See James Phinney Baxter, ed., Sir Ferdinando Gorges and His Province of Maine (3 vols.; Boston, 1890), II, 19. Francis Jennings has hypothesized that the epidemic of 1616-1619 may have been deliberately started by Vines, to weaken the native population and make way for European settlement. Though he cannot prove the point, Jennings is struck by a series of coincidences surrounding Vines. The outbreak of plague, in 1616 coincides with the arrival of Vines, a physician. It is notable too that Vines' journal does not survive, only Gorges' narrative based on it. Though many such seventeenth-century journals do not survive, there remains a slim possibility that Vines' was deliberately destroyed to eliminate references to the deliberate infection of the Indians.

41 Thomas Dermer, "To His Worshipful Friend Mr. Samuel Purchas," Sailors' Narratives, ed. George P. Winship, 251.
years successively." 42 This comment, combined with the variety of descriptions of the disease, the extremely high mortality rate, and the prolonged period of infection, raises the distinct possibility that several pathogens combined to have a devastating impact on the natives.

These outbreaks exacted a heavy toll on the native population. Biard reported that roughly 2,500 Eastern Etchemins died, out of a total pre-epidemic population of about 7,500. The Western Etchemins fared much worse, suffering 9,000 deaths out of a population of 12,000. The Patuxets of the York and Saco Rivers probably suffered even higher casualty rates because after the 1616-1619 epidemic, the once crowded villages of the region were completely abandoned. If any tribal members survived the plague, they probably moved south and united with other Patuxets. 43

Disease did not have an equal effect on all natives of New England, for it tended to spread along lines of European contact, the source of illness. While the contagion affected the Indians from Nova Scotia to Cape Cod, the most deaths occurred among the agriculturalists south of the Saco River, people who lived in densely populated sedentary


villages. The many deaths from these plagues worked to the advantage of the European invaders of New England. When colonists arrived in southern New England in the 1620s and 1630s they found many acres of open fields which Indians had abandoned during the plague of 1616-1619. In their weakened state, the natives of southern New England could do little to oppose English settlement of these prime locations. Instead, many native groups made defensive alliances with the English.  

Though not as many Maine Indians died as their southern neighbors, the combined ravages of plague and warfare had a striking effect on the northern hunters. Disease hit the Western Etchemins so severely that they ceased to exist as a tribe. Survivors presumably either moved east and joined the Eastern Etchemins or were assimilated by the Abenakis, who moved south to occupy the tribal lands of the Western Etchemins and the Maine Patuxets. In the 1620s, the French missionary Gabriel Sagard wrote from Quebec that "the Saguenay River is bordered by mountains among which live the Etchemins in quite small numbers for they have been nearly all killed in diverse wars and encounters with the Canadians."  

Indian place names demonstrate the exodus of Western Etchemins and the influx of the Abenakis. An example comes from present-day Castine, located at the confluence of the Penobscot and Majabigwaduce Rivers. The ethnographer Fannie Hardy Eckstorm noted that in 1611 Father Biard referred to the Majabigwaduce by the name "Chiboctous," a Micmac or Etchemin word. The next time the river is mentioned in 1625 the name had changed to "Chebeguadose," an Abenaki word. From this time forward, the Etchemin term never appears again, only variations on the Abenaki which have resulted in the current

44 Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 102-6.

45 Bruce Bourque, "Native Populations After 1500," manuscript in possession of the author; Hoffman was the first to suggest that the Etchemin were wiped out by plague. See Hoffman, "Souriquois, Etchemin and Kwedech," 69-72. I am indebted to Bruce Bourque for sharing his ideas as well as his unpublished paper "Native Populations after 1500." Though the French usually used the term "Canadians" to describe the Montagnais, in this case it probably refers to the Micmacs.
"Majabigwaduce." Thus, by 1625, the Western Etchemins had apparently abandoned their stronghold at the mouth of the Penobscot River. 46

Another gauge of the decline of the Western Etchemins is the raids of the Micmacs (or Tarrentines). The Western Etchemins acted as a buffer between the Micmacs and the tribes of New England. When the Bashabes was allied with the Chouacoets, the horticulturalists of coastal New England suffered few incursions from the Micmacs. However, once war and disease decimated the Western Etchemins, no tribe stood between the Micmacs and the agriculturalists. Throughout the 1620s, the Micmacs terrorized the natives of coastal New Hampshire and Massachusetts in a series of raids. Bradford, Winthrop, and other Puritan chroniclers note these attacks, which occurred until 1632. Indeed, the raids helped the English secure defensive alliances with the weakened tribes of southern New England. 47

The effects of disease went far beyond weakening the physical strength of the natives. The scourge virtually uprooted native society and culture. Though Thomas Morton was most familiar with the area around Merry Mount, he may have also drawn on his experiences in Maine in his depiction of the utter breakdown of Indian society. "They died on heaps as they lay in their houses; and the living, that were able to shift for themselves, would run away and let them die, and let their carcases lie above ground without burial... left for crows, kites and vermin to prey upon." 48 The Indians, who normally showed great care and ceremony in the burial of their dead, were physically and spiritually unequipped to deal with this problem. They had little understanding of the nature of 46

46 Eckstorm, Indian Place Names, 195-98; Thwaites, ed., Jesuit Relations, II, 49.


disease so shamans, the traditional tribal healers, stood powerless as people perished. Their helplessness led many natives to question the shaman as well as their deeply held tribal beliefs. Much as the Puritans of New England would see King Philip's War as a sign of God's displeasure, native populations must have searched their own spirit world for causes of their horrible plight. When numerous members of a band died, traditional forms of kinship underwent rapid change. The decimated tribes had to reorganize into new family and band units, based more on necessity than close blood ties. The Indians were a non-literate culture who passed on tribal crafts, history, and religion through oral tradition. As disease randomly killed off large segments of the population, tribes must have lost important collective knowledge. Loss of such traditional skills as flint knapping, pottery making, and weaving made Indians increasingly reliant on substitute European trade goods. 49

While disease greatly weakened tribes, inter-tribal war also contributed to native population decline. Archaeological and documentary evidence both indicate that warfare was common before European contact. Strife seems to have been a natural by-product of the native political order. One problem was the lack of central authority, even within a single band. Sagamores were not all-powerful chiefs but leaders who ruled by consensus. Though Rosier described a strongly hierarchical society, Biard was closer to the truth when he noted that "they have sagamores, that is, leaders in war; but their authority is most precarious....Obedience is in no ways obligatory....The Indians follow them through the persuasion of example or of custom, or of ties of kindred or allegiance." 50 Christopher Levett, a visitor to the coast of Maine in 1623, echoed Biard's sentiments. "Their

49 Axtell, The European and the Indian, 249-51; Cronin, Changes in the Land, 89-91; Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 105-6.

sagamores are no kings, as I verily believe, for I can see no government or law amongst them but club law: and they call all masters of ships sagamore, or any other man, that they see have a command of men." 51

These Indians pledged primary allegiance to their band. Bound together by ties of kinship, band members considered each other as social equals. Though bands had some kinship ties to neighboring groups, they had little tribal unity. Alvin Morrison has suggested that the Indians of Maine formed a confederacy under one ultimate leader. Morrison's evidence for a confederacy lies largely in the far-reaching influence of Bashabes, Chief sachem of the Western Etchemins. While Bashabes lived on the Penobscot River, Indians on the Kennebec answered to him, and those as far south as the Saco were his allies. All scholars agree with Alvin Morrison that Bashabes was an important regional spokesman; however, few would go so far as to suggest Bashabes headed a confederacy. Recently, Bruce Bourque and Steven Cox have asserted that Bashabes headed an economic network, not a military alliance. Bourque and Cox cite several occasions when Bashabes should have provided military assistance to his neighbors if he headed a defensive league. Trade, not defense, appears to have held Bashabes and his neighbors in loose alliance. Indeed, it seems unlikely that the Maine Indians formed a league, for they maintained much independence at both the individual and tribal levels. Under such conditions, confederacy was an impossibility. 52

Revenge, a strong factor among these kin-related bands, not only prevented lasting alliances but also fueled war. Biard noted that "they wage war as a tribe on account of


wrong done to a private individual. The whole race is very vengeful." 53 Biard criticized
the Indians for their vengeance without realizing that it was not a character fault. The clan
and kinship were strong ties in Indian society, and a wrong done to one member of the clan
was suffered by all. As such, revenge acted as a source of law and justice, a counterweight
to prevent wrong doing. Unfortunately, the revenge motive ran so deeply among most
Indians that while it may have stopped some misdeeds, once an insult or bodily injury took
place, the initial incident soon snowballed into a long bitter war. 54

European observers witnessed the extent of native bitterness during a violent series
of inter-tribal hostilities in the first two decades of the seventeenth century, which have
been variously labelled the Micmac War or the Tarrentine War. In this struggle, the
Micmacs and Eastern Etchemins warred with the Western Etchemins and the Chouacoets, a
Patuxet tribe of sedentary agriculturalists living on the Saco River. These groups had been
fighting long before the arrival of the Europeans. The Eastern Etchemins told Champlain
that the Chouacoets had long before built a palisade to protect themselves against their
enemies, and that on the Kennebec "the savages who plant corn dwelt very far in the
interior, and that they had given up planting it on the coast on account of the war they had
with others who came and took it away." 55 These others were probably the Eastern
Etchemins themselves, for they admitted to Champlain that the Indians of the Sagadahoc
were their enemies. Yet the next year, Champlain again travelled to the Kennebec, led by

53 "Biard to Reverend Father," Thwaites, ed., Jesuit Relations. II, 73.

54 "Biard to the Reverend Father," Thwaites, ed., Jesuit Relations. II, 73; For the
importance of kinship, see Salisbury, Manitou and Providence. 41-42; The work among
the Penobscot Abenakis by ethnographer Frank Speck in the 1920s confirmed the
importance of kinship among the Abenakis. See Speck, Penobscot Man. 203-12.

an Eastern Etchemin whose wife came from the region. Clearly, the Kennebec Etchemins traded spouses as well as blows with their neighbors. 56

Limited raids, if not all-out war, were occurring from the arrival of the French. In 1605 Champlain rescued some Eastern Etchemins being held captive on the Kennebec. The next year the French secured the release of a Micmac boy held at Chouacoet. That same year, leaders of both the Micmacs and Eastern Etchemins journeyed to Chouacoet, ostensibly to work out tribal differences, but the end result was the complete alienation of the two hostile groups. According to Lescarbot, the Micmac sachem Messamoet opened the meeting by offering to trade "kettles, large, medium, and small, hatchets, knives, dresses, capes, red jackets, peas, biscuits, and other such things." 57 The Micmacs, as French allies, had access to trade goods. In return, they would receive the Chouacoet agricultural surplus, supplies the Micmac hunters needed to survive the winter and early spring starving times.

The Chouacoets were unmoved by Messamoet, their long-standing enemy who insultingly offered them an inferior status in a trade relationship. The Micmac chieftain tried again, stressing how they could mutually overcome their enemies with the help of the French and telling them he was the man to lead the alliance, for he had personally visited France and stayed in the home of the mayor of Bayonne. To emphasize his trading power, he then flung into Olmechin's canoe all his trading merchandise, "which in those parts was worth more than three hundred crowns cash." 58


57 Lescarbot, History, II, 323-24; Biggar, ed., Works, I, 299, 364; Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 66-69; Lescarbot did not actually attend the meeting but learned about it from others who had.

58 Lescarbot, History, II, 323-24; Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 67-68; Alvin Morrison has stressed that Messamoet's behavior would have been considering quite insulting. See Morrison, "Membertou's Raid", 150-51.
Olmechin returned the insult the next morning when he delivered a canoe full of corn, beans, and other foodstuffs to Messamoet. While Messamoet had trade connections with the French, Olmechin demonstrated that he had a wealth of agricultural goods. Rather than accept inferior status in an alliance with former enemies, Olmechin quickly negotiated a separate alliance with the French. Meanwhile, relationships worsened in the north when in the fall of 1606 a group of Micmacs or Eastern Etchemins, led by Iouscaniscou, raided the Penobscot and Kennebec and killed several Indians. Shortly afterwards followers of Olmechin and Marchin ambushed a Micmac party, killing the sagamore Panoniac. The Micmacs were on their way to Chouacoet, to again attempt to form a trade alliance. Either the Chouacoet were sick of the boastful Micmac traders and their insulting offers of alliance, or the agriculturalists were seeking revenge for Iouscaniscou's attack. 59

Regardless of motive, Panoniac's attack galvanized the Micmac alliance into swift retaliation. The Eastern Etchemins, Micmacs, Abenakis under Sasinou, and even St. Lawrence tribes rallied together and agreed to avenge the death of the popular sachem and to gain trade hegemony. In the summer of 1607, this group attacked Chouacoet. Though Lescarbot described the battle in detail, he learned of the raid only when the Micmacs returned to Port Royal. According to Lescarbot, four hundred warriors descended on Chouacoet. While this figure is probably an exaggeration, it does suggest that the Micmac war party was large. Despite their numbers, it took several French muskets as well as steel arrow points to achieve what Alvin Morrison has described as "the Micmac sack of Saco."

59 Lescarbot, History, III, 273; Biggar, ed., Works, I, 435-443, 457; Salisbury suggests the killing of Panoniac was for revenge, while Morrison feels it was because he came to trade. Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 69; Alvin Morrison, "Membertou's Raid," 150-51.
Olmechin, Marchin, and many other Chouacoet allies fell as the Micmac alliance carried the day. 60

After the crushing victory, the war dragged on for several years. In 1614 John Smith planned to settle the coast of Maine and establish good relationships with Nahanada and his people through trade and by his protection of them against the "Tarrentines." The Admiral of New England's grand scheme never came to fruition and even if it had, it would have come too late for in 1615 the Micmacs made a final assault on the Western Etchemins. The attack signaled a Carthage-like end to Bashabes' alliance. The super-chief himself was killed, along with his warriors then the tribe's women and valuables were carried away. After this defeat, the confederacy collapsed as surviving sachems could not agree on a new leader. Instead of uniting against the Micmacs, they began to war amongst themselves, killing their former allies and destroying their foodstuffs. Famine soon killed many Etchemins, only to be followed quickly by the plague of 1616-1619. By 1620, the once populous and prosperous land of the Western Etchemins "was left desert without any to disturb or appease" either the Micmacs or Europeans. 61

While traditional emnity existed among Maine tribes, the French played a key role in escalating hostilities into a widespread deadly struggle. The Micmacs allied themselves with the French and hoped to use the tie to dominate their southern neighbors politically and economically. Clearly, the Tarrentine conflict had strong economic overtones, for the Micmacs and Eastern Etchemins saw the southern Maine cornlands as a key to their surviving the starving times in the bleak and cold winter. John Smith claimed that

60 Marc Lescarbot, "The Defeat of the Armouchiquois Savages by Chief Membertou and his Savage Allies," trans. Thomas Goetz, in William Cowan, ed., Papers of the Sixth Algonquian Conference, 1974 (Ottawa, 1975), 160; Morrison, "Membertou's Raid," 150-52; Lescarbot's description of the battle may have actually been a series of raids during the summer of 1607; Bourque, personal communication to the author, September, 1985.

sometimes the followers of Bashabes themselves carried out raids on the Massachusett. The raiding hunters must have been most interested in stealing corn and other foodstuffs. The alliance of Western Etchemin hunters and corn growers from south of the Kennebec may have been the result of years of such raids. The Chouacoets apparently accepted nominal lordship of Bashabes, probably exchanging corn for his protection from the Micmacs and Eastern Etchemins. The Micmacs centered their attacks during the war on two areas, Chouacoet and the Penobscot. Chouacoet provided a valuable supply of corn, and the Micmacs could gain hegemony over the cornlands only by destroying the Western Etchemins who protected the south. Recently Bourque and Whitehead have challenged this traditional interpretation, arguing that the Micmacs and Eastern Etchemins were not overly concerned with their food supply. Instead of food they sought furs from the agriculturalist Indians to increase their profit as middlemen. As proof they cite two occasions when the Micmacs or their allies traded foodstuffs. In 1603 Champlain encountered some Indians (probably Micmacs) on their way to Tadoussac to trade their moose meat for pelts. Three years later, during the meeting at Chouacoet, Messamoet offered peas, beans, and biscuits in trade. The Indians could store these European foodstuffs until the winter starving times.

Though Bourque and Whitehead present an intriguing argument, their examples fail to prove their point. The Micmacs offered moose meat in July, a time when food was in rich supply. Though there were limited ways to preserve meat killed in the summer, the Indians rarely concerned themselves with storing foods for the winter. Moose meat is notoriously tough during the summer, so the Indians probably preferred to trade it or even give it away, rather than to have to consume it themselves. Messamoet's trade offer was an even less typical transaction, for he gave over 300 crowns worth of European goods and foodstuffs to impress the Chouacoet and to bring them into his trade nexus. He had to

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demonstrate his wide variety of European goods even if he had to give away foods he himself needed. Besides, peas, biscuits, and other European foods were probably still a novelty among the Chouacoets and would bring a high return in traditional foods such as corn, beans, and squash. 63

Further, Bourque and Whitehead's claim goes against most reports of the trade between natives of southern and northern New England. Though eventually the Micmacs would strip their lands of fur-bearing animals, Calvin Martin believes that the Micmacs did not begin to overexploit their source of furs until the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. During the 1620s, when the Micmacs raided Massachusetts tribes, they primarily sought food, not pelts. William Bradford wrote that the Massachusetts tribes "were much afraid of the Tarrentines, a people to the eastward which used to come in harvest time and take away their corn." 64 The fall harvest time would have been the worst time to raid for beaver pelts, as few beaver were trapped in the summer, and those pelts that were caught would have been of poor quality. Even if they had come in the spring, the Micmacs would have found few prime pelts, for John Smith noted "the furs of the northward are much better, and in much more plenty, than southward." 65 Indeed, Smith argued that the agriculturalist Indians were in a superior trading position because they had foodstuffs which the northern hunters needed. "In the north (as I have said) they begun to plant corn, whereof the south part have such plenty, as they have what they will from them of the north; and in the winter much more plenty of fish and fowl." 66 Smith stressed the large number of pelts he traded for on the trip, most of which he gathered in the mid-coastal

63 Ibid.; The information on the toughness of moosemeat is based on modern-day ethnographic research among the natives of northern sub-arctic Canada. Personal Communication, Richard T. Will to author, August, 1985.

64 Bradford, Of Plymouth Plantation, 126; Martin, Keepers of the Game, 62-63.


66 Ibid.
region of Maine. Smith felt he would have gotten far more than his "neer 1100 beaver skins, 100 martins, and neer as many otters" in trade had it not been for the competition of the French and some fishermen in the employ of Francis Popham. 67

Smith was the last Englishman to record the native society of northern New England before the full impact of the virgin soil epidemics hit. Christopher Levett, the next Englishman to write at length about the coast of Maine, noted the effects of the recent wars and diseases. Along the York River Levett found "good ground, and much aready cleared, fit for planting of corn and other fruits, having heretofore been planted by the savages who are all dead." 68 At the mouth of the Saco River, Levett did not mention any Indians, only a large quantity of cleared land. This was the same place where the French had observed the thriving village of Chouacoet before the plague and the Micmac War. The effects of disease and war became more apparent when Levett decided to settle at Quacke (present-day South Portland). He ultimately received permission to do so from the "Queen" of the land, for "her father was the Sagamore of this place, and left it to her at his death having no more children." 69 Scholars know little about these Indians south of Casco Bay so generalizations should not be made about their inheritance patterns. Among their society, queens, or female sachems may not have been unusual. Also, Levett may have commented on it only because in Europe, such female inheritances rarely occurred. However, this statement also raises the possibility that the extremely high mortality rates suffered during the previous twenty years meant that the only heir left to lead the tribe was a woman.

Levett also participated in the fur trade, a trade which, like the native population had changed from the dawn of contact. The language of the natives suggests that trade,

67 Ibid., 214. These and other figures given by Smith should be viewed with caution as he tended to exaggerate the wealth on New England so it would sound more attractive to potential colonizers.


69 Ibid., 267, 274.
particularly with the English, was growing more common. In 1602, Gosnold and his crew were surprised to encounter some Indians who spoke "diverse Christian words." Since the English could not understand them, the Indians probably spoke the combination of Basque and Algonkian which served as the trade language of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century along the St. Lawrence and in the Maritimes. By the 1620s growing contact between English and natives had led some Indians to pick up a smattering of English. When members of two tribes met at Levett's camp, they could not understand each other's language, so they conversed in broken English. The native vocabulary included some colorful idioms picked up from fishermen. Not only were the Indians beginning to speak English but they were developing a taste for liquor and tobacco, two items that would soon become staples of the trade. While the natives disliked the spirits Waymouth offered, they accepted the aqua vitae Levett served. In the twenty years between the two incidents the natives of Maine had sampled enough liquor to acquire a taste for it.

Despite these signs of increased English-Indian contact, trade had not yet become widespread. When Levett visited Cape Newagen, he met a large group of Indians, including some from as far away as Casco Bay. The party was travelling to Pemaquid to truck with a Mr. Witheridge, master of a West Country ship. It seems unlikely that Indians would travel all the way from Casco Bay to Pemaquid unless trade ships were still somewhat uncommon, or his prices or merchandise were particularly outstanding. Also Indians were not yet receiving large quantities of European weapons. During his stay in

70 Gabriel Archer, "The Relation of Captain Gosnold's Voyage to the North Part of Virginia," in Massachusetts Historical Society Collections Ser. 3, VIII (Boston, 1843), 73.

Maine, Levett "never saw more than two fowling pieces, one pistol, about four half-pikes, and three cutlases" among the natives. 72

Relations between the English and the natives reached a high point during Levett's visit. Although he did not trust the natives, he insisted on treating them fairly. When other Englishmen stole furs from the Indians or cheated them in trade, Levett tried to rectify the situation. The Indians admired Levett as much as he liked them. They frequently visited Quacke, bringing gifts and furs to trade. Samoset, the Maine sachem who befriended the Plymouth colonists, called Levett his "cousin" and hoped that his son and Levett's would go through life as great friends. When Levett announced to his friends that he must return to England, they expressed their distress and their hope for his speedy return. Unfortunately, Levett was unable to return to Maine to foster the continued growth of solid relations between the two groups. Instead, others with less understanding and concern for the natives would lead the settling of Maine. 73

72 Ibid., 271.

CHAPTER 3
"A FEW SCATTERED PLANTATIONS:"
THE ENGLISH SETTLERS OF MAINE

Historians tend to pass by the English in Maine to study the Puritans of southern New England. Though many historians and antiquarians working in the nineteenth and early twentieth century provided important groundwork for the study of early Maine, no significant contribution was made to the field from Robert Moody's 1933 dissertation, *The Maine Frontier 1607-1763*, until the publication of Charles Clark's *The Eastern Frontier* in 1970. The dearth of scholarship on early Maine is so severe that the most detailed history of the region remains William Williamson's 1832 classic, *The History of Maine*.¹

While Maine was a part of Massachusetts from the mid-seventeenth century, the society of this northern region differed from that of southern New England in many ways which scholars have just begun to explore. Colonization in Maine began slowly, initially as an outgrowth of the seasonal cod fishery. The first year-round settlement dates to 1622, when Sir Ferdinando Gorges established a fishing station on Damariscove Island. The next year fishermen planted stations at Cape Newagen, Piscataqua, and Monhegan Island. These fishing stations, run by contracted employees for absentee owners, were a half-way step between seasonal fishing operations and permanent settlements. Some of the fishermen

Figure 3. English Settlements in seventeenth-century Maine
settled permanently in Maine. Others returned to the mother country when their contracts expired.2

Maine's nascent political organization struck a compromise between anarchy and settled government. The region included numerous individual grants and various groups vying for control. In 1622 the Council for New England, successor to the moribund Plymouth Company, issued a patent to Sir Ferdinando Gorges and Captain Robert Mason to all the lands between the Merrimac and Kennebec rivers. The two ruled jointly until 1629, when they split their holdings in half, at the Piscataqua River. Mason took the region south of the Piscataqua (the Province of New Hampshire), and Gorges possessed the land north of the river, naming it the Province of Maine.3

Gorges drew up an elaborate plan of settlement and government complete with a royal governor and an archbishop residing in the capital city of Gorgeanna (previously known as Agamenticus and now known as York), but the scattered hamlets of his province grew slowly. Disappointed with its snail-like progress, Gorges made his nephew, Thomas Gorges, the deputy governor in 1639 and sent him to Maine to bring Sir Ferdinando's grand scheme to fruition.4

Though young and inexperienced, Thomas Gorges made a successful start at organizing the struggling colony. Most who observed him, including John Winthrop, agreed that Gorges demonstrated many talents. Unfortunately, the outbreak of the English civil wars squelched any hopes that he might have brought. The civil wars ended migration to New England and with it any chance for the rapid growth of Maine. Worse, in 1643, Thomas Gorges returned to England to fight. He left behind small settlements at Kittery,

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2 Clark, Eastern Frontier, 13-26; Griffin and Faulkner, "Coming of Age on Damariscove," 16-18.

3 Clark Eastern Frontier, 17-20; For a detailed discussion of Gorges and the numerous smaller grants, see Henry S. Burrage, The Beginnings of Colonial Maine, 1602-1658 (Portland, Me.: 1914), 197-220.

4 Clark, Eastern Frontier, 17-20.
Gorgeanna, and Wells. Though he entrusted the colony to a committee headed by Edward Godfrey, former mayor of Gorgeanna, for the next six years the province had virtually no government. Godfrey had little authority, and the events of the civil wars took up so much of Sir Ferdinando's time that he neglected the governance of his colony.5

The Province of Maine remained small due in part to the partitioning of the northern half of its territory. In 1631, the Council for New England took away from Gorges the land from the Kennebunk to Kennebec rivers and gave it to a group of immigrants who planned to settle there. Upon arriving in Maine in the Plough, the colonists disliked the region and sailed on to Boston, where they settled. Still, the "Plough Patent" became a separate jurisdiction of several small villages, known as the Province of Lygonia. A settlement at Saco (1630) was soon joined by others at Black Point and Blue Point (present-day Scarborough), Richmond's Island, Casco (1633), and North Yarmouth (1636). In 1643, Sir Alexander Rigby purchased Lygonia. As an absentee owner, Rigby contracted with George Cleeve, a leading resident of Casco Bay, to run the colony for him. Despite these efforts initially the settlements grew slowly. When John Josselyn arrived on the coast of Maine in 1638 he observed that "the country all along as I sailed" was "no other than a mere wilderness, here and there by the seaside a few scattered plantations, with as few houses." 6

Between the Kennebec and Penobscot rivers lay the Sagadahoc region. Fishermen and traders had settled Pemaquid in the late 1620s, making it the first permanent settlement in the Sagadahoc. In 1631 the Council for New England granted formal title to 16,000 acres at Pemaquid to Robert Aldworth and Gyles Elbridge, two Bristol merchants who financed the venture. The Council also granted several tracts west of Pemaquid, on the

5 Reid, Acadia, Maine, and New Scotland, 105-9; Burrage, Beginnings of Colonial Maine, 311-21; Clark, The Eastern Frontier, 46-48.

Kennebec and Pejebscot rivers. In 1629 the Plymouth Colony secured a tract of land up the Kennebec upon which they promptly built a trading post. Three years later, the Council granted land on the Androscoggin River to Thomas Purchase. In addition to these two posts, scattered homesteads soon dotted the Kennebec and Pejebscot. Between the Kennebec and Pemaquid rivers lay the Sheepscot river valley, an area of farmland gradually settled in the 1650s and 1660s. By 1665, fifteen families lived on the Sheepscot. Also fishermen congregated on the region's rocky islands and jutting peninsulas to fish for cod. It is difficult to judge the size of the largely seasonal population of fishermen living on the off shore islands, but in 1672 at least fifteen fishermen occupied Damariscove Island and eighteen worked on Monhegan Island.

Despite these grants and settlers, the Sagadahoc was largely an ungoverned frontier with little population growth until the third quarter of the seventeenth century. As late as 1654, only fourteen families lived on the whole Kennebec River, but that number more than doubled in the next eleven years. Population growth was confined to the area between the Kennebec and Pemaquid, for the region between Pemaquid and the Penobscot River served as a demilitarized zone between English settlements and French Acadia, which began on the east side of the Penobscot at Fort Pentagoet.

In the 1650s residents of southern Maine felt the political disorder prevalent in the Sagadahoc. In 1649 Mainers learned not only of the end of the monarchy in England but also of the death of Sir Ferdinando Gorges. In response, the towns of Kittery, York, and Wells formed a new government which ineffectively ran the Province of Maine under

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Gorge’s charter. The next year, Sir Alexander Rigby died, leaving Lygonia in even worse condition, for feuding local officials had brought near anarchy to the colony.9

Massachusetts dignitaries observed the confusion in the eastern parts. As the population and economy of southern New England grew, Massachusetts became increasingly aware of the wealth of land and natural resources of her northern neighbors and sought to expand her authority in that direction. In the early 1640s Massachusetts undertook an active campaign to annex New Hampshire, which was in the hands of a provisional government following the death of Robert Mason. By 1643 Massachusetts had accepted submissions from all the settlements in New Hampshire. The deaths of Gorges and Rigby provided the Bay Colony with a chance to make further territorial acquisitions. Beginning in 1652, Massachusetts sent agents to Maine to persuade the residents to submit to Bay authority. Though some violently opposed annexation, to most settlers Massachusetts offered welcome relief in the form of effective government. By 1658 all towns in the Province of Maine and Lygonia had been annexed by Massachusetts. Together, they composed the new Massachusetts county of York.10

Though Massachusetts united the residents of Maine under one government, these people still displayed great cultural, religious, and economic diversity. In the past few years historians, including Charles Clark, Edwin Churchill, and John Reid, have undertaken new studies of early Maine, and archaeologists have investigated several seventeenth-century sites in the state. As researchers accumulate new evidence and reevaluate traditional sources, one point becomes strikingly clear: the transplanted English culture in early Maine was both rich and varied. People came to Maine from all over old and New England to carry out numerous pursuits, including farming, fishing, and trading. This early melting


10 Burrage, Beginnings of Colonial Maine, 356-82; Reid, Acadia, Maine, and New Scotland, 131-5, 154-5; Charles T. Libby, Province and Court Records of Maine (Portland, 1928), I, 243-45; "The Petition of Several Inhabitants of the Eastern Parts, May 18, 1672," Suffolk County Court File 1117.
pot contained Englishmen of many religious persuasions, including Puritans, Anglicans, Quakers, and Antinomians. While the English dominated the population of the region, members of other nations resided there too. Scotsmen came to Maine in the 1650s, men who fled their homes after the unsuccessful 1649 royal uprising. Other settlers hailed from Ireland, the Netherlands, France, Portugal, and Greece. A small number of slaves further increased the cultural diversity of the region. 

Mainers held a wide spectrum of faiths and beliefs. The first Anglican chapel in New England was built in York in 1635, the first step in Sir Ferdinando Gorges plan to make York not only the capital of New England but also the see of an Anglican archbishop. Reverend John Wheelwright led a band of Antinomians who founded Wells. Some residents of Maine ardently adhered to Puritan tenets and pleaded with authorities in Massachusetts for ministers. Others cared little for religion, and worshiped only the deities of cod, timber, and beaver.

People migrated to Maine for many reasons. Historians of colonial Maine have tended to emphasize the development of fishing, trading, and timbering, and to overlook the importance of farming. However, by the 1640s agriculture had become quite important to Maine's economy. Cattle were exported from Pemaquid, the residents of Saco sold wheat, and farming communities had developed at York and Falmouth. In the Kennebec, farmers, fishermen, and traders lived side by side. Indeed, many settlers combined two or more pursuits to make a living. John Josselyn, a visitor to Maine between 1663 and 1671,

11 Clark, Eastern Frontier, 84, 87; Charles E. Banks, History of York, Maine (Boston, 1931), 206-12. At least a dozen Scots ended up in York, forming the settlement of "Scotland." For references to other nationalities in Maine, see Libby, ed., Province and Court Records, II, 106, 114, 237, 292, 458, 484.

12 Clark, Eastern Frontier, 36, 47-49; Spencer, Pioneers on Maine Rivers, 131; Churchill, "The Founding of Maine," 34.
noted that its people "are planters and fishers." Josselyn went on to describe the Sagadahoc as an area of fishermen, but one also "stored with cattle and cornlands."\textsuperscript{13}

At the time of Josselyn's visit the Sagadahoc remained a separate jurisdiction, still outside Massachusetts' control. In 1664 Charles II granted the area east of the Kennebec River to his brother James, duke of York, along with the lands occupied by the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam. The duke immediately sent forces to seize New Amsterdam and turn it into the proprietary colony of New York. Shortly afterwards, he established the County of Cornwall in the Sagadahoc, and placed it under New York jurisdiction. James, however, paid Cornwall scant attention, and soon the county government dissolved.\textsuperscript{14}

Only a few years later, the residents of the Sagadahoc sought to reorganize their government. In 1671 Jean Talon, the Intendant of New France, sent the Sieur de Saint-Lusson to the Sagadahoc to examine the possibility of annexing it. The inhabitants seemed eager for French rule for Saint-Lusson received "a princely reception with musket and cannon salutes" from colonists who "vied with one another in entertaining him."\textsuperscript{15} The shrewd Talon noted, however, that their joy might have been merely an act to appease French military might, for just the year before, the English had handed Acadia back to the


\textsuperscript{14} Reid, Acadia, Maine, and New Scotland, 153-54; Churchill, "Introduction: Pemaquid," x-xii.

French. By 1671 antiquated Fort Pentagoet housed only a small garrison, but its proximity to the virtually defenseless Sagadahoc settlements clearly alarmed the English.\textsuperscript{16}

Probably these defensive considerations led over ninety heads of families to petition Massachusetts to establish a government. Historians have used this 1672 petition as another example of the lawlessness of early Maine. The frailty of government and lack of magistrates and ministers have been combined with spectacular contemporary descriptions to form the traditional interpretation of Maine as a lawless wilderness. Recently, however, Edwin Churchill has demonstrated the many flaws in this picture. In their constant searches for a minister, their desire for government, and their harsh punishments for transgressors of the law, residents of early Maine showed a desire for a stable and morally upright community. The generalizations of lawlessness by such contemporary observers as Sir Ferdinando Gorges, Cotton Mather, and the Royal Commission of 1665 are unpersuasive because they were written to serve the interests of their authors. For example, Gorges described the fishermen of Maine as "behaving worse than savages" when he was defending his New England fishing monopoly against Parliament's attacks.\textsuperscript{17} By describing the fishermen as lawless, Gorges hoped to show the need for his monopoly, which could assert strict control over the fishermen.\textsuperscript{18}

The degree of order in early Maine is a difficult question, but one that is central to understanding not only English society but also English-Indian relations. Kenneth Morrison has adopted the 'lawless' interpretation of Maine society in his ethnohistorical studies of early Maine. Morrison sees King Philip's War in Maine as the result of a

\textsuperscript{16} Gretchen Faulkner, "Pentagoet: A Time Capsule, 1670-1674."


\textsuperscript{18} Churchill, "The Founding of Maine," 36.
breakdown of English law enforcement. When Indians committed crimes against Europeans, the English held the tribes responsible for enforcing punishment. Yet Morrison argues that, when the Indians complained of English transgressions, English magistrates claimed they did not have the authority or ability to bring the accused to justice. This anti-Indian bias in English law drove the Abenaki to war in 1675.19

In many cases, however, the "lawless" argument has been based on negative evidence, which implies that since there was no county government, the region was in anarchy. Clearly, the occasional crime occurred in the Sagadahoc, and often the Indians were its victims, but little solid evidence exists to judge the degree of stability of the Sagadahoc. The 1672 petition merely demonstrates that most residents wanted to join Massachusetts, a status that offered several benefits to the Sagadahoc, including establishment as a county and security of membership in a prosperous colony. In 1674 the Bay Colony responded by incorporating the Sagadahoc as the county of Devon, thus finally bringing all of English Maine under Massachusetts' jurisdiction.20

The region that became the county of Devon, including settlements at Sheepscot, Pemaquid, along the Kennebec River, and on the coastal fishing islands, serves as an important case study which sheds light both on the English society of early Maine, and on English relations with the natives. The Sagadahoc region was the center of the English fur trade in Maine; hence it was the location of much interaction between English and natives. The area was home to a large percentage of the Indian population of Maine and later served


as a principal battleground in both King Philip's War and King William's War. Thus the Sagadahoc was a focus of culture contact and culture conflict.

The English culture on the Sagadahoc contained great diversity. The region had extensive connections, and its settlers came from many backgrounds. Residents ranged from Ichabod Wiswell, a Harvard-educated minister, to William Dyer, a Quaker who had fled from Boston to Sheepscot after his wife had been hanged for her religious beliefs. Not all residents concerned themselves exclusively with day-to-day subsistence. In the 1650s, Thomas Elbridge had several books in his Pemaquid home, including a Bible, The Faith and Head of the Church, and A Plea for Grace and Military Discipline. Even the fishermen, often considered a rowdy, lawless element by historians, defy stereotyping. For example, Job Tookie, a fisherman on Damariscove Island, came from a long line of ministers and was destined for ordination when family problems forced him to leave Emmanuel College at Cambridge University and become an apprentice to a Boston sea captain. Such diverse residents could have been found in most seventeenth-century New England towns but this is exactly the point. For years Maine settlements have been singled out as uniquely different from the Puritan strongholds of southern New England. Contemporary observers and later historians have depicted early Mainers as thieving rogues and rowdy West Country fishermen but when historians look beyond the sweeping generalizations and study individuals, a far different pattern emerges. 21

Recently David Allen has noted that English immigrants to Massachusetts brought a variety of regional cultural values. Because of this diversity, it is impossible to stereotype the settlers of the Bay Colony. Clearly many studies on the culture of early Maine need to

21 The Sagadahoc was also the section of Maine that saw the most intensive Anglo-Indian interaction in the second half of the seventeenth-century. As such, it plays an increasingly more important role in the following chapters. Sybil Noyes, Charles T. Libby, and Walter G. Davis, Genealogical Dictionary of Maine and New Hampshire (1928-1939; reprint, Baltimore, 1979), 213, 766-67. For Job Tookie, see "Richard Knott v. Job Tookie," Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County, Massachusetts (Salem, Mass., 1921), VIII, 336-38. Spencer, Pioneers on Maine Rivers, 316; Middlesex County, Massachusetts, Deeds, II, 27.
be carried out before meaningful comparative work can begin. Still preliminary research indicates that Maine, like Massachusetts, was colonized by many different groups of Englishmen. Some Maine settlers hailed from the West Country; others came from London, Hertfordshire, Kent, and Lincolnshire. An even larger number belonged to the second generation of colonists in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. They moved to Maine after 1650 because land and opportunity were not as readily available as they had been for their fathers. A few, such as the "Frenchman" Hosea Mallet or an unnamed "Irishman" indentured to the Plymouth Company, added a little international flavor to the community. The mix of economic pursuits along the Kennebec included agriculture. Alexander Thwaites and Richard Hammond combined fur trading with farming. Others, such as Thomas Webber and Thomas Atkins, considered themselves both husbandmen and fishermen. Full-time fishermen lived on the islands near the mouth of the river, while other residents, like the Giles brothers of Merrymeeting Bay, came to Maine to farm. The farmers probably supplemented their work by cleaving clapboards and pipe staves for sale to local merchants.22

Several overlapping communities existed in the Sagadahoc. The islands and the coastal region were the domain of fishermen. Some, such as John Parker, established permanent residences. Other mariners moved about, owning no land and few possessions. They sometimes lived on Damariscove Island, on the Kennebec or in Pemaquid, and at

22 David G. Allen, In English Ways: The Movement of Societies and the Transferal of English Local Law and Custom to Massachusetts Bay in the Seventeenth Century (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1981), passim. Information on Kennebec families comes from unpublished research by the author on over 100 families in the Kennebec region in the seventeenth century. Information on the families was drawn primarily from Noyes, Libby, and Davis, Genealogical Dictionary. These data suggest that West Country men made up a much smaller percentage of residents of early Maine (or at least the Kennebec) than previously thought. For some details on Kennebec settlers, see Appendices 1 and 2. Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 98. "Edward Tyng, Humphry Davie et al to Alexander Brown, April 7, 1669," Kennebec Proprietor Papers. John Vinton, The Giles Memorial (Boston, 1859), 113-17.
other times they appear in Massachusetts fishing ports like Salem, where they brought their catch and purchased fishing supplies.23

Traditionally, historians have assumed that these fishermen and their descendants were unruly outlaws constantly in pursuit of drink, but Edwin Churchill has successfully challenged this stereotype in his recent dissertation on early Falmouth, Maine. By closely scrutinizing the detailed records from the Richmond's Island Station, a proprietary fishing post in the 1630s, Churchill determined that the demanding jobs and work schedule of fishermen allowed little time for merriment. Fishermen labored long hours in harsh conditions. Admittedly, when given their pay and time off, some fishermen went on amazing binges, but they rarely had the money or free time for such pleasures. Although some fishermen many have lived a wild life, it is difficult to generalize about the lifestyles of Maine fishermen. Churchill's study of over 100 fishermen at Richmond's Island demonstrated that "the men were a group of individuals differing radically from each other by almost every measure."24

While this diverse lot of fishermen inhabited the coast, the region up river supported a greater variety of activities. Fishermen plied the rivers for commerce as well as for dinner. The Pejebscot was "famous for multitudes of mighty large sturgeon," and the falls of the rivers supplied a multitude of salmon and other anadromous fish.25 Fishermen

23 John Josselyn noted the many fishing stages at the mouth of the Kennebec. Josselyn, "Account of Two Voyages," 374. Job Tookle is a good example of an itinerant fisherman. He shows up in records in Boston, Salem and Damariscove. See George Corwin, a Salem merchant in the mid-seventeenth century recorded, accounts with numerous fishermen from the Sagadahoc region. See the George Corwin Account Books, Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts.


journeyed up the Kennebec to Nequasset each spring where they harvested migrating alewives, the best bait for their deep sea operations.26

Rivers also harnessed waterpower in tide mills which processed timber. The timber industry had been important to New England since the 1630s, when it began in northern Massachusetts. The growth of the industry quickly led to deforestation along the Massachusetts coast, so during the 1640s and 1650s timbering operations moved east into New Hampshire and Maine. By the 1650s it reached the Kennebec region, where timber exports included pipe staves, barrel staves, and lumber. In August 1676 a hundred thousand feet of boards awaited transportation off Arrowsic Island.27

Shipbuilding developed from the timber trade. The prime timberlands and numerous tide mill locations made the Kennebec region ideal for shipbuilding. The commissioners for the crown in 1665 noted that "in these parts are the best white oakes for ship timber."28 Best known as a treasure hunter and first royal governor of Massachusetts, Sir William Phips began his career as a humble shipbuilder in his native Nequasset (present-day Woolwich).29

The Sagadahoc region also served as the center of the fur trade in eastern New England. The fur trade met with only limited success in eastern Massachusetts, New Hampshire and southern Maine, in large part because no rivers in this area allowed access into the hinterlands. With no long rivers, relatively small hunting grounds, and stiff


competition from expanding English settlements for land, southern New England's fur supply suffered rapid depletion, but the Indians of eastern Maine had a huge interior to hunt, and little competition from the English for use of these lands. Thus the rivers of eastern Maine bustled with fur trade activity, and many Englishmen who lived on the long thoroughfares participated in the trade to some extent.30

English inhabitants also farmed. Salt hay, growing on the abundant marshes of the midcoastal region of Maine, supported a large cattle industry. Some of the cattle bore the brand of Thomas Elbridge, the proprietor of Pemaquid. An inventory taken in 1653, when he sold his Pemaquid holdings lists six oxen, one steer, one bull, six cows, one heifer, four yearlings, and five calves. In addition to these twenty-four head of cattle, he owned twelve swine.31

The breadbasket of the Sagadahoc, however, was not the fishing and trading center of Pemaquid but the farming village of Sheepscot, known to contemporaries as "Sheepscot Farms." Though few records survive from Sheepscot, four families who fled the town at the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1676 recorded the substantial agricultural holdings they deserted. The most prominent farmer was William Dyer, who left behind fifty-six head of cattle and thirty swine on his six-hundred-acre farm. Together, Dyer and the other three families abandoned ninety-six head of cattle, fifty-two swine, nineteen acres of wheat, thirteen acres of Indian corn, and five acres of peas. In 1677 a Massachusetts

---30 The two partial exceptions to northern Maine domination of the fur trade are the the Merrimac and Saco rivers. These two rivers did see some continuation of the trade in the second half of the century. For the decline of the fur trade in southern New England see William I. Roberts, "The Fur Trade of New England in the Seventeenth Century," Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1958, 74-108.

military expedition to the Sagadahoc visited the burned village of Sheepscot and salvaged "thirty or fourty bushels of good wheat." 32

In his History of the Indian Wars William Hubbard referred to the "considerable river called Ships-coat, upon the banks of which were many scattered planters, who lately flying from their dwellings, for fear of the Indians, left, as was judged, a thousand head of neat cattle." 33 At first glance, Hubbard's estimate sounds like an exaggeration, but if only four out of Sheepscot's roughly thirty farming families left 96 cattle, 1000 cattle in the whole town becomes a realistic estimate, indicative of the prosperous agricultural community at Sheepscot Farms.

Corroborative evidence for the importance of farming in the Sagadahoc comes from archaeology. In the nineteenth century inhabitants of Sheepscot, examining the old cellarholes and relics from Sheepscot Farms, found charred corn and peas in abundance. Writing in the 1880s, David Cushman, a local historian, noted numerous cornhills in wooded areas that had not been cleared since the demise of the old settlement. One resident discovered a floor of closely laid flat fieldstones, measuring eighteen or twenty feet square. The size and nature of the floor suggests that this feature may have been a dairy. 34

Recent professional excavations at Pemaquid and the Clarke & Lake site on Arrowsic give more evidence of farming. These sites have produced scythes, hoes, and other farming implements as well as numerous pieces of horse and ox hardware. The

32 Spencer, Pioneers on Maine Rivers, 286. The figures given by Spencer are made in bushels of corn, wheat and peas planted. They have been converted to a more common estimate, that of acres planted, thorough the use of figures supplied in Harry J. Carman, ed. American Husbandman (New York, 1939), 38, 41, 72-3, 425. The figures given in American Husbandman were noted in 1775. Though they are 100 years after the Sheepscot figures, they represent estimates from a similar type of unimproved husbandry in New England and New York, and should be roughly equal to Sheepscot yields. The figure for peas is the least accurate, it being taken from estimates from planting of beans (a similar type of legume) in England. Hubbard, "A Narrative of Troubles," 223.

33 Hubbard, "A Narrative of Troubles," 73.

Clarke & Lake Company apparently raised large herds of cattle on Arrowsic. One structure excavated at the site includes a room with a fieldstone-lined floor, probably another dairy. The discovery of over five thousand pieces of plain utilitarian earthenware, mostly in the form of dairy vessels, strongly reinforces the dairy interpretation. The Clarke & Lake site is also littered with cattle bones, indicating that residents frequently consumed beef as well as dairy products.\(^{35}\)

Not all men had the wealth to enter commercial farming as did Dyer or Clarke and Lake. Rather, most Sagadahoc farmers probably planted some food crops and supplemented them with fishing, timbering, or fur trading. The one estate inventory that survives from the area at this time shows the necessity of a mixed economy. Robert Gutch (?-1667) of present-day Bath owned fourteen head of cattle and two pigs, but he had only six acres in tillage. This was a sizable number of livestock but a small amount of land in tillage. Historian Robert Gross estimates that to feed a family of six in colonial Concord required eight to ten acres in tillage for grain and another acre for a vegetable garden. Gutch must have fished or traded timber products for foodstuffs to supplement the diet of his family of ten.\(^{36}\)

Though no surviving documents indicate that Gutch traded furs, many of his Kennebec neighbors did. Some, such as Alexander Thwaites and Richard and Elizabeth Hammond traded to supplement farming income. North and west of Merrymeeting Bay farmsteads gave way to the isolated privately owned truckhouses which transacted the bulk of the trade. Thus, along the Kennebec, three distinct zones of settlement can be discerned. First, the coastal islands and river mouth were the home of fishermen, who may have


planted small gardens but used most of their land for cod drying flakes. Upriver several miles lay a more stable community of farmers, traders, and lumberjacks. Finally, on the cutting edge of the frontier stood the trading posts, run primarily by employees and indentured servants of wealthy merchants.\textsuperscript{37}  

Sagadahoc settlements differed little from those in contemporary Falmouth (now Portland), where fishermen and husbandmen formed two geographically and culturally distinct units of the population. Though the fishermen dominated Falmouth in its early years, by the middle of the seventeenth century the farming community was growing in size. Churchill has suggested that the growing number of yeomen in Falmouth was primarily responsible for the evolution of a stable and orderly community. These farmers led efforts to create local government, enforce laws, and get a minister. In the Sagadahoc, the interior trading posts formed a third community, but the same geographical pattern held true. Probably Sagadahoc farmers were also more concerned with a permanent and lawful community than the largely itinerant fishermen.\textsuperscript{38}

One document undermines this view of growing stability in the Sagadahoc. The Royal Commission of 1665 stressed the small, humble state of the Sagadahoc settlements and noted the wild activities of the fishermen. These findings, however, are balanced by Jean Talon's 1671 report which noted that both the Kennebec and Pemaquid "rivers are covered with fine English habitations, well built, and a beautiful open country."\textsuperscript{39} Both views are prejudiced by their authors' motives. The Royal Commission, which never even visited the Sagadahoc, emphasized the lawlessness of the region to justify their extension

\textsuperscript{37} For Thwaites' supply of furs, see \textit{York Deeds}, VIII, 159-60. The Hammond's, as well as many other up river traders are mentioned in the Kennebec Proprietor's Papers, Maine Historical Society. See also Noyes, Libby, and Davis, \textit{Genealogical Dictionary}, 304, 642-43.

\textsuperscript{38} Churchill, "The Birth and Death of Falmouth," 113-4, 351-60.

\textsuperscript{39} "Talon to Colbert, 1671," as translated in Reid, "French Aspirations in the kennebec-Penobscot Region, 1671," 88.
of government over the region. Talon, on the other hand, wrote to persuade his superior, Colbert, to annex the Sagadahoc settlements to Acadia.

Archaeological evidence shows that Sagadahoc residents made significant investments in sturdy homes and verifies Talon's observations. Excavations at Pemaquid and Arrowsic have revealed the remains of many well-built timber-framed houses, complete with stone cellars, clapboarded exteriors, and shingled roofs. The extensive use of nails and windows (expensive commodities in the seventeenth century) demonstrates that settlers invested much money in their houses. The permanent houses of the Sagadahoc are a material sign of the residents' desire for stability. 40

Documentary and archaeological evidence both point to the third quarter of the seventeenth-century as a crucial stage of development for the Sagadahoc in particular and for Maine in general. At this time the scattered hamlets dominated by West Country families rapidly gave way to growing settlements which utilized all the natural bounty of Maine. New colonists came from many places, but the largest segment came from Massachusetts and New Hampshire, where many members of the second generation of settlers could not find suitable land and opportunity (see Appendix 1). Led by these farmers and merchants from southern New England, people from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds ventured into the Sagadahoc and unleashed forces of change.41


41 See Appendix 1 for a table of immigrants into the Kennebec region from 1654-1676. The date 1654 is used as a starting point because this is the year of the first oath of loyalty taken by Kennebec residents. This is the earliest document to indicate who was living in the region. Men from the fishing settlements at Damariscove, Cape Newagon and Monhegan are not included in Appendix 1, because virtually no records relating to them appear aside from the 1672 petition for government in the Sagadahoc. They are difficult to trace genealogically, and it is virtually impossible to tell who were permanent residents and how long they had been fishing in the region. Very few if any of these fishermen can be traced to the West Country.
- location of one household

Figure 4. Kennebec settlements in 1654.
Figure 5. Kennebec settlements in 1675.
Changes in the Sagadahoc, however, occurred within a framework already established by the first settlers. In particular, new settlers had to obtain land from the first families who had purchased almost all the land from the Kennebec to Pemaquid from the natives during the second quarter of the seventeenth century. Two fur trading companies, the Plymouth Colony and the Clarke & Lake Company, purchased much of the land by deeds from the Indians but the remaining thousands of acres fell into the hands of a small number of men, including John Brown, James Phips, James Smith, John Parker, Thomas Atkins, and Robert Gutch. These men amassed huge estates for themselves and their heirs as the Indians sold tracts to them at prices the English must have considered bargains.42

These colonial proprietors left a distinct imprint on Sagadahoc settlement and society because of the size of their land holdings and the nature of their families. For some as yet unexplainable reason, these proprietors had few surviving sons. John Parker, the first settler on the Kennebec, was fortunate to have two sons survive to inherit his thousands of acres. Robert Gutch, the owner of several thousand acres on the west bank of the Kennebec, had seven daughters and only one son. His downriver neighbor, Alexander Thwaites, had only one son and five daughters who reached adulthood. Thomas Atkin's ten daughters inherited his substantial tract.43

Marriage patterns for second-generation Sagadahoc settlers reflect this unbalanced sex ratio. Of the thirty-two recorded marriages of the second generation between 1650 and 1676, only three occurred between two members of the second generation. In the remaining thirty unions a second generation member (almost invariably a daughter) married a newcomer to the region. Unfortunately, documents reveal little of the sequence of events that led young men to migrate into the Kennebec in the 1660s and 1670s. Clearly,

42 Owen, History of Bath, Maine, 102-110; William Baker, Maritime History of Bath, 21-8; Emerson W. Baker "The Clarke & Lake Company," 7-21. Though Gutch did not arrive in the Kennebec until 1661, his purchase of substantial holdings in present-day Bath, on the western side of the Kennebec indicates that he belongs with this group.

economic opportunity rose in the region, as agriculture increased and the timber trade prospered. Many young men probably arrived as indentured servants, but others came as apprentices or free men. No data survive to determine whether they came to the Kennebec specifically to marry and settle or were drawn to the area by economic opportunities and stayed when they married into a Kennebec family. Land was not the only reward for marrying a Sagadahoc heiress. Some sons-in-law joined family businesses. For example, John Earthy apparently joined his father-in-law Thomas Gardiner's fur trading operation. Whatever their reasons, the predominance of females in the second generation stimulated population expansion in the third quarter of the seventeenth century. If the sex ratio of surviving children had been balanced, more intermarriage would have occurred between second-generation members. This balance would have reduced the total number of young families on the Kennebec in the 1670s, thus slowing population growth and creating less opportunity for immigrants to marry into local families and to procure cheap land.

The predominance of female heirs not only spurred the growth of the Sagadahoc region but also affected land ownership among members of the second generation. Of the thirty-two second-generation marriages, at least fourteen couples received land from the wife's parents. Yet this pattern of matrilocal land ownership cannot be entirely explained by the second-generation sex ratio. James Smith's mother and step-father held several

44 See Appendix 2 for details of second generation marriages from 1650 to 1676. For purposes of this study, members of the second generation of Sagadahoc families are those whose parents had moved into the region before 1676. Several third-generation marriages which also occurred in this time frame are also included, as they fit the marriage pattern. There are many sources which help pinpoint the location of settler's homes. It should be noted that most of these sources were introduced in the eighteenth-century court cases over land ownership in the region, so they must be used cautiously and independently verified for authenticity whenever possible. See "Account of the Eastern Parts and of the Several Settlements that have ever been Made on the lands Purchased by Mr. Wharton and now Bought by the Eight of Us," Noyes, Libby, and Davis, Genealogical Dictionary, 20; "John Cock's Deposition, April 1, 1740," York Deeds, York County Courthouse, Alfred, Maine, XXI, 218; "Book of the Eastern Claims," Maine Historical and Genealogical Recorder (Portland, Maine: 1889-1895), VI, 475-77, VII, 15-22, 73-81, 146-155, 186-197, VIII, 19-26, 77-83, 177-82, 198-203.
thousand acres in Nequasset, but James moved to Sheepscot, where his father-in-law, Walter Phillips, gave him land.45

The land-holding patterns in the Sagadahoc provide an interesting comparison with those in seventeenth-century Andover, Massachusetts. Philip Greven determined that the townsmen divided virtually all the land in Andover in the first dozen years of settlement. Though the sparsely populated settlement could not readily use the thousands of acres it had divided, the woodlands acted as a vast land bank which families could draw on when the children of the second and third generations came of age. The control of all town lands by the men of the first generation created a patriarchy, which left a distinct imprint on Andover's social and settlement patterns. Sons usually had to wait until their mid- to late-twenties before their father gave the land necessary for marriage and their own farm. Though this might have encouraged the migration of members of the second generation to strike out for frontier regions at an early age, Greven found that, in Andover at least, the majority of sons stayed in the town as dutiful children, awaiting their inheritance.46

Those sons who left towns like Andover for lands in the Sagadahoc must have been deeply disappointed to find that, even on the frontier, the first generation controlled all the land. The quirks of Sagadahoc demography, however, created a patriarchy where the daughter's father controlled the land. This pattern in land-holding must have left a significant imprint on Kennebec society. Their extensive holdings gave Kennebec fathers (and probably daughters as well) more choice over prospective son-in-laws, particularly those who lacked lands of their own. Further, the large tracts of first-generation lands, divided by daughters and their husbands, created sub-regions in the community where all

45 Ibid.; Noyes, Libby, and Davis, Genealogical Dictionary, 548, 642-43. In another marriage between two members of the second generation, Thomas Gent and Sarah Taylor, the newlyweds also received land from the maternal in-laws, despite the substantial holdings of the Gent family.

residents were related. Large kinship networks began to develop, with maternal grandparents as central figures. Though little direct evidence exists to support the supposition, the importance of female heirs and female kinship networks may have given women a more prominent and significant role in Sagadahoc society than in Massachusetts.47

For example, John Winslow's account books listed Elizabeth Hammond as a fur trader, not her husband, suggesting that she either shared responsibilities for the trade with her husband or ran it outright. As a farmer as well as trader, he must have spent most of his time in the fields. Elizabeth had many domestic duties, but at least they kept her near the home. When Indians arrived unexpectedly with pelts, they probably found only Elizabeth there to authorize the trade. She had become what Laurel Ulrich calls a "deputy husband." The mixed economy of the Kennebec, where families had a variety of interests, may have diluted family manpower and given women increased responsibilities.48

Regardless of the degree of female responsibility in the Sagadahoc, the unusual matrilocal influence in region has several levels of significance. First, Maine settlements had unique characteristics, which defy single generalization. Second, it demonstrates the changing nature of the Sagadahoc (and indeed all of Maine) in the third quarter of the seventeenth century. West Country men (primarily fishermen) dominated the population of Maine in its early years, but after mid-century, settlers from different backgrounds, particularly members of second-generation Massachusetts and New Hampshire families, brought changes to the region. Thus, the West Country influence, if ever very strong, must have quickly diluted. This would have been particularly true in the Sagadahoc region, where daughters of West Country men took non-West Country husbands.

47 Good examples of this sub-community are the extended families of Thomas Atkins at Small Point, and Robert Gutch in present-day Bath.

Finally, the matrilocal order on the Kennebec led to much more rapid growth of the community than in a sexually balanced population. Armed with sizable doweries in land, the numerous Sagadahoc daughters easily found spouses. As a result, farms and families in the region grew at a rate that must have concerned the Abenaki. At first, the isolated fishermen and traders in the region posed little threat to the Abenaki. Indeed, with their seasonal activities and tendency to move about, the early settlers seemed to imitate the Abenaki's seasonal wanderings. The expanding, matrilocal, and stable agricultural community which rapidly grew out of the initial settlements threatened Abenaki dominance in the region. Ironically, the Abenaki were all too familiar with another group of aggressive, expanding, matrilocal farmers, their hated enemy, the Iroquois.

As English society on the Kennebec grew in the seventeenth-century, so too did settlement in the rest of Maine. When Englishmen pushed into the region, hamlets became towns, and forests and open lands gave way to the axe and plow. As this process occurred, the English crept into increasing contact and conflict with the natives.
Chapter 4
"CUTTING ONE ANOTHER'S THROATS FOR BEAVER:"
THE MAINE FUR TRADE

In seventeenth-century Maine the fur trade was the primary focus of interaction between the Indians and the English. Some participants in the trade, such as Samoset and Christopher Levett, felt that they profited both from the goods they exchanged and the friends they made while trading. Unfortunately, the majority of English and Indian traders were much more concerned with the short-term benefit of material goods and overlooked the long-term benefits of cultural understanding which the trade could have promoted. Indeed, rather than improve understanding, the fur trade was a violent point of inter- and intra-cultural contention which helped destroy any hopes of lasting peace and understanding between the English and Indian inhabitants of Maine. An examination of the Maine fur trade shows how the trade helped lead to King Philip's War in Maine, and the subsequent generation of war.

Although English explorers, fishermen, and traders visited Maine in the first two decades of the seventeenth century, culture collision with the natives began in the 1620s with the advent of permanent settlements. By 1622, year-round fishing stations had been established on Monhegan and Damariscove Islands to take advantage of rich fishing grounds off the coast. It is quite possible that trade was conducted on Damariscove, which was defended by a palisade, cannon, some smaller weapons and "ten good dogs," a
weapon used specifically against the Indians. 1 In 1632 Massachusetts magistrates fined Nicholas Frost for "theft committed at Damariscove upon the Indians." 2 Frost probably stole furs, because the Indians would have had few other items which an Englishman would want. The extensive defenses at Damariscove, as well as the discovery of trade beads during recent archaeological excavations, support the conclusion that Indians ventured to the island to trade. Though Damariscove is several miles offshore, Indians were willing to travel much greater distances to get trade goods. In 1628 Thomas Morton met Indians on the Isles of Shoals, a full ten miles off the coast of Maine. Despite the eagerness of both sides for trade, problems continued to exist between the Abenakis and the fishermen. In 1623 Sir Ferdinando Gorges, owner of the station at Damariscove, accused the fishermen of corrupting and cheating the Indians and selling them guns. This was not the last time that the coastal traders and fishermen would cause problems in the fur trade. 3

The coastal fur trade of southern Maine all but disappeared during the 1630s. One of the last active traders in the area was Ambrose Gibbons, agent for the Laconia Company. As late as 1633 Gibbons enjoyed a booming business at Newichawannock, at the confluence of the Salmon Falls and Great Works River. Between April and June 1633 he took in trade 165 pounds of beaver, 17 pounds of otter, and an assortment of martin, fox, raccoon, and muskrat skins. Two months later, Gibbons wrote to England asking for

1 "John Pory to the Governor of Virginia," in Sydney V. James, ed., Three Visitors to Early Plymouth (Plymouth, Mass.: 1963), 15-16. The native people of North and South America were terrified of the fierce mastiffs which Europeans frequently set loose on them. For a detailed study of the use of dogs against Indians, see Mark A. Mastromarino, "'Cry Havoc and Let Loose the Dogs of War': Canines and the Colonial American Military Experience" (M.A. thesis, College of William and Mary, 1984), 53-73.

2 Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, ed., Records of the Governor and Company of Massachusetts Bay in New England (Boston, 1853), I, 94; Spencer, Pioneers on Maine Rivers, 301.

3 Morton, New English Canaan, 144, 151; James P. Baxter, ed., Sir Ferdinando Gorges and the Province of Maine. Including the Brief Narration, His Defense, the Charter, His Will and His Letters (Boston, 1891), II, 41-42.
more help, for he sometimes had over a hundred Indian customers at Newichawannock House. 4

The next year, however, the Indians were hit by another virgin soil epidemic which dealt a heavy blow to the remaining native populations and to the fur trade. In August 1634 John Winter, the agent for the Trelawney Station on Richmond's Island, wrote that "there is a great many of the Indians dead this year, both east and west from us, and a great many die still to the eastward from us." 5 This last disease virtually eliminated the remnant native populations on the coast of southern Maine. In 1640 Winter observed that there were no Indians within forty or fifty miles of Richmond's Island, other than a small group living on the Saco. Thomas Gorges, nephew of Sir Ferdinando Gorges also noted the decline in the fur trade. 6

The fur trade underwent a fundamental change after the epidemic of 1634. Previously, trade occurred along the coast for fishermen, and temporary English residents like the Popham colonists, and Christopher Levett did not have to go far to find Indians eager to trade. During the 1630s, however, native populations suffered further declines. At the same time, the growing number of permanent English settlers and would-be fur traders greatly intensified the competition for pelts. These demographic changes led to a geographical shift in the fur trade. Some traders moved inland along the rivers to get closer to the source of furs. Others moved eastward to the Sagadahoc, the Penobscot, and Acadia, where there were fewer English competitors and more Indian trappers. The trade that remained south of Casco Bay took place in the interior. As late as the 1660s Francis Small


5 James P. Baxter, ed., The Trelawney Papers, Vol. III of The Documentary History of the State of Maine, (Portland, Maine, 1884), 47. This may well have been part of the smallpox epidemic which William Bradford noted the same year in Plymouth.

ran a trade post at the confluence of the Saco and Ossipee Rivers, and Richard Waldron and Peter Coffin owned a truckhouse on the upper Merrimac. 7

After the 1630s most of the fur trade moved eastward, to the Kennebec and beyond. The first permanent settlers to take advantage of the wealth of furs in eastern Maine were the Plymouth colonists. John Pory, an official of the Virginia Company and visitor to the coast of Maine in the early 1620s, reported to the Plymouth Colony that the French had been successful in trading corn to the natives, particularly in the winter and late spring, the Indians' starving times. In 1625, after several years of surplus corn crops, Plymouth began to exploit the potential of the Kennebec when officials sent Edward Winslow up the river to trade a boatload of corn. Having garnered 700 pounds of beaver skins, the colonists made another trip the following year. In 1627 the fur trade took on new importance for Plymouth when the colonists agreed to buy out their London supporters for £1800, to be paid in annual installments of £200. With the barest of subsistence economies established at Plymouth village, they relied upon the fur trade to pay off this crushing debt. Two years later the Plymouth colony received the Bradford Patent, which affirmed their title to their lands in Massachusetts and gave them a separate grant of land on the Kennebec with a rather vague boundary. The definition of these boundaries was to cause numerous disputes for the next 125 years, but at the time the Pilgrims were not particularly concerned with property lines, but only that the patent guaranteed them the exclusive right to trade in the Kennebec. 8

7 York Deeds, II, 116; York Deeds, York County Court House, Alfred, Maine, XXIII, 238; XLII, 239; Lora Underhill, Descendants of Edward Small of New England and the Allied Families with Tracings of English Ancestry (Boston, 1934), 51-65; Massachusetts Archives, XXX, 154-61.

8 Most of the following seven pages have already been published by the author. See Emerson W. Baker, The Clarke & Lake Company: The Historical Archaeology of A Seventeenth-Century Maine Settlement (Augusta, Maine, 1985), 3-10, 13. John Pory to the Governor of Viriginia (Autumn, 1622), in James, Three Visitors, 17.
Thus, in 1629, the Plymouth colony set up a trading post on the Kennebec. The initial success of the Kennebec fur trade led the Pilgrims to establish two other trading posts to the east, one at the mouth of the Penobscot River and another in the vicinity of present-day Machias. These posts proved less viable investments. From the start they were plagued by bad management and threats from the French in Acadia. By 1635 the French had commandeered both bases. Penobscot (called Pentagoet by the French) soon became fortified as the southeastern bastion of Acadia. This left the Kennebec as the lone center of operations for the Plymouth fur trade in Maine. 9

For generations, Maine historians have speculated about the number and location of Pilgrim trading posts on the Kennebec. Some have suggested that two or three posts may have existed simultaneously, with one at the river mouth to facilitate trade and communication with Plymouth. Traditionally, the Maine post has been called Cushnoc (or Cuschenoc) and placed near Augusta, and some have gone so far as to suggest the Cushnoc post was on the site of Augusta's Fort Western. In many books the name Cushnoc has been freely substituted for "Kenibec" or "Kennebec," the terms used in seventeenth-century documents. But clearly in some documents "Kenibec" refers not just to the river or the region but to a specific location and trading post quite distinct from Cushnoc. William Bradford, the meticulous chronicler of Plymouth, never used the term "Cushnoc," not even to describe events at the first falls (the location of Cushnoc) during the Hocking incident in 1634. Indeed, a close reading of documents on the Hocking incident suggests that the main Plymouth post was somewhere downriver, for Plymouth employees had to get in a bark and chase Hocking upriver above the Kenibec post to his anchorage just below the falls in the river. As late as 1646 the Jesuits in Quebec wrote of Father Gabriel Druillette's visit

the previous year to the English trading post at "Kenibeki." Not until Druillettes's second visit to the Kennebec in 1650 was reference made to a trading post at Cushnoc. 10

The fact that Cushnoc is not mentioned as a place name until 1648, or as a trading post until 1650, combined with a close reading of Bradford's account of the Hocking incident and other pertinent documents, suggests that the first Plymouth Colony trading post was located at "Kenibec," probably somewhere on the lower reaches of the river. No evidence supports the traditional assumption that Plymouth built Cushnoc in 1629 as most historians have believed. Instead, Cushnoc replaced Kenibec as the location of the Plymouth post sometime in the late 1640s. Plymouth's actions during the incident indicate that Hocking would have been safe if he had stayed below the Plymouth truck house, in the region south of the Plymouth grant and outside of the colony's trade monopoly. Hence, the Plymouth post in 1634 guarded the southern border of the Plymouth grant. While the meaning of the word "Cushnoc" is unclear, it can be closely associated with the general area of the first falls in the river, the reversing falls at Augusta. 11

Thus, Cushnoc sat at the northern end of the Plymouth tract. In 1634 Hocking sailed above the Plymouth post and anchored below the Cushnoc falls and he was pursued

10 There are numerous spelling variations for the word "Kennebec." To avoid confusion, hereafter the variation "Kenibec" will be used solely to refer to the first Plymouth Colony trading post on the river. James Sullivan believed that there was only one post, and that it was located at the mouth of the river at Small Point. William D. Williamson opted for three posts, one at the site of the Popham Colony, one at Richmond's Landing, and one at Cushnoc. Henry Burrage felt that there was but one post and that it was located at Cushnoc. See Henry S. Burrage, "The Plymouth Colonists in Maine," in A History of Maine, ed. Ronald F. Banks (Dubuque, Iowa, 1976), 45-46; Edward Cass, "Settlement on the Kennebec, 1600-1650" (M.A. thesis, University of Maine, 1970), 12-13. Most recently, Eben Elwell has suggested that there were two posts, one at the site of the Clarke & Lake post at Spring Cove, Arrowsic, and one at Cushnoc. See Elwell, "Pilgrim Activity at 'Kenibec,'" 57-61. William Bradford, History of Plymouth Plantation, 1620-1647 (Boston, 1912), II, 175-90; Reuben G. Thwaites, ed., The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791, (Cleveland, Ohio, 1896-1901), XXX1, 186-89; Kershaw, Kennebec Proprietors, 10-11.

11 Bradford, History of Plymouth Plantation, passim. The Cushnoc falls were at the present dam location.
upriver by the Plymouth Colony's bark. If in 1634 the Plymouth post had been located at Cushnoc, there would have been no need for the bark to pursue Hocking upriver, for Cushnoc is only several hundred yards below the falls. Therefore, the move upriver to Cushnoc was probably a later move by Plymouth to keep coasters from trying to get upriver of its post, as Hocking had done.

The success of the Kennebec post, wherever its location, encouraged immediate competition. Bradford complained that he acquired the patent initially to ensure a Plymouth monopoly in the region, yet year after year outsiders moved into the region to capitalize on the fur trade. By 1632 Thomas Purchase was trading on the Pejebscot (Androscoggin) River on a grant given him by the Council for New England. Others, including Thomas Stevens and John Parker, may have been residing in the Kennebec at this time. 12

While these permanent settlers threatened Plymouth's monopoly, the coastal traders (or "coasters") operating out of fishing boats and other small vessels proved even more worrisome. One early coastal trader on the Kennebec was Thomas Morton. In 1626 or 1627 he sailed a vessel up the Kennebec and bought all the Indian's furs before Plymouth's agents even arrived to trade. Morton's success in the fur trade made Plymouth all the more eager to deport him to England. Besides cutting into Plymouth's profits, coasters had no permanent stake in the region and therefore were more likely to cheat the Indians or to trade them arms and liquor. Unfortunately, the coasters' activities are difficult to document because the seamen avoided established settlements, but from the comments of Gorges, Samuel Maverick, and others, it is plain that these men were dangerous. Although risky, cheating the Indians was profitable business for both coasters and established traders. In the three years that he ran his post on Richmond's Island, Walter Bagnall made a profit of

Figure 6. Major trading posts of the Sagadahoc region
£400. In 1631, however, irate Indians killed him for cheating and burned his truck house.

Although the murder of Walter Bagnall may have been justified, this was not an isolated example of native violence against the English. Later that year Henry Way, a Dorchester trader, sent his son and three other men to the eastward to trade. Indians killed the four men and sank their boat. These traders may not have been guilty of crimes. Instead they may have been victims of circumstance. Several years before the killings, William Bradford had noted that it was not safe to venture along the coast of Maine in the fall after the fishing fleets headed back to England. Perhaps Indians committed these violent acts in retaliation for specific acts of cheating and violence by fishermen and traders. Alternatively, after at least several decades of rough treatment from the English, some Indians may have considered themselves enemies of the English. The Indians would have had no compunction about killing an isolated "enemy" and taking his trade goods, even if the victim was an honest English trader.

Though the magistrates of Boston and Piscataqua took notice of the murder of Bagnall, Way, and the others, the impact of these events was minor compared to the furor raised by the John Hocking murders in 1634. A resident of Piscataqua and the agent for Lord Saye and Sele and Lord Brooke, Hocking sailed above the Plymouth post at Kenibec to intercept its trade. In the altercation that followed, Hocking killed a Plymouth employee, only to be killed himself by a return volley from another Plymouth worker. Though Hocking had no connection with Massachusetts Bay, the colony decided to use the incident to break the Plymouth hold on the fur trade. When John Alden (a Plymouth magistrate and

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14 Wilber Spencer, Pioneers on Maine Rivers, 60-61.
eyewitness to the killings) visited Boston shortly after the Hocking incident, he was seized as a hostage and imprisoned, occasioning a meeting between Bradford, Winthrop, and other officials of the two colonies. Winthrop, however, had to back down and admit that Plymouth had exclusive control of the Kennebec trade and that Hocking was in the wrong. Plymouth officials, for their part, admitted some fault in the matter and felt they could have proved their right to the river trade without two men dying. While Massachusetts wanted a share of Plymouth's fur trade, both colonies decided to downplay the incident because they feared that a serious dispute would give the king an excuse to impose a royal governor upon New England. The petty squabbling over so commercial a venture also diverted both colonies from their utopian goals. John Winthrop wrote that the incident "had brought the gospel under a common reproach of cutting one another's throats for beaver." 15 Thus, despite Saye and Sele and Brooke's initial reaction that they should "have sent a man of war to beat down the house at Kenebeck," the incident passed without further consequence. 16

Unfortunately the peaceful resolution of the Hocking incident neither healed the breach between Plymouth and Massachusetts nor upheld Plymouth's monopoly. In 1637 Plymouth again accused Massachusetts of letting its traders loose in the Kennebec, to which Winthrop replied that he knew of no more than one or two trade boats venturing there. 17

Despite the intruders, Plymouth dealt in a high volume of furs. In 1634 Winthrop noted that "our neighbors of Plymouth had great trade also at Kenebeck, so as Mr.


16 The narrative of events in the Hocking incident can be found in George Willison, Saints and Strangers (New York, 1945), 297-99. Both John Winthrop and William Bradford wrote at length about the incident; see Winthrop, History of New England, I, 123-31; Bradford, History of Plymouth Plantation (Boston, 1912), II, 174-90.

Winslow carried with him about twenty hogsheads of beaver." 18 Since a hogshead of beaver weighed about four hundred pounds, the 1634 shipment weighed eight thousand pounds and would have been worth no less than £6,000. Between 1631 and 1636 Plymouth exported at least £10,000 worth of furs, a large part of which must have come from the Kennebec, the best source of furs under Plymouth's control. 19

Success resulted largely from the use of wampum. In 1622 the Dutch of New Amsterdam discovered the value of wampum in trade, and five years later began exchanging the beads with Plymouth on the condition that Plymouth stay out of Narragansett Bay. Strings of wampum (called wampumpeage or simply peage), carefully crafted from quahog shells by the Indians of Long Island Sound and Narragansett Bay, were initially valued by Indians largely as sacred objects, but the natives soon came to accept the shells as currency in the fur trade. The Indians of Maine particularly esteemed wampum, for they received little of it through traditional Indian trade. Thus, by trading wampum, Plymouth held an advantage over the illegal traders of the Kennebec. 20

As other traders started to use wampum, Plymouth's initial advantage quickly dissolved. Trade declined markedly in 1637 and 1638, and by 1640 Bradford and his partners, who together leased the trade from Plymouth, threatened to give it up altogether. Finally, they agreed to lease the trade for a year for only £20, the low price indicating how far the trade had fallen. The problem stemmed in part from increased competition from settlers in the Kennebec. A slow and largely undocumented influx of people began in 1639 when John Brown "of Pemaquid" and Edward Bateman purchased Nequasset (Woolwich)

18 Ibid., I, 131.


20 Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 147-52.
from an Abenaki chief. Other Englishmen followed their example so that by 1654 at least sixteen heads of families lived on the Kennebec. Since Plymouth never established effective civil authority on the river, the colony was hard put to control the trading activities of the newcomers. Although the colony had enjoyed an early advantage by trading wampum, some of its competitors had seized the initiative by illegally dealing in arms and gunpowder. The competition for furs meant that profits for each party was greatly reduced. In 1634 John Winter, the agent for the fishing and trading post on Richmond's Island, complained that competition had become so fierce that it was impossible to profit in the trade. 

Plymouth's problems stemmed not only from competition but also from mismanagement and corruption. The colony had none of the capital necessary for the smooth running of the fur trade. A poor bookkeeping system and unscrupulous English partners multiplied Plymouth's difficulties. By 1636 Plymouth had exported £10,000 worth of pelts, which should have been more than enough to pay off its creditors, but the colony still owed £1,400. As Bradford noted, the colonists had been "hoodwinked" by their English creditors. Even as fur trade profits diminished, Plymouth found a source of capital closer to home. The Great Migration into Massachusetts Bay in the 1630s greatly increased New England's population and created a large external market for Plymouth's agricultural produce. The great profits made by Plymouth farmers turned much of the colony's interest from the distant fur trade to the expansion of settlement and cultivation around Plymouth.


These circumstances cooled Plymouth's interest in the fur trade, and throughout the 1640s the colony's participation in it diminished. By 1642 Plymouth's influence in the Kennebec had ebbed so low that Massachusetts had to send one of its own magistrates to the region to seize gunpowder that Plymouth's competitors were trading to the Abenaki. Coincidental with the waxing of disorder and the waning of Plymouth's authority were threats of an Indian uprising. Indians raided Thomas Purchase's post at Pejebscot as well as the homes of several other residents. While no one was injured, the Indians destroyed property and stole goods and fish. Thomas Gorges, deputy governor of the province of Maine, wrote to his uncle Sir Ferdinando Gorges, "if it be suffered, we must expect worse. . . . the country is in great fear of the Indians." This pattern of growing competition in the fur trade and increasing Abenaki unrest would prove a recurring problem. 23

In the late 1640s competition became so great that Plymouth abandoned its trading post at Kenibec in favor of a location upriver at Cushnoc. In 1648 the colony acquired an Indian deed to lands north of its grant, running from Cushnoc to Wesserunett (in present-day Skowhegan). By 1650 Plymouth colonists had erected a trading post at Cushnoc, near the lowest falls in the Kennebec, for in that year Father Druillettes recorded visiting the post during his second trip to the river. Recent archaeological excavations in present-day Augusta have unearthed the remains of one of the structures at Cushnoc. The archaeologists excavated mostly domestic materials from the structure's cellar but they also found one cannon ball, suggesting that the Plymouth Colony fortified Cushnoc. Though an isolated find, the cannon ball symbolizes Plymouth's desire to secure the Kennebec. Plymouth's new fortified trading post had the benefit of a better location upriver, which was closer to furs coming out of the interior and farther from competitors on the coast.

These advantages probably increased Plymouth's trade, for in 1649 the lease rate, always an important indicator of the health of the Plymouth trade, increased to £50. 24

While the move to Cushnoc to secure their trade may have seemed a good course of action at the time, Plymouth officials quickly recognized that they had made a tactical mistake. By taking Indian deeds, Plymouth Colony had acknowledged the right of all Indians to sell their land. Plymouth's action also suggested that the Indians themselves, and not the colony's patent, were the source of clear titles to Kennebec lands. Finally, Plymouth's acceptance of these deeds meant that the colony had to recognize the Indian deeds of its English competitors in the fur trade.

At the same time that Plymouth was moving its trading post, events in England altered the development of the Kennebec. In 1649 the rise of the radical Puritans and the execution of Charles I left no doubt about the outcome of the English Civil War. The death of Charles conclusively ended the authority of the Council of Plymouth, the grantors of the Plymouth Charter of 1629. The Council had been the real power behind the fur trade monopoly clause in the charter, so now there were no legal restraints upon the Kennebec trade. 25

Until 1649 the challenges to the Pilgrims had been for the most part by individuals with relatively small operations. At this time, however, Thomas Lake took an interest in the Kennebec. Lake, the brother of a baronet, was descended from a wealthy Lincolnshire

24 Kershaw, Kennebec Proprietors, 9-10; Thwaites, ed., Jesuit Relations, XXXVI, 83-87; Statement of the Kennebec Claims, by the Committee Appointed by a Resolve of the General Court of the 28th of October, A.D. 1783 (Boston, 1786), 5. This book brings together in published form many of the early deeds and depositions used in the land cases of the eighteenth century. Emerson Baker, Theodore Bradstreet, and Jeffrey Zimmerman, "History in the Ground: The Archaeology of Fort Western," The Kennebec Proprietor I, No. 1 (1984), 8. Archaeologists have been searching for Cushnoc since 1974. While many seventeenth-century artifacts were discovered at the site, the structure, and positive identification of the site were not made until 1985. Continuing excavations at Cushnoc, directed by James Leamon of Bates College, should reveal important information about the fur trade in early Maine.

family. He moved to New Haven, Connecticut, and married Mary Goodyear, the daughter of the deputy-governor of that colony. By 1640 Lake had taken up residence in Boston and, largely because of his trade connections, had prospered. He and his fellow Boston merchants participated primarily in the triangular trade of London. From his wharf and warehouses, Lake sent furs to England and boards, staves, fish, peas, and wheat to Barbados and the Wine Islands. He must have been a respected figure in Massachusetts Bay for in 1641 he and two other merchants, John Allen and Nicholas Shapleigh, were granted a patent to Swampscott and Dover. This huge patent covered thousands of acres of prime timberland along the southern bank of the Piscataqua River and the north shore of Massachusetts. Lake personally held over a thousand acres of the patent and by 1647 was exporting boards and staves, probably from these holdings. Thus, Lake had a good sense of the value of fish, furs, and timber, and an eye for land that could supply them. 26

Deforestation along the Piscataqua, an increasing problem in the late 1640s, may have forced Lake to turn north to the Kennebec region, for in 1649 he sent Christopher Lawson, his agent for the Swampscott and Dover patents, there to buy land. Lawson, working for Lake and his partners in the enterprise, Roger Spencer and John Allen, purchased two large tracts on the Kennebec from local Indians. One deed ran from "Swan Allie" (Swan Island) in Richmond north about thirteen miles to the mouth of the Cobbosseecontee Stream and extended ten miles into the woods on both sides of the Kennebec. A second tract, overlapping property purchased by Plymouth in 1648, centered

26 A discussion of the triangular trade can be found in Bailyn, New England Merchants, 79-80. Lake's family and genealogy are discussed in Sybil Noyes, Charles T. Libby and Walter G. Davis, eds., Genealogical Dictionary of Maine and New Hampshire (1928-1939; reprint, Baltimore, 1979), 408; Oliver A. Roberts, History of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts 1637-1888 (Boston, 1895), 175-76. A page of Lake's business ledger has survived, giving a brief glimpse of his trade connections. See Records of the Superior Court of Suffolk County, Massachusetts, Suffolk County Court House, Boston, Case 1675. The Suffolk Court files shall hereafter be referred to as SCF. The Swampscott and Dover patent documents can be found in the following: Massachusetts Archives, (Boston, the State House), XLV, 36-37; Suffolk Deeds (Boston, 1880), I, 97, 107, 127, 147-48; Shurtleff, ed., Massachusetts Bay Records, IV, pt. 1, 265-67.
around Taconic (or Teconnet, the falls in present-day Waterville), stretching four miles above the falls and six miles below. This second tract also extended ten miles into the woods on both sides of the river. By 1653 trading posts had been set up on both tracts, one at Taconic and another at Neumkeag (not to be confused with Neguamkeag) on the east bank of the river at what is now Agry's Point in Pittston. The Plymouth post at Cushnoc was sandwiched between these two posts, so that Indians going either upriver or downriver would tend to trade their furs before reaching Cushnoc. The tactic seemed to work, for an inventory taken on May 31, 1653, indicates that Lake dealt in a huge volume of furs. The Indians owed 1150 beaver skins, and Lake held £324 worth of trade goods. From this isolated figure, it is impossible to determine whether Lake was profiting in this venture. The large volume of trade suggests a booming operation but the large amount of trade goods on hand and the high debt in pelts may indicate a shrinking trade. May was a busy trading time in Maine. On May 10, 1667, one Kennebec trader wrote that "there is an abundance of Indians that are not come home as yet [and] a great deal of trade by those who are come home." 27 Thus, when the inventory was taken on May 31, many Indians may not have yet arrived home to pay their debts. Regardless of the profitability of the business, the large pelt debt and sizable holdings of trade goods indicate the capital behind Lake and his ability to extend credit to gain customers. His volume of traffic must have made serious inroads into the trade of the financially strapped Plymouth Colony, which had less credit and probably lost business as a result.

Plymouth's violent reaction to Lake's trading posts is further evidence of the serious threat he posed to Pilgrim control of the fur trade. A struggle to buy up Indian lands

quickly ensued between Lake and the Plymouth colonists. Problems arose as deeds overlapped, for it was difficult to determine which Indian had the right to sell a given piece of property. A 1653 deed from a local Indian sachem to the Plymouth Colony exemplifies this struggle. The sachem sold Taconic to William Bradford and claimed that, although another Indian had sold the same tract to Lake in 1649, that Indian did not own the land and had signed the deed "against his will, and by the importunity of Mr. Lake, Roger Spencer and Lawson." It is impossible to judge whether the Indian was coerced to sell the land by Lake and Lawson, or whether his fellow tribesman signed a document to that effect simply because he was paid to do so. What is clear is that the Indians were caught in the middle of this fight. The controversy at Taconic suggests that Indians may have been forced to sell their territory and that the English search for Indian landowners exacerbated intertribal conflicts over land. 28

The territorial fight was but one aspect of the struggle between Lake and Plymouth Colony. In 1652 Plymouth petitioned the Council of State in England for an extension of its Maine land grant and for the right to govern the extended area. While the territorial extension was rejected, Plymouth received the governance of the Kennebec for a seven-year probationary period. In March 1654 Plymouth learned of Parliament's reaffirmation of its grant and took action against those who "have intrenched upon the liberties of the trade belonging to us at Kennebec." 29 The Plymouth General Court sent former governor Thomas Prence to the Kennebec to establish a government. Bradford had already sent his son-in-law, Thomas Southworth, to run Cushnoc, and the addition of Prence, Bradford's

28 Lincoln Deeds, I, 9-10; "Aspinwall Papers," 329. The deed trade is discussed at length in Chapter 5.

29 Kershaw, Kennebec Proprietors, 9-10; Shurtleff, ed., Plymouth Colony Records, III, 43.
top aide, underscores the importance Plymouth still attached to the Kennebec and the severity of the threat. 30

Thomas Lake also sought political clout in the struggle for control of the region. In January 1654 Thomas Clarke, a Boston merchant, bought out Spencer's and Allen's shares of the Lake partnership. Clarke and Lake had been partners in other ventures for at least a year, sending masts and lumber to London and receiving goods in Boston. Both had large holdings in the timber-rich Piscataqua River Valley, where their partnership probably began. Clarke had been involved in the fur trade since 1644 when he joined a group of Boston merchants to form a "company of Merchant Adventurers" seeking to monopolize the fur trade of the Delaware River. Though the Dutch and Swedes of Delaware soon put an end to the venture, Clarke continued to be active in the trade of furs and other exports, dealing with many leading merchants of New England, including John Winthrop, Jr., John Hull, William Tyng, and Valentine Hill. In addition, Clarke had an agent and a warehouse in Barbados. 31

Clarke's connections and financial backing spoke well of his trustworthiness, for in the seventeenth century much of the trade carried on in New England was based upon credit extended from one merchant to another. Hence, unless a merchant could reliably fulfill his obligations when they came due, few would willingly trade with him. Indeed, the merchants of Boston considered Clarke among their leaders, in 1651 electing him captain in the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, a social and quasi-military organization dominated by merchants of the town. In the same year, after holding a number of local political offices, Clarke was elected one of Boston's two deputies to the legislature of Massachusetts Bay, the General Court. An experienced fur trader, financially well

30 Kershaw, Kennebec Proprietors, 9-10.

31 The fur company is documented in Shurtleff, ed., Massachusetts Bay Records, II, 60, and is discussed in Bailyn, New England Merchants, 102.
connected, and politically prominent, Clarke was a valuable ally for Lake in his battle against the Plymouth Colony.\footnote{Clarke's role in politics is discussed in Dorchester Historical Society, \textit{History of Dorchester, Massachusetts} (Boston, 1859), 114-16. For his military career, see Roberts, \textit{Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company}, 56. An overview of the Artillery Company and its implications for the merchant community is provided in Baily, \textit{New England Merchants}, 37-38. For Clarke's Barbados interests, see Samuel E. Morison, ed., \textit{Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts} (Boston, 1933), XXIX, 45-53.}

In May 1654, a two-part settlement was reached with Plymouth Colony. First, on May 15 Prence set up Plymouth's probationary jurisdiction of the Kennebec by calling together all the inhabitants of the region to swear an oath of allegiance to Plymouth Colony and to enact several laws. Trading liquor to the Indians was strictly forbidden, but any resident was allowed to trade furs, provided the Indians brought their pelts to the inhabitant's land. By making the Indians the initiators of trade, Plymouth helped itself and Clarke & Lake, for the natives were more likely to trade upriver with the two established companies. By outlawing the nonresident coastal traders and the liquor trade, the English removed the two major irritants to Anglo-Abenaki relations. Second, on May 17 Prence, Clarke, and Lake signed an agreement in which the two groups combined the merchandise of the Cushnoc and Neumkeag posts in a fifty-fifty partnership to form one trading company. In addition, a map was drawn which divided the Kennebec lands between them. The agreement, set to last for the seven-year term of Plymouth's probationary jurisdiction,
must have hinged largely on Plymouth’s promise to establish effective jurisdiction on the
Kennebec and to regulate the fur trade. 33

The agreement between the two warring companies may have come largely through
the efforts of William Paddy, who entered the Plymouth Colony partnership in 1654. A
gifted businessman, Paddy had served as treasurer of Plymouth Colony from 1635 until
1651, when he moved to Boston and became Thomas Lake’s next-door neighbor. He was
trusted by both Clarke and Lake, who subsequently made numerous ventures with him. In
July 1654 Paddy and Lake paid an £800 bond to Massachusetts Bay as a surety against
their companies trading with the French. A 1656 addendum to the 1654 agreement indicates
that Paddy and Lake worked closely together, as the two men were responsible for
supplying goods to the trade posts. Lake and Paddy also acted jointly in the fur trade of the
Penobscot region. In 1656 Paddy entered a partnership to run a trading post on the
Piscataqua with Thomas Clarke. The agreement between Plymouth and Clarke & Lake and

33 Shurtleff, ed., Plymouth Colony Records, III, 58-61; Baker, Maritime History of Bath,
21-28. The details of the partnership are vague for the document does not survive and is
only briefly described in court testimony during the land battles in the eighteenth century.
The document was introduced into a court case between the Kennebec Proprietors and the
Clarke & Lake Company by Thomas Hutchinson, the lieutenant-governor of
Massachusetts. Hutchinson’s grandfather, Elisha Hutchinson, was the son-in-law of
Thomas Clarke and inherited half of the Clarke estate. Apparently the Clarke & Lake papers
passed down in the Hutchinson family to Thomas, an avid historian. Though the document
severely hurt the Kennebec Proprietors’ case, and Hutchinson’s family held interests in the
Clarke & Lake claims, all concerned were convinced of the validity of the document.
Thomas Hutchinson’s possession of these and other documents potentially dangerous to
the Kennebec Proprietors’ claims may have led to the destruction of his mansion and most
of his papers in the Stamp Act Riot. See Kershaw, Kennebec Proprietors, 153-59, 180-
86. While the 1654 agreement does not survive, a 1656 addendum does, and this clearly
proves the existence of the 1654 agreement. See "Indenture, April 5, 1656," Maine
Historical Society, Pejebscot Papers, IV, 323. Further, a surviving document from 1659
suggests the trade partnership; see "Inventory of the Estate at Cushnock & Neumkeek & at
Boston, being in Partnership, between Mr. Thomas Prince & Company in equal parts,"
Winslow Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.
the establishment of civil jurisdiction seemed to benefit all residents of the river, even the Abenaki, but events soon proved otherwise. 34

Despite the promise of success, the Plymouth-Clarke & Lake partnership apparently failed to achieve the expected profit levels. In 1656 Paddy abandoned the unprofitable Plymouth partnership, whose lease had dropped to £35, and a new partnership formed including Bradford, Prence, and Thomas Willett. Again Plymouth's trading problems rested in its inability to enforce its jurisdiction along the river. In defiance of the 1654 law, coasters continued to trade on the river unmolested by Plymouth magistrates. As the largest trading companies, Plymouth and Clarke & Lake stood to lose the most business to coastal trader competition, but smaller resident traders also suffered. In 1657 some of the leading residents of the river took the law into their own hands and seized Joshua Tead's vessel. Tead had been trading liquor and possibly gunpowder to the Abenakis. Upon returning to Boston, Tead sued for recovery of his losses, but the Kennebec residents and the law against coasters prevailed. 35

Even with this isolated victory, the law meant little, for Plymouth did not have the manpower to enforce its jurisdiction over the distant Kennebec. To make matters worse, in 1659 raiding Mohawks killed and kidnapped a number of Abenakis and the Maine Indians turned their efforts from trading furs to fighting Iroquois. The temporary halt to the fur trade forced the Plymouth General Court to reduce the annual lease to £10. The death of


William Bradford in 1657 intensified Plymouth's fur trade problems. Governor Bradford had largely directed Plymouth's involvement in the trade, and his death created a leadership vacuum. Unwilling to expend energy and money on a distant territory, and unable to profit from the bountiful fur supply of the Kennebec, the Plymouth Colony began seeking a buyer for the Kennebec tract. In 1661 the colony sold the whole tract for £400 to four Boston merchants, John Winslow, Antipas Boyes, Edward Tyng, and Thomas Brattle. Traditionally historians have assumed that Plymouth Colony's failure in the fur trade resulted from a declining supply of furs. However, the activities of the Clarke & Lake Company and the plethora of other traders active on the river in the third quarter of the seventeenth century suggests that furs were plentiful and that other factors, including mismanagement and intense competition, forced Plymouth out of the fur trade. 36

Some of the competition came from Pemaquid, a trading location since the first decade of the seventeenth century. The Waymouth expedition and the Popham colonists had both visited Pemaquid, and English ships continued to call there through the 1610s and 1620s. Around 1628, traders and fishermen established a permanent settlement there, and in 1631 Pemaquid's Proprietors, Gyles Elbridge and Robert Aldworth, were granted the exclusive right to trade within their patent. Their agent, Abraham Shurt, soon began operating a palisaded trading post, but the next year a crew of pirates led by Dixie Bull raided Pemaquid and seized £500 worth of goods. Presumably most of the prize was furs and trade goods. This sizable haul indicates the early success of the Shurt's operation. Shurt continued to run a prosperous trading post until the 1650s, when several Massachusetts merchants bought the Pemaquid patent. In 1657, Nicholas Davison, a

36 Shurtleff, ed., Plymouth Colony Records, III, 168; Kennebec Claims, 6; Kershaw, Kennebec Proprietors, 12-16. Aside from the 1654 documents, no references exist to Plymouth's probationary government of the Kennebec, and the question arises as to whether Plymouth ever established any civil authority or merely sought the provisional government to aid its efforts to monopolize the fur trade.
Charlestown merchant, became the sole proprietor and moved to Pemaquid, where he traded until his death in 1664. 37

By the 1660s the glory days of the Pemaquid trade had passed as the coastal trading post faced fierce competition from the river traders on the Androscoggin, Kennebec, and Sheepscot rivers. However, a healthy trade continued at Pemaquid because the location still offered some advantages. Pemaquid was situated on a portage near a traditional Indian encampment and trading spot. Furthermore, it was the easternmost permanent English settlement and a center of the fishing industry. Some fishermen of the Pemaquid area also participated in the coastal fur trade. Edward Arrowsmith, a fisherman at Pemaquid and Monhegan Island, and his partners paid a substantial portion of their debts to George Corwin, a wealthy Salem merchant, in pelts. For example, in November 1661 Arrowsmith delivered £ 47 in mackerel, cod, and fish oil, as well as £88 in beaver and moose to Corwin. The supplies they received in return from Corwin also indicate the dual nature of their occupation. In addition to salt, fish lines, hooks, Arrowsmith also purchased trading cloth and a barrel of rum. 38

While Arrowsmith and other Pemaquid fishermen pursued the coastal trade east of the settlement, the only resident trader between Pemaquid and the Penobscot was apparently Philip Swadden, who ran a trading post near the mouth of the St. George River. Yet Swadden, too, was linked to Pemaquid, for he received trade goods and supplies from Bull was a fur trader who took to piracy after the French seized his shallop and goods.


38 George Corwin Account Book, IV, 129, 163-64, 203, 208, Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts.
Nicholas Davison. In 1665 Davison's widow sued Swadden for £45 in beaver and moose he owed the estate. After Davison's death the leading Pemaquid trader became Thomas Gardner, a member of a successful Salem merchant family. In the 1670s Gardner's son-in-law, John Earthy, joined the business, and the two men continued to trade at Pemaquid until the settlement was abandoned during King Philip's War. 39

Gardner had his initial trading experience on the Penobscot River, which was in English hands from 1654 to 1670. As part of Oliver Cromwell's aggressive foreign policy, a Massachusetts military expedition led by Major Robert Sedgewick captured Acadia in 1654. Two years later the Council of State granted Acadia to William Crown, a wealthy London merchant, Sir Thomas Temple, a kinsman of Lord Fiennes, and Charles de la Tour, a French claimant to the land. Temple quickly gained control of the colony as de la Tour released his share for five percent of the annual revenue and Crown leased his interest to Temple. Much of the trade was carried on at Fort Pentagoet, the administrative and military post at the mouth of the Penobscot, which the English renamed Fort Penobscot. In addition to running Fort Penobscot, Temple established a truckhouse farther up river to solidify his hold on the Penobscot market and to intercept furs which might have

been portaged to the Kennebec. Temple established the post, called Negue, on Eddington Bend in present-day Veazie, and manned it year round with at least two men. 40

As Acadia became a center of English trade, coasters relied increasingly on the former French possession for business. In April 1655 John Pierce, acting on authority of Captain John Allen of Penobscot Fort, seized the John of Boston for trading with the natives of Acadia without a license. Before Pierce confiscated the ship, Captain Thomas Jenner had traded for £47 of moose, £48 of beaver and £11 of otter skins. By the 1670s the large number of permanent traders in the Sagadahoc and the presence of civil authorities apparently kept most coastal traders out of this region. Instead, they sailed from Pemaquid to Nova Scotia. After the English returned Acadia to the French in 1670, the reestablished French government was weak at best. With few soldiers and a tiny bureaucracy, Governor Grandfontaine did not have the strength to challenge the English traders. Neglected by officials and merchants in both France and New France, all Acadians, including their governor, relied on the New England coastal trade for survival. In 1674, when Dutch privateers temporarily took Acadia from the French, they also seized four New England coasters.41

40 Surviving documents do not indicate when Thomas Gardner became Commander of Penobscot Fort. Considering his Salem connections he probably entered the Penobscot trade through the wealthy Salem merchant, George Corwin. Corwin and Joshua Scottow, a Boston merchant, leased the the Penobscot trade from 1658 to 1660, for £110 per annum. In 1662 Gardner was relieved from his command at Fort Penobscot when Thomas Temple temporarily lost control of Acadia to rival English claimants. At the same time, Edward Naylor, Gardner's former truckmaster at Penobscot who had been promoted to commander at Negue, was also fired. "Deposition of Edward Naylor, October 25, 1666," in Documentary History, ed. Baxter, VI, 20; Noyes, Libby, and Davis, Genealogical Dictionary, 253, 505-6. For details on Crowne and Temple and their activities in Acadia, see Bailyn, New England Merchants, 110-11, 115-16, 128; Gretchen F. Faulkner, "Fort Pentagoet, Castine, Maine: An Archaeological and Historical Perspective of the Anglo-Acadian Frontier" (M.A. thesis, University of Maine, 1984), 39-49; Reid, Acadia, Maine, and New Scotland, 135-41, 144-49.

Throughout the seventeenth century the fur trade of Maine and Acadia were closely connected. Many of the principals were involved in trade in both areas. In the 1630s the Plymouth Colony ran posts on the Penobscot and the Kennebec, and the Penobscot truckmaster, Thomas Willett, would later become a partner in Plymouth Colony's post at Cushnoc. When England regained control of the region in 1654, Thomas Lake and other Boston merchants who had trading experience in Maine eagerly sought involvement in Acadia. Thomas Temple, the proprietor of Acadia also purchased a share of the Plymouth Proprietor's Kennebec trade. Thomas Gardner and Edward Naylor were first employed in Acadia before starting their own trading ventures in the Sagadahoc. Three of the four vessels seized by the Dutch in 1674 had northern New England ties. One was owned by John Freake, son-in-law of Thomas Clarke. A second was owned by Nicholas Shapleigh, a leading merchant of Kittery, and a third belonged to William Waldron, the Dover trader and brother of Richard Waldron. 42

The Indians of the two regions also had close connections. Some Indians of the Kennebec had family ties among their eastern neighbors. For example, Madocawando, sachem of the Penobscots, was the adopted son of the Kennebec leader Essemenoque (or Assiminisqua). The natives of Maine did not acknowledge European boundaries, so Indians who traded on the Kennebec could just as easily trade on the Penobscot. Regardless of where they traded, the Indians still considered the traders as representatives of the English and held the English accountable for the traders' actions. For example, in the fall of 1675, coastal traders kidnapped eight or nine Indians from the vicinity of Machias and sold them into slavery in the Canary Islands. Though this occurred well outside the

bounds of English authority, and the victims were probably Eastern Etchemins, the incident was a leading cause in bringing many Abenakis into King Philip's War. 43

Despite continued trading operations at Pemaquid and the English efforts in Acadia, fur traders proliferated on the Kennebec in the 1660s and 1670s. The Patteshalls, a family of merchants who had interests in New York and Boston, were active on the Kennebec by 1664. Humphrey Davie, the son of a wealthy London baronet, was a partner in some trading ventures with the Patteshalls. Davie was also a partner with Richard Collicot, another Boston merchant who ran a trading post at Abagadusset Point, just down river from Swan Island. In 1672 Davie purchased Swan Island from Christopher Lawson and apparently took over Lawson's trading operations. By 1675 Thomas Stevens had established a post on the portage between Merrymeeting Bay and Casco Bay. Other long-time residents of the Kennebec, including Alexander Thwaites, Thomas Watkins, Clarke & Lake, and Richard and Elizabeth Hammond, also continued to trade in furs. 44

In addition to this glut of traders, the Plymouth Proprietors continued to farm furs in the Cushnoc region. The Proprietors hired Josiah Winslow, brother of John Winslow, as first truckmaster. Both of the Winslows had previously been involved in Plymouth Colony's trading operations on the Kennebec. In 1664 Winslow left Cushnoc and the post may have been temporarily abandoned. By 1666, however, Alexander Brown was

43 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 154. For details on the kidnapping and its impact on Anglo-Indian relations, see below chapter six.

44 By the late 1660s, the Plymouth Proprietors' main truck house was at Kedumcook (present-day Hallowell) but references were still made to Cushnoc as well. For details on the Plymouth Proprietors' operations, including their connections with Walker & Naylor and the Hammonds, see Kennebec Proprietors' Papers, Maine Historical Society. For Walker & Naylor, see also Suffolk County Court File 139152. For Gardner and Earthy, see Churchill, "Introduction: Pemaquid," xi. In 1665, Alexander Thwaites had over £300 worth of furs at his house in Bath, see York Deeds, VIII, 159-60. For Humphrey Davie see Maine Historical and Genealogical Recorder, VIII, (1895), 177; Noyes, Libby, and Davis, Genealogical Dictionary, 183.
running the Proprietors' trading post at Kedumcook, several miles downriver from Cushnoc. 45

A series of letters between Brown and his employers in Boston sheds much light on Maine trading operations. An underlying theme of the letters was the isolation of the post. The Kennebec froze over as early as October, and navigation was not safe until March or April. Thus Brown was cut off from Boston, his source of trading goods and instructions for over six months of the year. Even during the summer, ships called at Kedumcook only about once a month, so it took at least two to three months for Brown's employers to act on his requests for trade goods and supplies. Under such conditions the post had to be well stocked with trade goods. Though the financial backing for the enterprise came from Boston, it was the truckmaster who made the daily decisions and took much responsibility for the post's profit margin. 46

Many of the truckmaster's decisions were based on his knowledge of and relations with the Indians. A successful truckmaster had to be on good terms with the Indians as well as be able to anticipate their needs at least a season in advance so that he could have the right trade goods on hand at the right time. The truckmaster also had to wisely extend credit. Most of the trapping took place during the fall or winter hunts, on large expeditions to the interior to gather prime pelts. When the Indians returned from these trips they paid off the debts they had accumulated in the previous months. The truckmaster had to judiciously extend or deny credit while juggling a variety of factors. He had to be constantly aware of his stock of goods and his (and his employer's) limits on how much credit he could afford to extend. At the same time, he had to know the Indians well enough to judge whether they could pay off their debts, and if they genuinely planned to do so. Credit was a serious problem for all traders. When initiating trade, the English were eager


46 For the correspondence between Brown and the Proprietors, see documents for the years 1667 to 1669 in the Kennebec Proprietors Papers.
to extend credit to gain Indian pelts and good will. Once an Indian had credit, he would have to return to the same post to pay off his accumulated debts. Brown wrote of "our Indians," indicating that he had at least some steady customers, probably because of their indebtedness. 47 Unfortunately, credit had its limits, depending upon the store of goods and credit available to the English trader himself. If traders extended too much credit and Indians were slow to repay, it could create difficulties. In 1670 Indians owed £2600 to Thomas Temple, a significant factor in his financial ruin. 48

The Plymouth Proprietors did little better in trade than their predecessors, the Plymouth Colony. Brown often complained of an inadequate supply of trade goods. In May 1667 he wrote to John Winslow that "my cloth is gone and I sit here in a market like a man without money." 49 At least once he had to seek trade goods from other sources to supplement the supply from the Proprietors. Credit was also a problem. Josiah Winslow may have extended too much credit, or extended it to Indians who were reluctant to pay, because four years after Winslow left Cushnoc, Brown was still collecting his debts. In 1667 Brown wrote to John Winslow that "I have a great deal of goods by me at present for I dispose upon nothing without receiving pay." 50 He may have suspended credit because he feared the Indians would not or could not pay off their extensive debts. More likely, the Proprietors, who apparently had cash flow problems, had overextended themselves and ordered the suspension of credit. Regardless of the cause, no trading post


could keep its business going without credit, so within a year Brown was reextending credit to Indians.

Credit was only one of several problems the Proprietors faced. Like the Plymouth Colony, the Proprietors felt competition from traders encroaching on their tract. They complained about these illegal traders to Henry Josselyn, head of the weak and short-lived government established by the Royal Commission of 1665. Josselyn, a resident of Black Point, apparently had little concern or ability to police the distant reaches of the upper Kennebec, for there is no record of any action taken to stop the encroachment. John Winslow was so disenchanted with the situation that in 1668 he sold his interest in the company. In so doing, he ended the Winslow family's involvement in the Kennebec trade, an involvement that dated back to 1625, when his brother Edward had made Plymouth's initial trading expedition to the river. 51

John Winslow's former partners struggled to reorganize their operations. When Winslow's share was purchased by Sir Thomas Temple and John Joyliffe, the proprietors must have expected that Temple's wealth and connections would ease their credit problems and greatly improve their trade. Unfortunately, Temple had lost most of his money and his credit in his mismanagement of the Acadian trade. Tiring of their difficulties, late in 1669 the Plymouth Proprietors leased their tract and their trading rights to the partnership of Obediah Walker and Edward Naylor. 52

Walker and Naylor already ran a trading post on the south side of Merrymeeting Bay. Walker, a Boston merchant, provided the cash while Naylor contributed his many years of trading experience. Naylor had been truckmaster at Penobscot Fort, under the

51 "Proprietors to Alexander Brown, July 21, 1668," "Proprietors to Alexander Brown, November 25, 1668," Kennebec Proprietors' Papers; Henry Josselyn's brother John was the author of "An Account of Two Voyages to New England."

command of Thomas Gardner. By 1666 he had moved up the Penobscot, where he ran the Negue post. Despite their two trading posts on the Kennebec, Naylor continued to draw upon his Acadian ties, for in the summer of 1672 he was operating a coastal trader near Mount Desert Island. Walker remained active in the fur trade until his death in 1676, for the inventory of his house in Boston included various skins, broadcloth, and "seven small broken Indian guns." 53

History has left the names of Obediah Walker, Edward Naylor, and numerous other traders, but names do not reveal the full measure of these men. More details from their lives are needed to judge their role as mercantile and cultural agents of the fur trade. The English who participated in the fur trade had diverse backgrounds. Heading the operations were the wealthy merchants, men like Thomas Lake, Richard Waldron, and the Plymouth Proprietors. In general, these merchants were respected members of the top echelon of Puritan society. For example, Cotton Mather described Lake as "my dear friend, that exemplary good man." 54 These merchants had only limited involvement in the day-to-day operations of their trading posts because they had many other interests to oversee. They provided the capital for trading operations but lived in Boston or other port towns and seldom visited their posts.

Below these men were the employees who ran the posts and the smaller independent traders who secured goods and credit from the greater merchants. Many of these truckmasters seem to have been cut from different molds than their superiors, for they frequently ran into trouble with the law, either for questionable trading practices or for domestic disputes. Thomas Paine, Richard Waldron's truckmaster at Pennacook, was fined for stealing in 1659. Paine's legal difficulties were minor compared to those of


54 Cotton Mather, Magnalia Christi Americana (Hartford, 1853 orig. publ. 1701), 577.
Christopher Lawson, the agent for Clarke & Lake. In 1643 Lawson, who sometimes used the alias of Harson, was fined for stealing money and charged with extortion. Despite being employed by two leading Massachusetts magistrates, Lawson apparently held civil authority in low regard. In 1669 he showed his contempt for the York County court when he came into court "carrying himself uncivilly towards some particular members saying that he or they should not be his judges, with a turbulent behavior towards the said court." 55 The court rewarded Lawson for his outburst by placing him in the stocks for an hour. Suffolk County magistrates so distrusted Lawson that when he visited Boston in 1672 the court imprisoned him until he could post a bond for his good behavior. Lawson also suffered a tempestuous marriage. His wife ran away from him and the court had to warn them to live together in peace; but the court order had little effect, for in 1670 she left him for good and returned to England. After Mrs. Lawson's departure Christopher committed adultery with "a crazy distempered woman" named Sarah Stevens. 56

Edward Naylor also had marital problems. Naylor married Katherine Wheelwright Nanney, the daughter of the celebrated Antinomian, the Reverend John Wheelwright. Unfortunately, Wheelright took no pride in his son-in-law, who was inclined to chase women and to drink heavily. In 1668 Naylor committed adultery with Mary Reade of Hampton. When in Boston he frequented Widow Thomas's bawdy house, often in the company of Mary More. About 1671 someone poisoned Katherine Naylor and, though no charges were pressed, Edward headed the list of suspects. She recovered but had taken all she could of her husband; in 1672 she divorced him. It must have been a turbulent divorce for in the settlement the court banished Naylor from Boston and a twenty-mile area


56 Noyes, Libby, and Davis, Genealogical Dictionary, 419-20; Samuel E. Morison, ed., Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts (Boston, 1933), XXIX, 184, 436.
surrounding the city. In 1674 Naylor was again in court for intruding into his late wife's company. 57

The marital discord suffered by Naylor and Lawson was unusual by seventeenth-century New England standards. In Puritan society marriage was the natural state for men and women, a state seldom disrupted by open discord and only very rarely ending in divorce. Men who failed in this most basic relationship may not have gotten along well with other people. Thus they seem unlikely candidates for success in negotiating fur trades with members of a completely different culture. Indeed, Naylor did not prosper as a trader. About 1667 he was accused of trading liquor to the Indians on the Kennebec and by 1672 he was apparently deeply in debt. 58

While Alexander Thwaites did not have marital problems, during his long trading career he was constantly moving, both to find the best trading locations and to avoid trouble with the authorities. Shortly after his arrival in Watertown in 1635, he was fined for trading firearms to the Indians. He then moved to Concord, at that time a frontier trading post, but by 1640 he had removed to Maquoit, the southern end of a canoe carry between Casco Bay and the Androscoggin River. By 1650 he was apparently living at Abagadusset Point, on the north side of Merrymeeting Bay, but around 1656 he moved downriver to land he purchased at Winnegance, a portage between the Kennebec and Casco Bay. In 1665 Thwaites surrendered this land to Edmund and Richard Patteshall and Humphrey Davie when he refused to pay them a debt of £314, despite having more than enough pelts


58 The importance of the marriage bond in Puritan New England is discussed in Edmund S. Morgan, The Puritan Family (New York, 1966 orig. publ. 1944), 28-42. Morison, ed., Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, XXIX, 9, 118, 267, 417; Naylor was so deeply in debt that in 1672 he surrendered his interests and profits in his partnership with Obediah Walker in order to pay off a £330 debt to Walker. For the accusation of trading liquor see "Alexander Brown to John Winslow, June 10, 1667," Kennebec Proprietors' Papers.
to pay off the obligation. After this transaction the name of Thwaites disappears from the records. 59

It seems quite likely that Thwaites continued trading under the alias of Alexander Brown. Thwaites vanishes exactly at the same time and place that Brown appears. Both men had the same set of creditors, the same occupation, and lived on the same section of the Kennebec River. Indeed Brown's house is depicted on a map of the Kennebec on land owned by Thwaites. Keeping his first name, which was rare among seventeenth-century Maine residents, Thwaites apparently changed his distinctive last name to the more anonymous Brown. Thwaites had to change his name in order to work for the Plymouth Proprietors, who would have recognized his real name. With his new name, however, Thwaites continued his old ways. In 1667 he was accused of trading liquor to the Indians. 60

The domestic problems of Thwaites, Naylor, Lawson and others do not by themselves prove that these men were unscrupulous traders. However, fur traders had to be able to understand Indians and gain their trust and respect. Men who stole, defaulted on debts, disobeyed authorities, and had unsuccessful marriages seem dubious candidates for such a job. Why would merchants hire or lend credit to such unworthy men?

The answer may lie partially in the geography of the fur trade. Geographically, the trade was a game of leap frog, with the winner getting the bulk of the pelts. The first

59 Noyes, Libby, and Davis, Genealogical Dictionary, 678; York Deeds, IV, 19; VIII, 159; X, 89.

60 Noyes, Libby, and Davis, Genealogical Dictionary, 20, 113, 162; "Book of the Eastern Claims," Maine Historical and Genealogical Recorder, VIII, 190-91; Joseph Heath, "Map of the Kennebec River," and "Account of the Eastern Parts and of Several Settlements that have ever been Made on Lands formerly Purchased by Mr. Wharton and now Bought by Eight of Us," Pejebscot Proprietors' Papers, Maine Historical Society; "Alexander Brown to John Winslow, June 10, 1667," Kennebec Proprietors' Papers; Abraham Corbett provides an interesting contemporary case of an assumed alias. A warrant was issued for Corbett, a Kittery distiller who opposed Massachusetts control of the Province of Maine. He avoided arrest for five years, thanks in part to his use of the alias of Abraham Baker. Corbett, like Thwaites, kept his first name but replaced his last name with a Baker, a common last name.
traders on the river had a distinct advantage over the coastal traders. Yet these river traders constantly faced competition from other posts which were planted even farther up river. The farthest up river, the closest to the supply of furs, and the more likely the merchant was to garner trade from Indians coming down river. Though the Indians were a mobile people, they wanted to carry their pelts the shortest distance possible to trade. Thus, successful posts were located on the leading edge of the frontier. It may have been almost impossible to attract morally upright men to these isolated stations. The lonely frontier was no place for a family of Puritans, who placed so much value on close-knit communities. There were also no churches or ministers on the edge of settlement. Finally, whether it was accurate or not, Maine rapidly acquired a reputation as a rugged, lawless, godless land. Few Puritans would have been eager to move to the most isolated sections of this supposedly anarchic region and merchants may have had to settle for men like Lawson and Naylor who sought escape from unsuccessful marriages. 61

Alternatively, the merchants may not have cared about the background and scruples of their employees. Indeed, it may have been a distinct advantage to hire someone willing to trade contraband. The merchants had to be highly respected members of the community; otherwise they would lose the support of their creditors in England, and other merchants in their trade network. They could ill afford to personally trade such contraband. Still, liquor and guns were highly profitable items, and a merchant who did not deal in them risked losing his business to those traders who did. Instead, merchants hired men who would carry out the darker side of the trade and who would make easy scapegoats if the matter came before the authorities. Neither Edward Naylor nor Christopher Lawson was a Puritan saint. Naylor was the son-in-law of the Antinomian John Wheelwright, while Christopher

61 On several occasions the Maine Indians requested that trading posts be built closer to them. In the 1680s, the Kennebec Indians asked for a post at Merrymeeting Bay which would be closer to them than the post at Pemaquid. In 1702 the Penobscot Indians asked that a trading post be built at Pemaquid, so they would not have to venture all the way to Fort New Casco. "Notes of a Conference at New Harbor with the Truckmaster, February 29, 1702," in Documentary History, ed. Baxter, XXIII, 35-36;
Lawson was a follower of Wheelwright and a kinsman of Anne Hutchinson. Such men, with tarnished reputations from domestic problems, from legal difficulties, and from their religious affiliations, were ready-made victims of a Puritan court. 62

Truckmasters repeatedly faced prosecution for supplying liquor to Indians, but the merchants who supplied them managed largely to sidestep the blame for these sales. The merchants may have escaped reproach for their dealings because of their social, political, and religious standing. They were usually not involved directly in transactions. John Winslow bought land from Kennebec Indians for several beaver pelts worth of liquor, and Thomas Lake broke out rum to celebrate a treaty with the Androscoggin, but neither man was called to account for these acts. Even when merchants were caught in direct violation of the law, they suffered only slight consequences. When the agents for Peter Coffin and Richard Waldron were caught trading liquor at Pennacook, Coffin was fined £50 for providing the liquor. Despite significant evidence against Waldron, the deputies dropped all charges against him when he swore an oath to God proclaiming his innocence in the matter. Though a £50 fine was significant, it paled compared to the profits to be made by trading liquor. Coffin and the community also seem to have considered the fine more a business expense than an admission of wrongdoing. Despite the fine, neither Coffin nor Waldron appears to have lost any prestige from the incident. Waldron continued to hold high political offices and in 1674 was appointed a major in the militia. Coffin also continued his long and prosperous career as a representative to the General Court and a captain in the militia. Despite his illegal trading activities, Coffin would later serve as a

62 Noyes, Libby, and Davis, Genealogical Dictionary, 419-20, 505-6. Lawson was one of the refugees who went with Wheelwright to settle Exeter.
chief justice for the highest court of New Hampshire. Surely no man would reach that eminence if his peers felt he had broken laws. 63

While many small details survive on the English traders of Maine, we know relatively little about their Indian trading partners. No accounts survive even to tell how they transacted the trade. It is possible that each Indian traded separately with the English, but since hunting was a group activity it seems likely that trading was done in bands as well. When negotiating the land sales to Englishmen, the Indians of Maine entrusted their sachems with the authority to sell and to divide the profits among the tribe. The Indians of northern Canada used a similar system when trading with the Hudson's Bay Company. They appointed a trading captain to negotiate the sale of all their pelts with the truckmaster. The Indians of Maine may have traded furs in a like fashion. 64

The geographical distribution of those Maine tribes who participated in the trade underwent considerable change during the first half of the seventeenth century. By the 1640s the Western Etchemins had ceased to exist as a tribe, and the once populous agriculturalists of southern Maine had all but disappeared. Those few surviving Indians from south of Casco Bay probably joined their allies, the Androscoggins. With the decline of the Western Etchemins and the Almouchiquois, the Abenakis moved towards the coast. Little is known of the Abenakis before their migrations because as an interior tribe they were seldom observed by Europeans. All that can be said is that various groups of these people came to inhabit the drainages of the Saco, Kennebec, and Penobscot rivers. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the supply of pelts was controlled by these Abenaki

63 In 1667, Alexander Brown was accused of trading liquor to the Indians, but his employers, John Winslow, Thomas Temple, and the rest of the Plymouth Proprietors who supplied Brown the liquor, apparently were left out of the investigation. "Alexander Brown to John Winslow, June 10, 1667," Kennebec Proprietors' Papers; Statement of the Kennebec Claims, 6; Massachusetts Archives, XXX, 154-61; Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 99; For a transcription see "Pennacook Papers," Collections of the New Hampshire Historical Society (Concord, N. H., 1832), III, 215-24.

64 Ray and Freeman, Give Us Good Measure, 67-75.
tribes, the Androsocoggins, and the Eastern Etchemins (also known as the Maliseets and Passamaquoddys) who remained in the vicinity of the Ste. Croix and St. John Rivers. 65

Much information on the mid-seventeenth-century Abenakis comes from French sources. The Abenakis controlled the upper Kennebec, a trade route between New England and New France which the Abenakis had been using from at least the turn of the seventeenth century. From the headwaters of the Kennebec, a series of portages brought the Abenakis to the Chaudiere River, which flows into the St. Lawrence River near Quebec. They utilized this route to try to become fur traders. In 1637 a party of twelve Abenakis, carrying firearms, travelled to Quebec and then up the St. Lawrence on the pretense of aiding their allies, the St. Lawrence Algonquians, against the Iroquois. French authorities, however, feared that they came primarily to trade their wampum for the Algonquians' beaver. This incident reveals much about some Abenakis. First, they remained allied with the Indians of the St. Lawrence, an alliance Champlain had noted in the opening years of the seventeenth century. Also, they were getting wampum and guns from English traders on the coast of Maine, so much wampum, in fact, that they had a surplus they wanted to trade for pelts. 66

Fearing that the Abenakis would make an appreciable dent in their fur trade, the French demanded that they stop making these trading voyages. But the Abenakis did not give up. In 1640 they ventured to the St. Lawrence in the company of an English explorer, a Captain Young. The French captured Young and dispersed the Abenakis, but the Indians came again in 1647 and returned home with twenty bales of pelts. When thirty Abenakis


66 Thwaites, ed., Jesuit Relations, XII, 186-89; Marcel Trudel, The Beginnings of New France, 1524-1663 (Toronto, 1973), 182-83. Although they are not specified in the quote, the Algonquians were probably members of the Montagnais tribe.
arrived in Quebec in June 1649, French authorities sternly warned them that "they are not to come again, and that their goods will be plundered if they return." 67

Despite the uneasy political ties between the French and the Abenakis, in the early 1640s they became spiritual allies when some Abenakis adopted French Catholicism. By 1642 several Abenaki lived at the mission village of Sillery, five miles up the St. Lawrence from Quebec. The next year, an Abenaki sachem and his family joined the converts at Sillery. Abenakis became Christians at the urging of French missionaries who visited Maine. Of the several missionaries active there, none was more popular with the Indians than the Jesuit Gabriel Druillettes, who established a mission on the Kennebec in 1646. Through the efforts of Druillettes and other missionaries the Abenaki grew closer to the French, despite the unfriendly reception their traders received in Quebec. 68

The Abenakis risked French antagonism because the Indians desired European goods. In the seventeenth-century, virtually any and all English items were traded to the natives, so it is difficult to define a "trade good." For example, excavations at Burr's Hill, a seventeenth-century Wampanoag burial ground in Rhode Island, revealed traditional trade goods in addition to unexpected European-made products such as ceramics, wine bottles, horse shoes, and door hinges. Most English merchants traded with both Indians and colonists, so even mercantile inventories do not completely solve this riddle. Still, descriptions of the fur trade include six major categories of trade goods: weapons (firearms, ammunition, and swords); hardware (hatchets, knives, kettles); cloth and clothes (shirts, coats, blankets, and cloth); small items (such as beads, "trinkets," and jews')


harps); foodstuffs (corn, peas, and bread); and narcotics (tobacco, pipes, brandy, and rum). 69

Of all the types of trade goods, weapons proved the most controversial. The Indians constantly demanded guns and swords for their hunts and for their wars, but English authorities did not trust the Indians and feared that the guns would be used against the English themselves. William Bradford summed up English concerns in his verse history of New England:

For these fierce natives, they are now so fill'd
With guns and muskets, and in them so skilled,
As that they may keep the English in awe
And when they please give to them the law;
Thus like madmen we put them in a way,
With our own weapons us to kill and slay: 70

Some English still traded firearms despite these fears and the numerous laws which prohibited the trade. In 1622 John Pory wrote from Damariscove Island that the Indians of the region were "furnished in exchange of skins by some unworthy people of our nation with pieces, shot, powder, swords, blades, and most deadly arrow heads." 71 William Bradford and Sir Ferdinando Gorges made similar complaints that the numerous fishermen on the coast of Maine were supplying the natives with guns.

These early reports probably exaggerate the problem. Christopher Levett, who lived in Maine from 1623 and 1624, saw only a handful of firearms among the natives in the course of his extensive contact with them. Why would such responsible authorities as Bradford and Gorges overstate the threat of weapons? First, they were very much afraid of the weapons trade, and their apprehensions may have led them to exaggerate the situation.

71 James, Three Visitors, 16, 32; Vaughan, New England Frontier, 227-28.
Second, they used the argument for political purposes. Gorges brought the matter to Parliament when he applied for a fishing monopoly for all of New England. Sir Ferdinando stressed the disorder and lawlessness among the fishermen in hopes that Parliament would allow him to regulate the fishing industry. William Bradford was not a disinterested party either, for the Plymouth Colony used the fur trade to pay off its English creditors. Any competition, regardless of whether they traded guns or not, was a threat to Plymouth's dominance of the trade. In 1628, when the Plymouth authorities deported Thomas Morton, they claimed they did so because he traded guns to the Indians. In reality, Plymouth deported Morton because he threatened the colony on many levels, not the least of which was his success in the fur trade. 72

While Morton's guilt is open to question, Edward Ashley freely admitted trading rapiers, guns, powder, and lead to the natives who visited his post at Penobscot. His employers at Plymouth insisted that he stop this practice, but he continued since he felt it was the only way to compete with neighboring French merchants who traded weapons. After Ashley ignored several warnings to cease his illegal activities, Plymouth authorities deported him too. 73

Though they did get rid of wayward traders, the English could not eliminate the weapons trade. In 1672 John Josselyn noted that "of late he is a poor Indian that is not master of two guns, which they purchase of the French." 74 While Josselyn and other Englishmen censured the French for the arms build-up, the French blamed the English. In


73 Spencer, Pioneers on Maine Rivers, 367-72.

74 Josselyn, 309.; Vaughan, New England Frontier, 228.
1634 one Jesuit complained that "since they have come into possession of firearms, through their traffic with the English, they have become fair huntsmen, some of them shooting very well." 75 In actuality, arms came from both the French and English. Despite French attempts to limit sales in Canada and Acadia to their Christian Indian allies, guns became increasingly common throughout the Indian community. When Father Druillettes arrived at the Abenaki village of Norridgewock in 1646, the Indians saluted him with "a salvo of arquebus shots." 76 Finally, in 1668 the Massachusetts General Court realized it could no longer prevent the arms trade so it legalized it. Instead of outlawing the trade, the legislators hoped to regulate it and profit from it by licensing traders to sell firearms. 77

Liquor was almost as controversial a trade good as firearms. Massachusetts, Plymouth, and the Province of Maine all prohibited the sale of liquor to Indians. Many settlers feared trading liquor because of the effect it had on the natives who knew no moderation when drunk. Indians drank to achieve drunkenness for several reasons. First, it produced a sense of euphoria and inflated their self-esteem. Intoxicated Indians frequently bragged about their bravery and feats of daring. Drunkenness also gave Indians an excuse to commit socially unacceptable acts, for they blamed the alcohol or the liquor trader for their inebriated acts. While drunk, Indians could beat, murder, or rob, without risking retaliation. Finally, Indians drank to achieve a religious dream-like state used by Indians to communicate directly with their spirit world. Dreams played an important role in the traditional Indian spirit world, and alcohol gave them a new way to reach this state. 78

In early trading encounters, liquor was a novel trade item. In 1605, when Waymouth offered aqua vitae, the Indians of the St. George River tasted it but rejected it.

75 Thwaites, ed., Jesuit Relations, VI, 309.
76 Thwaites, ed., Jesuit Relations, XXXVII, 249; Vaughan, New England Frontier, 228.
Quickly, however, liquor became a staple of the fur trade. The coastal traders dealt in large volumes of liquor. Thomas Jenner's vessel had a hogshead (approximately sixty-three gallons) of brandy and one-half a hogshead of wine aboard in 1655 when authorities seized his ship in the Kennebec. Joshua Tead had two barrels of beer and a barrel of wine confiscated from his ship. Oliver Duncomb and William Waldron put 140 gallons of liquor aboard their shallop for a trading voyage to Maine and Nova Scotia in 1671. Nicholas Denys observed that the Micmac spent their summers and falls on the coast, trading virtually all their pelts to fishermen for brandy. Micmac men spent most of this time inebriated, while most women and children hid in the woods to avoid their drunken brawls. Some Micmac maidens received brandy from sailors who "bring them into so favorable a condition that they can do with them everything they will." 79

While the coasters and fishermen gained notoriety for selling liquor, the landed traders also lubricated their customers with spirits. The English traded alcohol not only because Indians demanded it but also because they could easy cheat intoxicated Indians. John Josselyn wrote that the Indians "love it dearly, and will part with all they have to their bare skins for it, being perpetually drunk with it, as long as it is to be had." 80 Traders throughout Maine were accused of trading liquor, but most accusations took place on the Kennebec. In the 1660s Thomas Watkins, Alexander Brown, and Walker & Naylor were all accused of trading spirits to the natives of the Kennebec. Brown was undeterred by the accusation, for he continued to ask for barrels of rum from the Plymouth Proprietors. 81


The danger of trading alcohol to the Indians was seen in an incident at Waldron's and Coffin's truckhouse at Pennacook. The resident agents, Thomas Paine and Thomas Dickenson, repeatedly sold liquor to the Pennacook Indians. Once in 1668 Paine and Dickenson traded three rundlets of liquors to the Indians. The rundlet (or runlet) is an imprecise measure, which varies from a pint to eighteen gallons. In this case, however, the rundlets were large, for with these beverages "there were at least one hundred of Indians drunk for one night, one day, and one half together." One Indian was so intoxicated that he killed Thomas Dickenson.

The Pennacooks had foreseen unpleasant consequences of the liquor trade. In the spring of 1667, when they first heard that Waldron intended to build a truck house near their village, they journeied to Dover and asked him not to trade spirits at the post. They feared that their enemies, the Mohawks, would attack and slay them while the entire village was drunk. Other Indians voiced similar complaints against the liquor trade. Not only were intoxicated Indians defenseless against their enemies, but they were also liable to be cheated by unscrupulous English traders. Indians also complained of paying a premium price for watered-down liquors. An Androscoggin Indian once complained that "he had given an hundred pounds for water drawn out of Mr. P. his well." Alcohol also had a noticeable effect on Indians' health. Denys estimated that six to eight Micmacs died each year because of drunkenness. Josselyn noted that "it hath killed many of them, especially old women who have died when dead drunk." 82

82 Massachusett Archives, XXX, 154-61.
84 Josselyn, "An Account of Two Voyages," 304.
Not all trade goods had to be illicit to be popular. The hunters of northern New England constantly demanded corn, peas, biscuits, and other foodstuffs. In the first several decades of the seventeenth century the northern natives continued their reliance upon the agricultural Indians of southern New England to supplement their food supply. However, the food trade was revolutionized by the introduction of the European shallop. The Micmacs and Etchemins continued to travel traditional trade routes in shallops, but these vessels carried much more food than their canoes could, thus making bulk transactions in grains practical for the first time. By the 1630s war and disease had decimated the agriculturalists of southern Maine, so the northern hunters had to turn increasingly to the French and English to provide food.

The Maine fur trade differed in one respect from the trade of southern New England. During the early years of settlement in southern New England, the English traded for Indian foodstuffs to keep their fledgling settlements alive. In Maine the Indians themselves had to trade for food. Early visitors to Maine noted that even some of the hunting tribes grew some corn, and they continued to do so throughout the seventeenth century. In 1676 Francis Card, a hostage of the Abenakis, was held at Taconic, a place he called "their planting ground." 85 The Etchemins also grew corn, for John Gyles, a captive in the 1690s, described planting and harvesting corn on the St. John River. Still, little corn was grown by the hunters of northern New England, and by the mid-1630s there were few agricultural Indians left in the region. Rather than trading their surplus to the English, they relied on trade from the English. Foodstuffs show up constantly in merchants' records of the seventeenth century. 86


86 John Gyles, "Memoirs of Odd Adventures, Strange Deliverances, etc., in the Captivity of John Gyles, Esq., Commander of the Garrison on St. George River, in the District of Maine, in Ricard VanDerBeets, ed., Held Captive by Indians; Selected Narratives, 1642-1836 (Knoxville, Tennessee, orig. publ. 1736), 104.
The foodstuffs on board Thomas Jenner's vessel suggest the Indians' need for foods that could be stored. In addition to bread, a favorite commodity of the Indians, the ship held 298 pounds of prunes, an easily storable fruit. Alexander Brown frequently asked the Plymouth Proprietors for corn and bread. In 1668 he requested one hundred bushels of corn. The Proprietors could only purchase forty bushels and then could not get freight for it. As late as 1701 the Penobscot Indians requested that corn, meal, peas, apples, and molasses be included in a shipment of trade goods. 87

The Indians also demanded European finished goods, including kettles, knives, and axes. The natives generally substituted European goods for traditional hand-crafted items. Stone knives and wooden cooking vessels gave way to steel blades and copper kettles. When John Josselyn observed Indians spear fishing for bass and blue fish, he noted that they strike them "with a dart or staff, to the lower end of whereof they fasten a sharp jagged bone (since they make them of iron)." 88 Traditional spear fishing continued, but labor-intensive bone harpoons gave way to more durable iron barbs. Nicolas Denys, a French merchant who traded with the Micmacs in Nova Scotia, claimed that a copper kettle was "the most valuable article they can obtain from us." 89

Others, including Roger Williams, believed that cloth was the single most important trade item. Peter Thomas' recent study of John Pynchon, the preeminent fur merchant of the Connecticut River Valley before King Philip's War, supports this view. The monetary value of cloth traded by Pynchon was twenty-five times greater than the


88 Josselyn, "An Account of Two Voyages," 305; Axtell, The European and the Indian, 253-56; Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 56.

89 Denys, Natural History of North America, 441.
value of all other goods combined. Suits of clothing were particularly prized by the Indians and were often presented to sachems in trade meetings or in treaty negotiations. The Indians throughout eastern North America seem to have preferred dark-colored cloth, particularly reds and blues, and Maine Indians were no exception. Probably they preferred these colors because they were the same as their traditional native dyes. John Josselyn observed that the Indians traditionally wore skins "dressed and drawn with lines into several works, the lines being colored yellow, blue, or red." In 1667, Alexander Brown ordered red serge to make Indian coats. The invoices from Waldron's and Dunscomb's shallop included blue cotton, blue duffels, and red stammels. Other popular trade cloths included manchester, broad cloth, shag, frize, and kersey, all versions of a coarse, woolen, blanket-like material which the Indians made into rough but warm clothing. Most clothes were mantles and coats, though women and some old men also wore caps.

A final category of trade item is toys, beads, rings and other small items of adornment, such as combs and mirrors. These items, generally but incorrectly lumped under the title of "trinkets," were much admired by the natives. Early explorers, including Waymouth, bragged about their success in trading these items for prime beaver pelts. While small items like mirrors and jew's harps continued to be trade items throughout the seventeenth century, the Indians quickly lost their initial enthusiasm for these novelties and instead demanded more substantial goods, such as cloth and hardware. Not a single toy or


piece of jewelry is noted in the trading inventories of Waldron & Smith or Thomas Jenner, and it appears that by mid-century these items were in limited demand. 92

Unlike other small trade goods, shell wampum and its European imitation, glass beads, both apparently remained important trade items in Maine until the outbreak of King Philip's War. This was probably because wampum, made from shells on Long Island Sound, was imported only in small quantities before European contact. Excavations of Indian burials indicate that wampum was traded as far away as the Penobscot and Nova Scotia in the early historic period. Lescarbot observed that the Micmac traded for beads with the Almouchiquois during the first decade of the seventeenth century. Despite these references to wampum, before the 1630s the natives of Maine saw it only in small quantities. In 1623 two sachems flattered Christopher Levett by saying he was "so big a sagamore, yea four fathom, which were the best words they could use to express their minds." 93 Presumably the Indians referred to Levett's ransom value in fathoms of wampum, as fathoms were the standard unit of measure for wampum. It is interesting that four fathoms was the largest measure of wampum the sachems could imagine, for the previous year the Pequot Indians paid a ransom of 140 fathoms of wampum to safeguard the return of their sachem. The Pequots, as residents of Long Island Sound and makers of wampum, had wide access to the shell bead. The Indians of Maine saw wampum much less frequently, so even four fathoms was a large amount to them. 94

The Plymouth Colony revolutionized the Maine fur trade when they introduced wampum in quantity in the 1630s. As late as 1659 the inventory of the Plymouth and


94 Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 148-50.
Clarke & Lake trading venture included wampum. Though wampum does not appear in any inventories after 1659, beads continued to be popular. In 1667 Alexander Brown wrote that "I want beads most at present and corn and bread." Wampum and beads remained in demand in Maine at least several decades after they ceased to be popular trade items in southern New England. This popularity was probably due both to the late arrival of large quantities of wampum in Maine and to the Abenakis' trade of wampum to the St. Lawrence Algonquians.

In return for wampum, beads, and other diverse goods, the English received fur pelts, principally beaver, moose, and otter. In addition to these mainstays of the fur trade, the Indians trapped mink, fox, muskrat, marten, and even the occasional bear and seal. While beaver was quickly hunted to near-extinction in coastal southern New England, the animal continued to thrive in northern New England. Moose, however, may have been even more important than beaver in Maine and Acadia. Denys noted that in Acadia "when skins are mentioned, simply without any addition, it is the same as saying skins of moose."

Until about 1670, moose-leather clothes were so fashionable in England that a moose skin was worth at least as much as a beaver pelt. Generations of Indians had hunted the moose, a plentiful animal in northern New England. The Indians' long tradition of hunting the animal, combined with the large quantities of meat it provided, made moose a prime target for Abenaki hunters. The only disadvantage of hunting moose was that a dressed skin weighed from fifteen to twenty pounds, giving successful hunters a heavy burden to carry to the nearest trading post. Unlike beaver and other small pelts, moose also provided headaches to English merchants who had to find shipping room for it. In one shipment alone, Alexander Brown sent the Plymouth proprietors 143 moose skins weighing 2252


96 Denys, Natural History of North America, 447.
pounds. A pack of 54 beaver skins which was part of the same cargo weighed only 53 pounds. 97

The price of skins slowly decreased throughout the seventeenth century. A prime beaver pelt, worth ten shillings a pound in the early 1630s, gradually declined to about eight shillings in the 1670s. Moose also began to decline in the 1670s. In 1671 John Hull, a Boston merchant who exported large volumes of furs, cautioned his London agent "not to sell my moose too hastily whole markets did run so low." 98 In addition to the gradual drop in fur prices, the market experienced occasional rapid fluctuations. In 1656 a London merchant wrote George Corwin that "beaver is exceeding low at this time by reason of the wars with Spain." 99 The agent was lucky to get five shillings six pence a pound for prime pelts which Corwin had probably valued at nine shillings. The declining value of furs, combined with increasing levels of competition, must have greatly intensified the trade, cutting profit margins and forcing merchants to take drastic steps to maintain a profit.

Not only did the popularity of trade goods and pelts vary somewhat over the course of the seventeenth century, but the trade itself underwent some significant changes. In particular, competition intensified. While the point cannot be proven, it seems quite likely that the native population of northern New England continued to decline. The Maine Indians remained susceptible to European diseases and to the raids of their enemy, the Mohawks. Migrations to the mission villages of the St. Lawrence also reduced the


99 "William Peake to George Corwin, 1656," Corwin Papers, Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts.
population. As native peoples and animals retreated, the English advanced. By the mid-seventeenth century, coastal southern New England had too many people and too few beavers, and in the next quarter-century Maine gradually began to face the same problem. Some Englishmen moved north for fishing, farming or timbering, while others came to the region to take advantage of the still-vibrant fur trade. In the third quarter of the seventeenth century, growing numbers of traders tried to tap into the fur supply of Maine. The growth of the fur trade may have triggered over-hunting which resulted in population decline of fur bearers. The proliferation of fur traders and settlers profoundly disturbed the Abenaki way of life.

Disciples of a free market system might suggest that the Abenakis benefited from such competitive trade, for the greater the competition, the higher the offers for Abenaki furs. Yet this does not seem to have been the case. Denys saw that the Indians knew how to take advantage of the plethora of competing traders. When they came out of the woods in the spring, the Indians hid all their best pelts, taking only a few mediocre skins to the trading posts "in order to obtain their right to something to drink, eat, and smoke. They pay a part of that which was lent them in the autumn to support them, without which they would perish of hunger. They insist this is all their hunting for the winter has produced." The Indians then picked up their prime furs and headed for the coast where they waited to trade with the fishermen. Although the Micmacs had discovered a way to maintain credit with the established traders while getting higher yields from the fishermen, this potential benefit for the Micmacs had its price. The fishermen were more concerned with obtaining pelts than with the welfare of the Micmacs, so they primarily traded brandy. The widespread brandy trade led to the death of many Micmacs and to the weakening of their society. Also, the Micmacs' falsehoods made to the established traders must have

100 Denys, Natural History of North America, 446.
decreased the traders' trust of the Indians and in general worsened Acadian-Indian relations.

While Denys observed only the Micmac of Acadia, similar trading practices probably took place in Maine. With more fur traders competing for a limited quantity of pelts, each trader had to struggle to make a profit. The stiffer competition in the Sagadahoc region worked to the detriment of the Indians, for the inconveniences suffered more than balanced any financial gain. When the Kennebec and its trade was controlled by the Plymouth Colony and the Clarke & Lake Company, the Abenaki had fewer alternatives in their trading, but they also had fewer Englishmen threatening them. While the leaders of these English companies were more concerned with a profit than with the Abenakis' well-being, they were intelligent businessmen who understood that a viable trade network and the security of their settlements depended upon trust and cooperation. When competition arose, however, relations with the Indians quickly deteriorated. Truckmasters were forced to try to squeeze as much profit as they could out of pelts which were declining in value, so instead of the Indians getting a better deal, they complained about the "hard dealing of the English in the Kennebec River." 101 Many of the challengers for the fur trade were men of few scruples with no permanent stake in the Kennebec to moderate their practices. Interested in a quick profit, they swindled Indians or, in extreme cases, kidnapped them and sold them into slavery. Even the established traders committed excesses against the Indians when the domination of the trade was at stake.

The English competition for furs affected relations with the Indians in other ways. In 1639 five Englishmen stole £50 worth of moose skins from Thomas Purchase's house. The Pejebscot trader could only afford to give partial credit for the stolen skins to Abagadusset, the Kennebec sachem who had traded them. As a result, Abagadusset felt that he had been cheated. Purchase lost trade from the Indians and feared for his life until

101 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 97-98, 150.
the truth about the missing pelts surfaced a year and a half later. The greed of several Englishmen for furs increased distrust and anxiety between the Indians and the English.

Likewise, the English settlers in Maine were caught up in the Indian competition for furs. The English were unwilling participants in the war between the New England Indians and the Mohawks, a struggle that was part of a larger series of wars fought by the Iroquois against their numerous neighbors. The war hurt English traders, for when the Indians fought, they trapped few or no furs. While the wars were based largely on traditional tribal animosities, they were fueled by Iroquois desires to dominate the fur trade. When the Mohawks raided the Penobscot valley in 1662, they arrived at Negue, pulled the palisade down, captured the four employees, and stole £400 in trade goods. They then proceeded down river to Penobscot, where they took captive eighty Indians supposedly under the protection of the English at Penobscot Fort. After killing ten cattle, the Iroquois returned to Negue, where they built a fort and waited two weeks in hopes that the English would return so that they could ambush them and take more trade goods.

Because the Mohawks considered the English in Maine to be the allies of the Abenakis, they included the English in their attacks. Not only did the English lose property in the raid, but they also lost prestige with the Abenakis, since the Indians were under the protection of Penobscot Fort and it was up to the English to safeguard them. Even though the small garrison at Penobscot was no match for a war party of 260 Mohawks, the Abenakis must have blamed the English for their capture.

Intra-cultural hostilities in early Maine were more than matched by English-Indian violence. For the most part, the fur trade in Maine was a turbulent, uneasy truce, frequently punctuated by violence. From the days of the first English traders, cultural fears had

102 Lechford, Notebook, 401-3.

weighed heavily on both sides of the exchange. Violence and kidnappings by the English were returned in kind by the natives. The intense contest for furs cultivated these basic fears and led to continued violence. Despite the turbulence of the trade, however, the Indians and the English grew steadily more reliant on each other. The Indians grew increasingly dependent upon European hardware, weapons, and foodstuffs for their survival. Concurrently, the English practiced traditional forms of livelihood such as fishing, farming and timbering and relied on the Indians for hunting and trapping. Also, as the English population of the Sagadahoc region grew rapidly in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, settlers turned increasingly to the Indians for land. 104

Chapter 5
"A SCRATCH WITH A BEAR'S CLAW:"
THE MAINE LAND TRADE

In 1688 Joseph Lynde, owner of large tracts of land in the Pemaquid region, presented his deeds to Sir Edmund Andros, governor of the Dominion of New England. Lynde later recalled that "after showing him an Indian deed for land, he said that their hand was no more worth than a scratch with a bear's paw, undervaluing all my titles, though everyway legal under our former charter government." 1 Andros refused to validate the deeds from Indians because he planned to give the holdings of Lynde's and other Maine proprietors to his own friends and cronies as choice political plums. Although one hundred years of courtroom debate resulted from the questionable legal validity of Maine lands held under such conveyances, there is no dispute that deeds granted by Indians to English settlers in Maine are worth more to the historian than than a scratch with a bear's claw.

Despite the many surviving conveyances for northeastern North American lands, ethnohistorians have been chary in their use of such deeds as sources of information. At best, they are an uneven source, for some deeds have been identified as forgeries. Even if legitimate as records of cross-cultural encounters, deeds seem to show more about the English than the Indians. Despite their unreliability and vagueness, however, deeds comprise a significant amount of the surviving material on the interaction between the English and the Indians in North America. Most studies of Indian deeds have examined native concepts of family hunting territories and land tenure. The works of anthropologists such as Frank Speck, William MacLeod and Anthony Wallace have shed important light on native land tenure, but have not analysed the deeds as a detailed record of interactions

between natives and Europeans. Land sale, as did the fur trade, played several roles in English-Indian relations: as commercial exchanges, as ways to strengthen alliances, and as agents of acculturation. Deeds, as detailed records of cultural interaction, deserve as much scholarly attention as the fur trade has received. 2

Roger Ray drew heavily upon the research of Speck and other anthropologists involved in this debate in his 1974 article "Maine Indians' Concept of Land Tenure." Ray argued that the Indians of Maine had traditionally shared land, but that this system changed during the contact period. Still, Ray suggested that when Maine Indians signed deeds, they believed they were sharing the land, not truly selling it. While much that Ray wrote holds true, he relied far too heavily upon the flawed data and interpretations of early twentieth-century anthropologists such as Speck. Also, he examined only a small percentage of the Indian deeds available to him. Ray's work provides an important introduction to Maine Indian deeds, but his article only scratches the surface of a complex ethnohistorical issue. 3

One reason for the inadequacy of Ray's work was the undeveloped state of ethnohistory in 1974. The next year, ethnohistorical method and theory leaped forward when Francis Jennings published The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest. Jennings was the first ethnohistorian to fully appreciate the importance of English-native land transactions, which he dubbed 'the deed game.' In The Invasion of America he describes how the English used deeds to take land from Indians. They had several ways to convince an Indian to sign a deed, ranging from getting him drunk to


threatening violence. Jennings suggests that fraud was involved in most land transactions. Even when it was legitimate and unforced, he points out that the sale of native homelands was traumatic for the Indian, for once "dispossessed of his land, he lost all hope of finding any niche in the society called civilized, except that of servant or slave." 4

More recently, Robert Grumet has examined the possible reasons for native land sales and has derived several possible explanations from extant sources. The most common interpretation has been that natives did not understand the conveyances they signed. Faced with the jargon of English legal language, the Indians did not realize the significance of the deeds to which they affixed their marks. An alternative explanation is Grumet's "misunderstanding hypothesis": the natives considered the land to be a gift to the English, given in friendship, admiration, or even pity. Some Englishmen took advantage of this misunderstanding by cheating the guileless Indians of their acres. Recently, William Cronin has argued that the New England Indians did not understand the full implications of English property law. When they sold the land, they believed they were giving only usufructuary rights to the English, or the right to occupy land, not exclusive ownership of it. Other scholars, such as Peter Thomas, disagree with the misunderstanding hypothesis, for they believe that property sales were merely an act of trade. Other than furs, the Indians had little to barter but territory, which they were forced to when they ran out of furs. 5

Grumet suggests from his study of spatial and temporal patterns in deed sales in New York and New Jersey that, at least for the Upper Delawaran Indians, land sales were a deliberate tactic to insure survival of the militarily inferior tribe. By gradually selling off small tracts of land at cheap rates, they gained the gratitude and alliance of their Dutch and


English neighbors. Though the tribe sold all their lands over a 125-year period, at least they dictated the rate of sale. If the Delawares had refused, Europeans would have quickly stripped the land from them by warfare and other techniques suggested by Jennings. 6

Despite the work of anthropologists and historians, the full potential of deeds as ethnohistorical texts has yet to be realized. Not only do deeds shed light on native land tenure and Indian-European encounters, but they can also provide important specific information on the native populations. This is particularly true for Maine, where there are few other documents that describe the Indians during the middle decades of the seventeenth century. Europeans frequently noticed the natives of Maine before 1630, but made fewer references to them between 1630 and the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1675. Deeds from Indians to settlers not only prove that natives interacted with the English, but also serve as one of the few sources on Maine Indians during this crucial period. Over seventy seventeenth-century Indian deeds survive for Maine, the bulk of which were signed before 1675. Most of these come from the Sagadahoc region, the heart of the fur trade, and are ample enough to present a case study of the use and significance of Indian deeds.

Unfortunately, these deeds pose some serious problems because the validity and accuracy of Indian deeds throughout the English colonies are open to question. The fact or suggestion of cheating and forgery makes them potentially unreliable source materials. Deed registration procedures make matters worse. When a clerk recorded a deed, he transcribed the original, which he then returned to the grantee (the buyer). Thus the deeds preserved in county courthouses and in other legal papers are merely copies. Though they represent verified copies, they lack the original handwriting, signatures, and other items which might improve one's understanding of the transaction. Further, during the seventeenth century, grantees frequently waited many years before recording their deeds, often until they themselves were preparing to sell the land.

The problems with deeds increase due to several factors peculiar to Maine. York was the only county of importance in Maine before 1760. Many settlers never made the long trip to York Village to record their deeds. Other deeds were entered in the courthouses of Massachusetts ports frequented by Maine merchants and fishermen. The disruptions created by the Indian wars in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries further magnified the recording problem. Indians destroyed many towns in Maine during King Philip's War and King William's War, and settlers abandoned most of those towns that escaped attack. During these disasters, many unrecorded deeds were burned or lost. The ultimate loss occurred in 1742 when the Cornwall County records were burned in a courthouse fire. Thus many deeds are known only through claims for lands entered by settlers in the Book of the Eastern Claims, a logbook made in Massachusetts by Maine residents who fled their homes during King William's War. These claims lacked the detail of deeds and were more susceptible to exaggerations. 7

Historians must view these Indian deeds and claims with caution because many of these conveyances were later entered as court evidence in proprietary land battles in eighteenth-century Maine. Groups such as the Kennebec Proprietors, the Pejebscot Proprietors, and the Clarke & Lake heirs had much to gain by counterfeiting deeds. At least one forgery has been exposed, and other deeds appear suspect. While some had been faked, others were deliberately destroyed to prevent damaging evidence from being introduced in court. 8

As important evidence in the battle for ownership of thousands of acres of land, such deeds, often recorded a hundred years after the transaction, are suspect. Historians,

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7 Aside from York, the only county was the short-lived County of Cornwall (1665-1688). For information on the eastern claims and the destruction of the Sheepscot court papers, see Cushman, The History of Ancient Sheepscot, 55-6; David Quimby Cushman, "Ancient Settlement of Sheepscot," Collections of the Maine Historical Society Ser. 1, Vol. IV (1856), 228-30.

however, should not dismiss them outright. All deeds should undergo careful scrutiny and individual checks for accuracy. When extensively researched, many eastern claims and questionable deeds have been verified from other seventeenth-century sources. For example, a 1653 deed from Agadoadimagoe and Skumbee to Thomas Lake was not recorded in York County until 1759, amid the court battle between the Clarke & Lake heirs and the Kennebec Proprietors. Since it was recorded so long after the sale, the deed rightly arouses suspicion. The original, however, survives in the Massachusetts Archives, and proves the validity of the 1759 document. Common sense suggests that most of these deeds were legitimate. Though we do not have the Cornwall deeds to compare with surviving deeds and claims, when the eastern claims were recorded in Boston in the first decades of the eighteenth century, the Cornwall deeds did exist. It would have been foolhardy to enter a false eastern claim that surviving residents and the Cornwall deeds could quickly dismiss. Indeed, many eastern claims entered long after the fact were merely direct transcriptions of the Cornwall deeds, which authorities had removed to Boston for safekeeping. Fifty-six Indian deeds survive for the Sagadahoc region. While only half of these conveyances can be fully verified, most of the rest appear to be legitimate. 9

Unfortunately, proving that a deed was a "legitimate" legal transaction does not mean that historians can take the instrument at face value. Though a deed was signed by an Indian, serious questions arise over his authority to sell the land, his understanding of the transaction, and his literacy. For many years anthropologists have hotly debated the issue of land ownership among Maine Indians. Indian deeds clearly indicate that seventeenth-century Indians had some concept of land ownership, although its exact nature is difficult to determine. Apparently, the tribal chieftain had the right to sell the land, but often he did so only with the consent of lesser sachems and other Indians who had established a right to

9 The original deed to Lake is in Massachusetts Archives, XXX, 33. Copies are recorded in York Deeds, XXXV, 50; Lincoln Deeds, I, 22. Another ten deeds survive only in the form of Eastern claims.
it. This relationship is apparent in a 1685 deed from Moxus, chief sagamore of the Kennebec Abenakis, to Richard Pateshall, a Boston merchant. While Moxus was the lone grantor, the deed stated that "Derumkin and his son Venunguisset, it being their proper right and interest that is contained and expressed within this paper," had a claim to the land as well. As further proof of their right, the father and son signed the deed just below the mark of Moxus. 10

More revealing evidence of Indian land ownership comes from a series of deeds and depositions to lands on the upper Kennebec River. In 1648 Monquine (or Natahanada) sold the land on both sides of the Kennebec from Cushnoc to Wesserunett to William Bradford, governor of the Plymouth Colony. In 1653, however, Abagadussett (or Baggadusset), an Indian who lived many miles downriver (in present-day Richmond), sold much of this tract to Thomas Lake, Roger Spencer, and Christopher Lawson. The greatly upset Plymouth Colony authorities proceeded to take depositions from several Indians to confirm Pilgrim ownership. Essemenosque, "one of the right owners of Toconett," signed one of the depositions, stating that he had been aware of the sale of land by Monquine to Bradford, consented to it, and received "part of the pay." 11 While Essemenoque acknowledged that he and all the other Indians freely approved of Monquine's transaction, he claimed that Abagadusset had no right to sell Taconic, for the land belonged to himself and Watchogoe's wife. 12

In 1654 the Plymouth Colony and Thomas Lake solved their difficulties by agreeing to property boundaries and uniting their several truck houses in one fur trading partnership. The documents relating to this incident provide further important information.


11 Statement of the Kennebeck Claims by the Committee Appointed by a Resolve of the General Court of the 28th of October, A.D. 1783 (Boston: Adams and Nourse, 1786), 4-6.

12 Ibid., 5.
about the Indians' concept of land ownership. First, the Kennebecs did not cease to occupy land when they sold it. Though Essemeneoque agreed to Monquine's sale of the Cushnoc-to-Wesserunnet tract in 1648, in 1653 he stated that he still dwelled at Wesserunnet. Essemeneoque was not the only member of his tribe still living within the confines of the tract, for throughout the period the Kennebecs maintained a major village at Taconic. 13

Though Monquine signed the deed, he sought the consent of the whole tribe and divided profits among its members. These actions imply that the sachem acted more as a tribal authority than as a land owner and that Monquine used his authority to act as a broker in the land exchange. Apparently the tribe held all lands, and members were consulted before a sale and then shared in the proceeds. Still, some Indians held more rights to certain lands than to others. Essemeneoque claimed he and Watchogoe's wife rightfully owned Taconic. Thus property ownership seems to have functioned on two different levels among the Kennebecs in the mid-seventeenth century: the tribe jointly possessed all its territory, but individuals enjoyed some rights to specific tracts. 14

The reference to Watchogoe's wife is one of the few to Indian women of the Sagadahoc region. The only other woman ever mentioned by name was "Miss Joane," who witnessed a deed from five sachems to Thomas Stevens. Native women played a much more prominent role in land sales on Casco Bay. Five Indian deeds survive from that region; women are the grantors in four of them. Three of these deeds were signed by Warrabitta, alias Jhone, sister of the sachem Scitterygussett. In 1623 Scitterygussett was among a delegation who visited Christopher Levett's camp in Casco Bay, and in 1631 authorities accused him of murdering Walter Bagnall. Scitterygussett sold land to Francis

14 Statement of the Kennebec Claims, 5; Baker, Clarke & Lake, 7-9.
Small in 1657; he had died by 1670, when Jhone sold four hundred acres to Anthony Brackett. 15

Jhone was not the only Indian woman of Casco Bay to sell land to the English. In 1659 Uphannu, alias "Jane the Indian of Scarborough," and her mother and brother sold a tract of land at Blue Point to Andrew and Arthur Alger. It is possible that the Indians of southern Maine, who quite likely belonged to a different tribe than the Kennebec Abenakis, gave women a higher place in their society and held them in greater esteem. Judging from Christopher Levett's observations, however, the woman's role in southern Maine Indian society was not an enviable one. When Levett told his Indian friends that he would soon return to England, "they asked me why I would be gone out of their country, I was glad to tell them my wife would not come thither except I did fetch her, they bid a pox on her hounds (a phrase they have learned and do use when they do curse) and wished me to beat her."16

It is also possible that these women signed deeds because of the population crisis that hit the Casco Bay region. The families of Jane and Jhone were apparently among the few in southern Maine who survived the epidemics of 1616-1618 and 1634. In 1640 John Winter noted that the Indian population of Casco Bay had all but disappeared. Perhaps in this demographic situation women could reach positions of authority normally denied them. The general paucity of deeds for land south of the Kennebec indicates the high mortality rate suffered during the epidemics for, as in Massachusetts, few Indians survived in the region to sign deeds. According to a local historian writing in the mid-nineteenth century, Jane was the last Indian resident of Scarborough. She spent her lonely final years in lonely


16 York Deeds, II, 114; Levett, "My Discourse of Diverse Rivers and Harbors," in Winship, ed., Sailors' Narratives of Voyages, 279. Both Jhone and Jane had brothers who witnessed their deeds. Thus the women had not attained positions of authority because all males had perished from the virgin soil epidemics.
solitude in her small abode near Blue Point. Concerned with caring for themselves, Jane and her mother stipulated in the deed that they could continue to plant corn in the Algers' field and receive one bushel of corn from the Algers each year for as long as they lived. As the last native inhabitants of Scarborough, Jane and her mother probably were not concerned about the ownership of their land after their deaths. Instead, they wanted to ensure that they could remain on the land and at least receive a modest rent for it. 17

Many scholars would argue that the English took advantage of Jane and other Indians when they purchased tribal lands. Did the Indians really understand what they were signing? Did they get receive a fair amount for their lands? The schoolboy tale about the Dutch purchase of Manhattan Island for $24 worth of "trinkets" has taught Americans to believe that the crafty Europeans constantly took advantage of the Indians, who neither understood the land's true worth nor comprehended the European concept of exclusive land ownership. The matter is not that simple. Few Maine deeds stipulate the payment made to the Indian for his land. Most specify cryptic considerations, such as "a certain sum of money" or "for divers good causes and considerations." 18 This pattern of unspecified considerations is uncharacteristic of colonial New England deeds. Most Indian deeds recorded in Massachusetts courthouses clearly specify the amount paid for the lands.

The English obtained few deeds in eastern Massachusetts, in large part because they did not need to. Epidemics had so reduced the Indian population of Massachusetts that few were left alive to sell lands. Invariably, those lands that were purchased from Indians were obtained in large tracts by town proprietors, not by individuals. A better comparison with the Sagadahoc region is Hampden County, Massachusetts, which was spread across the Connecticut River Valley. Like the Sagadahoc, the Connecticut was a center of both the fur trade and the deed trade. Most of the Indian deeds of Hampden County specify the

18 For example, see York Deeds, I, 10; VIII, 220; IX, 229, 254.
purchase price of the land. Common items exchanged include strings of wampum, hardware, cloth, and even English specie. For example, in 1636 John Pynchon traded "eighteen fathom of wampum, eighteen coats, eighteen hatchets, eighteen hoes, [and] eighteen knives" for land in present-day Springfield. 19

Why do the Sagadahoc deeds differ so greatly from the Hampden deeds in the specification of payment? An examination of those twelve Sagadahoc deeds which include lists of goods received for land explains why many deeds remain mute on the issue. Only two deeds indicate that cash was paid for land. Instead, deeds specify trade goods as payment: wampum, a trading coat, blankets, food stuffs, liquor, and firearms are all mentioned. This contrasts with the Hampden deeds, which usually specify wampum and blankets, but never mention illicit goods such as liquor and firearms. Presumably the Maine deeds are so vague because the price included some sort of illicit trade good. There has to be some reason to explain why these deeds are so aberrant, and a very likely explanation is illegal trade, an activity frequently noted by many observers of early Maine. Since trading firearms was illegal until the late 1660s, and trading liquor was always prohibited, no English grantee would want to open himself to court charges by admitting in a legal document that he had broken the law. Hence, English grantees wrote nebulous purchase prices in actual deeds. 20

A second clue to Maine's vague purchase prices is also found in the twelve deeds which stipulate a price. Three detail that payment for the land was to be made on an annual

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19 Harry A. Wright, ed. Indian Deeds of Hampden County (Springfield, Mass., 1905), 11-12, 25-27, 31, passim; Thomas, "Cultural Change on the Southern New England Frontier," 149-53. It should be noted that only Hampden County Indian deeds before 1675 were studied and compared with Sagadahoc deeds. For examples of deeds to proprietors, see Sidney Perley, The Indian Land Titles of Essex County, Massachusetts (Salem, Mass., 1912).

20 Statement of the Kennebec Claims, 5-6; York Deeds, II, 13; XXXV, 55; Drake, Book of the Indians, 100; George A. Wheeler and Henry W. Wheeler, History of Brunswick, Topsham, and Harpswell, Maine (Boston, 1878), 11; Wright, ed. Indian Deeds of Hampden County, passim.
basis. Francis Small agreed to pay Scitterygussett an annual rent of a trading coat and a gallon of liquor for lands on Casco Bay. Jane received one bushel of corn annually from the Algiers, and Robin Hood received a peck of corn each year from the Englishman James Smith for selling him Woolwich. These descriptions make the deed appear more like a lease than an outright purchase. Other Indians may have also asked for such annual provisions rather than a lump-sum payment. Other Englishmen may have agreed to such annual payments, but would have been hesitant to specify such stipulations, for it would look as if the Indian retained rights of ownership over the tract. 21

Regardless of how a clerk wrote a deed, did an Indian know what he was signing and how well it expressed his wishes? Few, if any, Indians could read at all, never mind decipher verbose legalese in intricate court script. Probably an Englishman discussed a sale with a sachem, then wrote a deed and read it aloud to the Indian. He would agree or offer changes until ultimately the bargainers struck a deal. Such negotiations occurred in mid-eighteenth-century Maine when competing proprietary land companies sought depositions from aged settlers of the region. Jabez Bradbury, a seasoned scout and Indian interpreter, witnessed Joseph Bane’s signing of a deposition for the Kennebec Proprietors. Bradbury observed that "a deposition being produced by the said gentlemen, it was read to the said Bane who in the main approved of it." 22 Though Bane was not an Indian, it is interesting to note that he was a former captive who spent most of his youth among the Kennebec Indians. Few Englishmen in the Sagadahoc would have possessed the legal skills and literacy to author a deed. Indeed, while very few Indians were literate, many grantees themselves were not even signature literate. Under such conditions, the deed was probably negotiated orally by the two parties and then recorded by a literate witness.

21 York Deeds, I, 83; II, 114; Drake, Book of the Indians, 100.

22 Suffolk County Court Files, no. 75654.
Still, the oral nature of the contract did not insure Indians a fair deal. It is possible that the written version of a deed could have differed markedly from a verbal agreement without the knowledge of the Indians. This explains how contraband goods and annual rents agreed to orally could become "valuable considerations" in print. Beyond these vague clauses, there are no surprises to the deeds. Perhaps historians have searched for evidence of the English swindling the Indians because of the "bargains" they received. All of Woolwich, Maine, for example, was sold for only one hogshead of corn and thirty pumpkins. These questions, however, must be answered from the seventeenth-century native perspective not from a modern viewpoint. To do this it must be determined what the land was realistically worth to the native population. The epidemics of the first two decades of the seventeenth century greatly decreased the native population of Maine, particularly in the area south of the Androscoggin. In such sparsely populated regions, the native population would not have needed much land. North of Casco Bay, however, the native population, although small, was certainly larger than in southern Maine. Under these conditions, deed sales take on a much more complex meaning. Few deeds from the Sagadahoc region indicate the price paid for land, certainly too few to judge whether the natives received a fair price.

Payment would have depended in part upon an Indian's understanding of the sale. If a native was merely granting use of the land, then his idea of a fair price would have been much less than if he was selling the land outright. Yet this image of the unwitting savage, unable to comprehend English land concepts and trading practices, flies in the face of all evidence. It is conceivable that some of the earliest deeds were signed in just such a manner, but the Indians must have quickly learned the rules of the game. In 1642 Thomas Gorges complained that "the trade of beaver is utterly lost, the Indians understanding the value of things as well as the English."23 It seems doubtful that such astute fur traders

would have misunderstood land sales or become easy targets for fraudulent sales. Most deeds go to great lengths to specify that the sale included all rights to the land in perpetuity. The Indians apparently understood this stipulation. For example, the list of grievances written by the Kennebec Indians in 1677 contains many detailed complaints, but does not mention land transactions. 24

Perhaps the Indians did not complain because the settlers did not force them off the land. Although almost all the lands on the lower reaches of the Kennebec and Androscoggin Rivers were sold to Englishmen by 1660, the natives remained on many parcels long after. As late as 1676, Kennebec Indians maintained a village, known as "Abagadusset's fort," on the north side of Merrymeeting Bay, despite having sold this property in the 1650s. The English must have allowed this in part because it ultimately benefitted them. Having a large Indian village within the bounds of the Clarke & Lake tract at Taconic was a major reason for the success of the company's trading post there. Likewise, as the English did little or no trapping, they would have been foolhardy to deny the Indians the right to trap on their land, else they would never have received any pelts in trade. The English probably did not mind the Indians' continued use of the lands as hunting territory, for the English settlers of Maine preferred their traditional sources of subsistence, particularly husbandry and fishing. 25

Such a situation is spelled out in several Maine deeds. In 1659, when Nanuddemance sold land on the Kennebec to John Parker, the sachem specified that he retain the "liberty unto me and my heirs to fish, fowl, and hunt also to set otter traps without molestation." 26 The 1684 deed from six sagamores which reaffirmed the

24 Documentary History, ed. Baxter, VI, 177-79. The earliest serious complaints about English land seizures were made just prior to King William's War, after some Englishmen abandoned the tradition of purchasing land from the Indians.


Pwchase Patent on the Androscoggin River granted the land under the stipulation that the Indians could continue to improve their ancient planting grounds, hunt on lands that were not enclosed, and fish as long as no damage was done to the English fishery. Likewise, many of the Hampden deeds reserve for the Indians the right to fish, hunt, and plant on the lands they sold. Even if the Indians did not have continued use of the land spelled out in their deeds, European custom guaranteed them the right to hunt on unfenced land. Thus, while the English formally owned all the lands in the region, the Indians retained vested interests in the property. The hunters had always maintained a relatively low population density, which was thinned by attrition from the Tarrantine Wars and the epidemics of the 1610s and 1630s. By retaining the right to hunt and gather on the land, the remaining Indians of the Sagadahoc region actually gave up little when they sold their land. 27

Other considerations must also have convinced the Indians that they did not need land near the coast, for they dealt away virtually all of these holdings before the outbreak of King Philip’s War. An Indian probably sold land because he believed he could still use it for his purposes (as in the Purchase tract deed). Alternatively, he sold either because he was getting a very good deal or because he had little choice but to sell. In some cases, trading land to Englishmen worked to the native’s advantage. Many of the grantees in the Sagadahoc were fur traders, so the Indians were probably eager to barter land to them, for the farther upriver they sold land to traders, the shorter would be their journey to trading posts.

Francis Jennings has suggested that the Indians gained little by peddling their land and that they sold because they were forced to do so. Jennings believed that selling land was often an act of desperation by Indians whose only purchase power lay in their pelts

27 For the Purchase Patent deed, see York Deeds, IV, 15-16; Baxter, ed. Documentary History, XXIV, 211-15; Wright, ed. Indian Deeds of Hampden County, 33, 37, passim; Vaughan, The New England Frontier, 104-9. The right to hunt on open land was never spelled out in Maine or Massachusetts, but in 1649 the Connecticut General Court reaffirmed the natives’ right to do so.
and their land. When their lands were trapped out, they were forced to exchange them for the European goods they had come to rely on for survival. This suggestion is somewhat supported by evidence from seventeenth-century Hampden County, where a few Indians turned their lands over to John Pynchon or other traders for debts. Indians would place a mortgage on their land that the trader could foreclose if the Indians did not pay their pelt debts after the next hunting season. Merchants had to foreclose on only four such mortgages, a small percentage of all Hampden County Indian deeds. Thus no evidence exists of a widespread conspiracy to make the Indians debtors and seize their lands. Instead, as Peter Thomas has demonstrated, John Pynchon and other merchants insisted upon such mortgages as security for the credit they extended to Indians. Indeed, in Maine, no deeds or court proceedings suggest that such mortgages or foreclosures took place.28

Alternatively, Jennings proposes that the English coerced the Indians into selling by threats of violence. He reads between the lines of deeds to suggest that "a timorous Indian—there were many—would turn over his property for no other reason than the 'love and goodwill' he bore the man behind the gun." 29 While Jennings' description may make sense for southern New England, where the English quickly established military superiority, the argument carries much less weight for the Kennebec, where the English considered the Indians a constant threat. Sensible settlers knew that the isolated farmsteads and trading posts of Maine were easy targets for attack, a fact borne out in King Philip's War. The Indians, for their part, showed how they dealt with those who tried to threaten or cheat them when they killed the unscrupulous trader Walter Bagnall. Maine Indians only complained once that the English forced a sale. This was when Essemenoque claimed that Abagadusset had no right to Taconic, and that he sold the land "against his will, by the


29 Jennings, The Invasion of America, 144.
importunity" of the English. 30 As Essemenoque's claim was made as a part of his deposition in favor of Plymouth Colony ownership of the land in question, the assertion has questionable value. Even if Essemenoque was correct about this one incident, it was probably the exception and not the rule. It seems unlikely, considering the likelihood of retaliation, that the English settlers in Maine would threaten a native.

Jennings would place in this category of coerced sales the 1661 deed from John, a sachem on the southern side of Merrymeeting Bay, to Thomas Watkins, a Kennebec trader. John received no payment for the land but sold it "in consideration of the love and good will which I have and bear towards my loving friend Thomas Watkins ... as also for and in consideration of his travel with and for me from the aforesd Boston to the Fort of Arania, and the great pleasure and good he did me there."31 Watkins, a Kennebec trader, apparently accompanied the sachem to Fort Orange (Fort Arania), where they must have participated in peace negotiations between the New England Indians and the Mohawks. It was a long journey by boat from the Kennebec to Boston, New York City, and up the Hudson River to Fort Orange. Watkins must have been a true friend of John's to arrange such a trip and accompany him on it. The small piece of land Watkins received from John represented a fraction of the time and money he must have invested in the trip. So instead of an act of coercion, the deed from John to Thomas Watkins should probably be taken as an act of friendship and a partial repayment for a large favor. This transaction reminds scholars that deed sales were not always based entirely on the profit motive. Further, it demonstrates that some English residents of Maine got along well with the Indians. 32

The deed from John to Thomas Watkins indicates that there are no simple explanations of the many complex reasons for Indian land sales. It is doubtful that the

30 Statement of the Kennebec Claims, 5.
shrewd Indians would have sold their land and all rights to it for inconsequential sums, particularly in the seller's market on the Kennebec. Even those transactions that appear greatly to favor the English would probably seem more equitable if the "valuable considerations" they included were specified. While it is possible that the Indians were tricked, cheated, or forced into sales, little evidence supports this view. Although it is possible that the Indians did not completely comprehend the English concept of exclusive ownership, clauses in deeds guaranteeing continued native use of the land argue against this. If the Indians did not understand the concept of exclusive ownership, why would they have demanded clauses stipulating what rights they would retain after the sale? The Indians probably sold land for three reasons. First, their diminished population required less land than previously. Second, they actually lost few of their traditional rights to the territory even after the sale. Finally, with the English flooding into the region, the Indians must have caught some glimpse of the future and realized that whatever they could sell the land for was better than having it taken from them for nothing in return. At least by selling their land, they had some control over the pace of English expansion. While Jennings' labelling of land transactions as "the deed game" may hold true for other times and places, in seventeenth-century Maine, the Indian sale of land to English settlers was predominantly a bona fide exchange.

Historians can use Indian deeds not only for assessing motives for the deed sales, but also for determining tribal organizations and boundaries. At the same time, the deeds provide information about the various tribes' political structure. In the early seventeenth century, the region had been the meeting place of three peoples. The Western Etchemins lived along the lower reaches of the Kennebec and along the coast east of the Kennebec. The Androscoggin were horticulturalists who lived on Casco Bay and up the Androscoggin, and were kin (or at least close associates) of the agriculturalists living at Chouacoet, at the mouth of the Saco River. And the Abenakis grew corn and lived far up the Kennebec, presumably in the vicinity of Norridgewock. This division of territory may
have gone through radical alterations after the plagues and wars of the first two decades of
the century, but there is little direct testimony describing what changed. Deeds provide
virtually the only way to untangle tribal boundaries and affiliations for mid-seventeenth-
century Maine.

Probably the most significant grantor of native deeds in the Sagadahoc, indeed in
colonial Maine, was Robin Hood (also known as Rawmegin), who signed seventeen deeds
and witnessed two others. These conveyances were signed between 1639 and 1675 and
covered an area ranging from Westcustugo (North Yarmouth) to the East Bank of the
Sheepscot River. Five of the Robin Hood deeds are proven seventeenth-century
documents, and the rest also appear legitimate. Significantly, his deeds were relatively
uncontested in the land battles of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Only one of
them is even mentioned in the Lincoln County Commissioner's Report. It is noteworthy
that in most land cases, the validity of deeds was never questioned. Instead the lawyers
argued over their legal standing. The Kennebec Proprietors desperately sought any opening
against the opposing claims of the Pejebscot Proprietors and the Clarke & Lake Company.
If they had felt that any of the Indian deeds supporting the land titles were suspect, they
would have tried to prove the fraud; but they made no such efforts. Thus Robin Hood's
deeds compose a large body of important and highly reliable data.

Robin Hood's deeds can be divided into three distinct geographical areas: the
territory from the west side of the Kennebec River to Casco Bay, the area just east of the
Kennebec, and lands north of Georgetown and Boothbay along the Sheepscot River.
First, there are grants east of the Kennebec including present-day Woolwich, Georgetown,
Arrowsic, and Boothbay, in which Robin Hood was the sole grantor. The fact that he
signed these deeds himself suggests that this territory was his private domain. Presumably,
he sold his own residence in a 1639 deed to Woolwich, which included "one
wigwam or Indian house." 33 Robin Hood also granted two deeds along the Sheepscot River. One he signed with two other Indians, Dick Swash and Jack Pudding. The other deed merely confirms his approval on lands previously sold by several Sheepscot sachems to the Englishman George Davie. 34

Likewise, when deeding land west of the Kennebec, Robin Hood always co-signed deeds with one or more Indians, usually with a group led by Tarumkin (or Derumkin or Jerumkin), an Androscoggin sachem. While Robin Hood signed deeds for land south of the Androscoggin, he only witnessed one deed north of it: a 1670 deed from Tarumkin, Daniel and Robin to James Thomas and Samuel York, for land on the north side of Merrymeeting Bay. Perhaps more interesting are Robin Hood's two deeds for lands south and west of Pejebscot, on the northern end of Casco Bay. One deed from Robin Hood and Sagettawon to Nicholas Cole and John Purrington for land on Merriconeag Neck (present-day Harpswell) cannot be verified. Another deed in this region, however, is a legitimate document, recorded not long after it was written in 1674. This deed is quite similar to the other deeds Robin Hood signed with the Androscoggins and is co-signed by Tarumkin and three other Indians who sold a strip of land along the Westcustugo River (present-day Royal River in North Yarmouth) to Thomas Stevens. 35

Taken together these deeds give an overall view of the territory where Robin Hood's influence was felt. Robin Hood was the chief sachem of the Indians inhabiting the region between the northern end of Casco Bay and the Sheepscot River. While these were the bounds of his sphere of influence, his personal domain, which he sold by himself, was


34 York Deeds, XX, 86-88; "Book of the Eastern Claims," VII, 73-74; Maine State Library, "Necodehant, Obihas, and Quesememock to George Davie, December 21, 1663;" "Necodehant, Obihas, Ellis, Daniel, and Dick Swash to George Davie, January 9, 1666;" "Robin Hood to George Davie, January 23, 1668."

Figure 7. Indian Land Sales on the Lower Kennebec, 1639-1675.
Figure 8. Indian land sales on the upper Kennebec. Drawn in 1754 by Thomas Johnston. Reprinted by the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1912.
Figure 9. Approximate boundaries of Robin Hood's Deeds

- land sold by Robin Hood as sole grantor
- land sold by Robin Hood as joint grantor
located on the east bank of the Kennebec River. To the east, he approved deeds along the Sheepscot River. To the west, Robin Hood signed deeds, but only with other Indians, usually Tarumkin, a noted leader of the Androscoggins. What is perhaps most interesting is that Robin Hood signed deeds with Tarumkin as far west as Casco Bay. There is no indication of Robin Hood's influence north of Merrymeeting Bay. Indeed, this area appears to have been the home of Abagadusset.

This information leads to a determination of Robin Hood's tribal identity. Since he owned land on the lower Kennebec, the sachem had to be either an Androscoggin, an Abenaki, or an Etchemin, the three tribes active in this region in the first half of the seventeenth century. It is unlikely that he was a Western Etchemin, for according to all descriptions, the territory of the Western Etchemins ended at the western side of the Kennebec. Though most of Robin Hood's deeds are east of the Kennebec, no Etchemin would have been included as the primary grantor to lands at Westcustugo and Merriconeagan, lands firmly in the hands of the Androscoggins. Also, there are no indications from the deeds or other sources that any Etchemin remained on the Kennebec after the plague of 1616-1618. Hubbard notes that Robin Hood was a chief of great renown. It seems unlikely that he could have been such an influential chief if he was sachem of a remnant Etchemin population, greatly outnumbered by their Androscoggin and Abenaki neighbors. 36

Perhaps Robin Hood was an Abenaki, a member of the tribe that owned lands up the Kennebec River. Possibly a part of the tribe had moved downriver to take over the lands left by the Etchemins. But this affiliation is unlikely, for there seems to be no connection between Robin Hood and his neighbors to the north, such as Abagadusset, Washemet, and Moniquine. While he co-authored deeds for a long stretch of land along the coast, the influence of Robin Hood, as well as of Tarumkin and other Androscoggins,

36 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 99.
seems to have ended on the north side of Merrymeeting Bay. While Abagadusset was involved in the sale of Taconic and Wesserunett more than forty miles from his home near Abagadusset's Point, Robin Hood was not involved as witness to or participant in any deed more than several miles north of his home in Nequasset. It could be argued that Robin Hood was an Abenaki who also served as a regional headman, much like Bashabes, and that this was why he co-signed many Androscoggin deeds. However, this argument does not hold either, for if he were a regional headman, particularly an Abenaki, he would have also co-signed the deeds of Abagadusset, Moniquine, and other Abenakis. Robin Hood was not headman of the Kennebec Abenakis, for a 1648 deed clearly reserves this honor for Natoworumet. 37

Most likely Robin Hood was the headman of the Androscoggin. He signed many deeds with Tarumkin, an Androscoggin sachem. Significantly, he signed the deeds first, even for those lands near Pejebscot, the center of Androscoggin homelands. He was also first grantor of land in Westcustugo, an area so far away from Western Etchemin and Abenaki holdings that it is most unlikely that an Abenaki or Etchemin would have participated in the deed at all, let alone as the primary grantor, ahead of Tarumkin. Hubbard supports this assertion. At the Taconic peace conference, he notes that Robin Hood's son was one of the "Amonoscoggan men." Presumably this son was Hope Hood, who led the assault on Newechewannick in October 1675. 38

It is possible that Hope Hood may not have been an Androscoggin and only served them because he had married into the tribe, but another incident related by Hubbard clinches Robin Hood's and Hope Hood's status as Androscoggins. In response to English pressure in July 1675, five Androscoggin Indians brought their guns to the Reverend

37 Statement of the Kennebec Claims, 5.

38 Hubbard, "A Narrative of Troubles," 156. Ranchock, another son of Robin Hood's is only mentioned in a deed of the 1650s, so it is likely that he had died before 1675. "Book of the Eastern Claims," VII, 191.
Ichabod Wiswell, one of the Commissioners on the Kennebec. For some unknown reason, one of the Androscoggin, Sowen, swung an ax at Hosea Mallet, a neighbor of Wiswell's. Some of the English wanted to hang Sowen for attempted murder, but the next day Robin Hood came down river and negotiated a deal whereby Sowen's life was spared in return for forty beaver skins and a pledge by the Androscoggin to be peaceful. To seal the bargain "an Indian of great note amongst them, called Robin Hood, with great applause of the rest, made a dance, and sung a song to declare their intent in what was transacted." 39

In a time of crisis, the Androscoggin had sent for their headman, Robin Hood.

The deeds of Robin Hood, Tarumkin, and the rest of the Androscoggin account for only part of the Sagadahoc transactions. Though the point cannot be proven beyond doubt, the remainder of these deeds all seem to be signed by the members of another tribe, the Kennebec Abenaki. The deeds signed by the sachems Abagadusset and Esseenoeque help delineate the Kennebecs' tribal bounds. Esseenoeque (also spelled Assiminisqua and Quesememecke) was the speaker for the Kennebecs at the Taconic Peace conference of 1675. The next year he was one of the Kennebecs who signed a peace letter to the governor of Massachusetts. Despite his high position in the tribe, he participated in only two land sales. In 1648 Esseenoeque, who claimed rightful ownership of Taconic, agreed to the sale of his lands as part of the Plymouth Colony's purchase of land from Cusshoc to Wesserunnet. In 1666 he, and two other sachems, sold land on the northwestern side of Wiscasset Bay. 40

Abagadusset lived far down the Kennebec from Esseenoeque, at the northern end of Merrymeeting Bay, but he, too, was a Kennebec Indian. Between 1650 and 1663, Abagadusset sold four tracts of land, ranging from Swan Island to Wesserunnett. Esseenoeque objected to Abagadusset's selling lands so far up the Kennebec, the domain


40 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 154; Statement of the Kennebec Claims, 5-6; York Deeds, II, 8.
of other Kennebecs. What is most striking in both Abagadusset's and Essemenoque's deeds is the area covered. Both men claimed Taconic, which was located approximately forty miles from either Merrymeeting Bay or Wiscasset Bay. Notably, neither sachem nor any other Kennebecs, sold land south of these points, but the Androscoggins did. The north sides of these bays seem to form the boundary between the two tribes. The Androscoggins spread themselves along the coast, while the Kennebecs occupied the long interior river valley north of Merrymeeting Bay and Wiscasset Bay. 41

If this geographical distribution is correct, then perhaps it is time to reassess the traditional assumption, most recently voiced by Dean Snow, that "the Eastern Abenaki defined their homeland in terms of river drainages." 42 According to Snow, Kennebec territory began on the east side of the Kennebec River, yet deeds demonstrate that the Androscoggins controlled this land. Admittedly, the issue of Maine Indian land tenure and tribal territories is far from solved, but the boundaries suggested by Indian deeds provide important help in deciphering the riddle.

Indian deeds also cast light on the natives of Maine and their relations with the English. Not surprisingly, they show that the Indians of Maine were not signature literate in English. Instead, like most English in Maine, they signed their names with a mark, although, unlike the English, whose marks usually consisted of an "X" or an initial, the Indians frequently made a detailed symbol or pictograph. These marks have little or no consistency, as the same Indian would use different marks to sign different deeds. While most of the marks are copies traced from original documents, the subjects of the marks

41 Statement of the Kennebec Claims, 5-6, 14; "Book of the Eastern Claims," VIII, 22-3; "Aspinwall Papers," 329. Abagadusset lived on the west side of the Kennebec, near the point that still bears his name. This fact can be determined by the "Depostion of Jabez Bradbury," Suffolk County Court File, no. 75654. An abstract of the deposition, printed in the Statement of the Kennebec Claims indicates Abagadusset lived on the east side of the river. In the original document, however, "west" was crossed out and replaced by "east." Bradbury's description of the location of his home clearly indicates it was on the west side of the Kennebec.

42 Snow, "Eastern Abenaki," 137.
Figure 10. Androscoggin/Kennebec Boundary
provide some insights. Most that can be deciphered are related to the hunt or fur trade. Bows and arrows occur a number of times. The fur pelts and horned animals, probably moose or deer, may signify what the natives received in payment for the land, or perhaps animals symbolized an Indian family totem. Little work has been done with Indian marks in deeds, but it is an avenue which needs to be explored, most logically as a counterpart to stone pictographs. 43

Likewise, Indian names have received little study, but deeds provide a large body of appellations to draw upon. If these names were studied by linguists, new clues might be provided not only about the meaning of Indian names, but also about the tribal affiliation of Indians. Until a trained linguist undertakes such a study, the only Indian names which can be studied are those nicknames that the English gave them. Few Indians in seventeenth-century Maine were given nicknames, or, at least few of those nicknames have survived, but those which have are colorful and informative. Perhaps the most interesting is Robin Hood, whose native name was Mocohotoworumet or Rawmeagin. The English gave him the same name as the legendary English archer, who had led his band of merry men in a forest far away from the wilderness of the Kennebec. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the Indian Robin Hood and his band lived on the shores of the body of water the English called Merrymeeting Bay.

Two other Indian names suggest the influence of English popular culture. First, Jack Pudding, the name of an Indian sachem in the Sheepscot area, was a seventeenth-century term used to describe a clown. Often it was the generic name given to a play character who acted as a buffoon. Even the name of that most famous of all Maine Indians, Samoset (or Summerset), has festive connotations, for summerset was a variation on the word somersault. According to John Josselyn, the Indians "covet much to be called after

43 Sheepscot John, a sachem who also served as an interpreter during treaties with the English could sign "John I," but this is the only known example of a seventeenth-century Maine Indian having even signature literacy. See York Deeds, X, 258.
our English manner, Robin, Harry, Philip and the like." 44 Maine Indians received such nicknames as Thomas, Robin, John, Joane, Daniel, and Walter. It seems unlikely that the Indians would take these English monikers unless they had some admiration for the English.

If the English and the Indians had any mutual admiration, they quickly set it aside in the 1670s. A combination of circumstances ended such brighter sides of Anglo-Indian relations as the friendship between Sachem John and Thomas Watkins, and the colorful English nicknames proudly worn by Indians. The trade in furs and lands also came to an abrupt halt as the spectre of war loomed over Maine.

44 Josselyn, An Account of Two Voyages, 297. Josselyn closely observed the Indians of New England, and seems to have been a fairly reliable and unbiased recorder of their culture.
Growing tensions between the English and the Indians of Maine finally resulted in open warfare in the fall of 1675. On September 10 Lieutenant George Ingersol, commander of the Falmouth militia, visited the farmstead of John Wakely and found the remains of the planter and five members of his family among burned ruins. Ingersol noted with horror that "an old man and woman were half in and half out of the house, near half burnt; their own son was shot through the body, and also his head was dashed to pieces; this young man's wife was dead, her head skinned, she was big with child; two children having their heads dashed in pieces, and laid by one another." 1 Ingersol and his men witnessed the gruesome result of the first raid of King Philip's War in Maine, a war that one English participant dubbed "our suffering times." 2

A thorough understanding of this painful conflict is important because the war was the culmination of failed Anglo-Indian relations. The English and Indian residents of Maine never successfully bridged the cultural divide, sharing little besides a concern for fur pelts and land. King Philip's War marks a terrible turning point in those relations. Before the war, tensions had only occasionally given way to outbreaks of violence. But when open hostilities finally commenced, they ushered in almost a century of border warfare in Maine.


2 Suffolk County Court File, no. 1828.
After King Philip's War, Anglo-Indian relations worsened as both sides built upon the
distrust and hatred the war had fostered.

Many historians of this war have studied hostilities in southern New England, but
most have ignored the conflict in Maine, even though it lasted longer and killed or
displaced a larger proportion of the English population than did its southern counterpart.
The fierce struggle dragged on in Maine from 1675 to 1678, with atrocities committed by
both sides. When peace finally came, all but four of Maine's thirteen English towns
had been abandoned, and the total population of approximately 3,500, about 260 had
lost their lives. Even though most Indian demands were met in the 1678 Treaty of
Casco, there were no winners in the war. Numerous Indians were killed in battle or
died of starvation, and many others were forced to abandon their traditional homelands
in Maine for French protection on the Indian reserves. 3

Remarkably, this violent intercultural confrontation has received little attention from
historians. In 1906, when George Ellis and John Morris published *King Philip's War*, the
first modern monograph on the struggle, they relegated the events in Maine to a brief
appendix. Douglas Leach's *Flintlock and Tomahawk* (1958) has become the standard
reference work on the war, the first major scholarly interpretation on the topic since Ellis
and Morris' efforts more than fifty years earlier. While Leach's interpretation of Indian-
English relations has been superseded, his narrative of the military events was thorough,
except that he virtually ignored the war in Maine. This is particularly curious because Leach
was teaching in the state while researching the book. 4

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3 English casualties in southern New England are estimated at 800 to 1,000 dead out of a
population of 30,000. Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk*, 243-44; Noble, "King Philip's
War," 6-7.

4 Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk*, 94, 240, 245; two of Leach's other books both deal
with topics related to the growth of New England and colonial wars, but again make only
fleeting references to the war in Maine. See Douglas Leach, *The Northern Colonial
Frontier, 1607-1763* (New York, 1962), 59; Douglas Leach, *Arms for Empire* (New York,
1973), 65.
Despite these oversights, a significant body of historical writing on King Philip's War in Maine does exist. The most important early work on the war is William Hubbard's 1677 account entitled *A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New England, from Piscataqua to Pemaquid*. Although Increase Mather and Thomas Church also wrote histories of the war, Hubbard was the only contemporary to describe events in Maine in detail. In *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest*, Francis Jennings criticized Hubbard, exposing his inaccuracies, blatant pro-white stance, and selective use of facts to defend English actions in the war in southern New England. Hubbard was particularly vague about many of the atrocities committed against the Indians, even though much information on these activities was available to him. Despite Hubbard's obvious bias, however, his descriptions seem accurate. For example, recent archaeological excavations at the Clarke & Lake Company headquarters on Arrowsic Island have uncovered a site that conforms perfectly to Hubbard's description, even though many local historians of the Kennebec have dismissed his account as incorrect. When read closely and critically, Hubbard's history still provides the best source of information on King Philip's War in Maine.  

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries numerous antiquarians continued to study of King Philip's War in Maine. Their efforts reflect the gamut of scholarly ability, from Rufus Sewall's racist and sensationalist *Ancient Dominions of Maine* (1859) to William Williamson's detailed and scholarly *History of Maine* (1832). More recently, two historians trained at the University of Maine have turned their attention to the war. John Noble's 1970 master's thesis, "King Philip's War in Maine," finally gave

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the war the separate treatment it deserved. Noble's classmate, Kenneth Morrison, wrote his doctoral dissertation on the Abenakis, which he has subsequently reworked into a 1980 New England Quarterly article, "The Bias of Colonial Law: English Paranoia and the Abenaki Arena of King Philip's War, 1675-1678," and a monograph, The Embattled Northeast: The Elusive Ideal of Alliance in Abenaki-Euramerican Relations. 6

All the historians from Hubbard to Morrison have raised several significant historical issues. Some early chroniclers felt that the wars in Maine and Massachusetts were part of a large Indian conspiracy that threatened not only New England but all the English colonies as far south as Virginia. Hubbard believed that the Indian wars of New England, as well as the Indian uprising that led to Bacon's Rebellion, were all part of the same war, "a design of a general rising of the Indians against the English, all over the country." 7 Although he accepted this Indian conspiracy, Hubbard did not share the popular sentiment that French officials actively encouraged and aided the New England Indians. Hubbard believed that French involvement in the war had been limited to a few French traders providing guns and ammunition to the Indians. Despite Hubbard's dismissal of cooperation, James Sullivan expanded the French conspiracy theory in his 1795 History of the District of Maine, and the issue of French involvement has been debated ever since.


7 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 92-93.
Most recently, Noble has suggested that there was some unofficial French participation in the war, and Morrison has strongly refuted French involvement. 8

Residents of Maine during King Philip's War saw another conspiracy in the inability or reluctance of Massachusetts to send them aid. Did Massachusetts deliberately deny assistance to her two northern counties because they were non-Puritan and unruly? Robert Moody firmly answered this question in the negative in his 1933 dissertation, "The Maine Frontier, 1607-1763." Moody believed that Massachusetts did not deliberately abandon Maine. The Bay Colony could not adequately secure even her own safety. "The war showed that, as has almost always been the case, the frontier must defend itself." 9 These conspiracy theories may, in part, have served to cover up some historians' unwillingness to see English abuse of the Indians as the underlying issue of the war.

The relationship between the wars in Maine and southern New England has also been warmly debated. Some historians have viewed events in Maine as a mere northern extension of King Philip's War, while others have completely dissociated the two. The relationship between the two wars, including the parallels between them, deserves particular attention, for the events in Maine can serve as a useful comparison to the new

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interpretations of King Philip's War and Anglo-Indian relations in southern New England by Vaughan, Jennings, Salisbury, and others.  

Many historians have indicted the settlers of both southern New England and Maine for imposing English laws on the Indians and then denying them English justice, but Kenneth Morrison points out that this argument fails to account for the law's importance in shaping Indian-white social behavior. In the broader social and cultural sense of the law, the Indians were less concerned with receiving English justice than with preventing English intrusions into native legal custom. According to Morrison, "the Abenaki War" had two underlying causes: conventional English abuses of the Indians and the English insecurities that increased Indian-English legal misunderstandings. Few Englishmen tried to win the trust of the Abenakis, for they saw the Indians merely as a source of furs and land. This attitude, combined with the lawlessness of the Maine frontier and the independence of Maine towns, led to a breakdown of both the Massachusetts judicial system and English-Indian relations.  

Although Morrison stressed some of the key reasons behind King Philip's War in Maine, he put far too much emphasis on the legalistic aspects of the war. Many factors accounted for worsening English-Indian relations, only some of which related directly to colonial regulations. In his brilliant study of the origins of the English Civil Wars, Lawrence Stone identified three levels of factors contributing to the outbreak of war. The

10 Hubbard, and George Bodge have indicated that the Maine war was just a part of the war in southern New England. Most historians since Ellis and Morris have seen the wars as separate but closely related. Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 92-93; Bodge, Soldiers in King Philip's War, 25; Ellis and Morris, King Philip's War, 293; Morrison, "The Bias of Colonial Law," 363-67; John G. Reid, Maine, Charles II and Massachusetts (Portland, Maine, 1977), 157; James Axtell, The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America (New York, 1981); Francis Jennings, The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1975); Neal Salisbury, Manitou and Providence (New York, 1982); Alden Vaughan, Puritan Frontier: Puritans and Indians, 1620-1675, 2d ed. (Boston, 1979).

most basic causes were the preconditions, the long-term background issues related to war. The next level of factors were precipitants, the policies and actions that escalated the possibility of violence. Finally, there were the triggers, the specific events that led to the outbreak of war. While Stone used this schema to study the English Civil Wars, his approach also helps unravel the complex causation of King Philip’s War in Maine.  

Several preconditions led to the outbreak of war in 1675. The most important was the instability of Indian-English relations in Maine. The fur trade was an intense confrontation, punctuated by acts of violence on both sides. Initial encounters in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries had established a pattern of distrust and violence, and this pattern had changed little by 1675. The presence of many unscrupulous traders who often lacked the social awareness necessary to get along with the Indians certainly did not improve the situation. Despite the inherent instability of Indian-English relations, both sides became increasingly reliant upon each other during the seventeenth century. The Indians compounded their dependence on European goods while the English economy of Maine was geared to gathering furs and lands from the Indians.

The Indians of Maine interested the English only as suppliers of furs. This indifference is exemplified by a letter written during King Philip’s War by Major Brian Pendleton. In October 1676 the major wrote to the General Court to describe the total destruction of his prosperous Saco River farm by Squando and his Indians. He complained that he did not deserve such treatment from "Indians who I never dealt with once in all my life." 13 If Pendleton had been merely a common yeoman, it might not have been important that he had little contact with the Sacos. But he was one of the most prominent merchants and magistrates residing in Maine. He had been not only a Massachusetts Commissioner


who had accepted the submission of Maine, but also a deputy of the General Court. Indeed, throughout his long career, Pendleton held numerous local and provincial offices. 14

Unfortunately, many other magistrates seem to have shared Pendleton's disregard of their Indian neighbors. Since the wealthy merchants who politically dominated early Maine also controlled the fur trade, they should have had much contact with Indians. These men were occupied with many activities and apparently left most of the trading to their employees. Without personal knowledge of the Indians, it was impossible for merchants and magistrates to legislate effectively on matters concerning the natives.

Ignorance of Indian ways seriously hampered relations between the two cultures. For example, John Winter, the agent at Richmond Island, accused the Indians of repeatedly killing his livestock. He was so concerned with the problem that he helped to pass a law providing the death penalty for any Indian convicted of killing an English swine. Soon afterwards Winter learned that the negligence of his men and the appetites of prowling wolves had actually accounted for his losses. If he had known more about Indians, perhaps he would not have accused them of such crimes. Although Winter quickly put the matter behind him, the issue persisted for the Indians and helped to build up their resentment. As late as 1677 the Kennebecs complained that "if the wolf kill any of your cattle you take away our guns for it." 15

In the late 1660s and early 1670s several precipitating agents heightened the significance of these preconditions. Perhaps the most important was the growing competition for furs in the Sagadahoc region. In the 1660s the number of fur traders in the

14 Noyes, Libby, and Davis, eds., Genealogical Dictionary, 537-38. Before moving to Saco, Pendleton had also been a leading figure in both Watertown and Sudbury. See Sumner Powell, Puritan Village: The Formation of a New England Town (Middletown, Conn., 1963), 77-92, 169.

region greatly increased, and the situation worsened in the 1670s when the French regained Acadia. While some English coasters continued to ply the Acadian trade, the loss of Acadia meant that New England fur merchants had to turn increasingly to the Sagadahoc as a source of income. As the number of traders increased, the price of pelts decreased. In general, this price decline was gradual during most of the seventeenth century, but in the 1670s, the price of moose began to fall rapidly. This decline must have quickly affected the Maine fur market, which was based largely on moose skins. As more traders competed for less valuable furs, the Indians received fewer trade goods for each pelt. This contracting market fostered animosity between the Indians and the English.

At the same time, the Indians were increasingly pressed by English population growth, particularly in the Sagadahoc region. In the late 1660s and 1670s the second generation of English settlers began to marry and start their own families. This growth rapidly brought many wooded acres under cultivation and made the Indians feel as though they were drowning in a wave of English settlers. The growing English population in the region began to infringe on the Indians' customary rights. Earlier, the few planters and Indians could peaceably share land. The English gained ownership of the land, but the Indians continued to use it unmolested. With the growth of settlement, however, the English began to improve many more acres, and the Indians began to reconsider the wisdom of their extensive land sales.

Finally, in 1675 and 1676 a series of incidents transformed these preconditions and precipitants into open fighting. Several of these factors were beyond the control of the residents of Maine. With the outbreak of fighting in the south, Philip tried to spread the flames of war to northern New England by sending emissaries to Maine tribes to persuade them to join his cause. Later, when the war collapsed in the south, some southern Indians sought refuge among the northern tribes. The impact of these outside agitators on the Maine Indians is unknown. They may have helped to provoke the northerners into war, or their counsel may have been ignored. The presence of these intruders from the south, at the very
least, increased English distrust of the Maine Indians and raised fears of a universal Indian plot. 16

Two other trigger events beyond Maine's control occurred in 1674. In that year Massachusetts annexed the area east of the Kennebec, making it the County of Cornwall. This annexation unified her grip on Maine and extended Massachusetts authority to the Indians of the Sagadahoc. The Pequot War of 1637 and other incidents had proven that Massachusetts had little ability to relate peacefully to the Indians. If her officials had been unable to deal effectively with their Indian neighbors in southern New England, how could they hope to negotiate with Indians who were distant and unfamiliar? Also in 1674 Dutch pirates sacked Pentagoet and other French Acadian trading posts. While a few French traders such as Baron Castine continued in Acadia, the colony remained in an unsettled state for several years and it is likely that the fur trade suffered disruption. Even if the Acadians did manage to continue trading with the Indians, the French could no longer provide the facilities of an armorer to repair Indian weapons. A skilled gunsmith had previously worked in Pentagoet's armory, and the Penobscot Indians probably relied on him to repair their weapons. Without him, broken guns were useless. 17

While the English residents of Maine could not control events in Massachusetts and Acadia, their own actions heightened the impact of those events. Thomas Gardner admitted to Governor Leverett that "the reason of our troubles here may be occasioned not only by some southern Indians which may come this way but by our own actings." 18 In particular, Gardner worried about the embargo the English had put on arms sales to the

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17 Alaric Faulkner, "Changing Self-Sufficiency at Fort Pentagoet: A Study of On-site Tool Maintenance and Fabrication," paper presented at the 1985 meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology, Boston, Massachusetts. Faulkner's excavation of the armorer's shop showed that the smithy performed extensive and sophisticated repairs.

Indians. Even though the Eastern Abenakis had not threatened to go to war, paranoia and
general distrust of the Indians led the English to ban munitions sales. The Abenakis were
doubly distressed by this. Not only did it upset the Indian economy, but it demonstrated to
the Abenakis how little the English trusted and respected them. The disarming of the
Indians temporarily secured peace and reduced English paranoia but eventually forced the
tribes to war. 19

The English were so alarmed that they even banned English trade with the
French for fear that they would pass goods along to the Indians. Since the French Acadians
relied heavily upon New England merchants for trade goods, this embargo also diminished
the fur trade of Acadia. English authorities did their best to maintain the ban on trade. In the
fall of 1675, fishermen observed several Frenchmen travelling to Pemaquid to trade beaver
and moose skins to Thomas Gardner. Soon after, the Council ordered Gardner to Boston
to answer charges of "trading with the French and Indians, to the great danger and trouble
of the English and encourgement of the barbarous natives now in hostility." 20

Some Englishmen used the war in southern New England as an excuse to commit
barbarities upon the Maine Indians. In the fall of 1675 some settlers were so worried that
they threatened to kill any Indian they met, and the fishermen of Monhegan Island offered a
bounty of five pounds for every Indian brought in. Government policy also pushed the
Maine Indians to war. As a wartime measure, the Massachusetts General Court authorized
a bounty on scalps taken from Indians south of the Piscataqua River, the southern border
of Maine. Some bounty hunters apparently preferred to seek scalps among the peaceful
tribes of Maine and then return to Massachusetts to claim their bounty. These actions
inflamed the Indians of Maine who remained at peace but were still victimized by the

19 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 148-49.

20 Documentary History, ed. Baxter, VI, 96-97; Massachusetts Archives, LXVIII, 20;
CXII, 243.
English. Thus the General Court helped trigger war in Maine in its attempts to subdue the Indians of Massachusetts.  

When news of the outbreak of King Philip's War reached the Sagadahoc region in early July 1675, the magistrates decided that Indian disarmament was the safest course of action. Thomas Lake, Richard Patteshall, and other members of the Kennebec defense committee asked that all Indians turn over their knives and arms. The Indians, who desired friendship and neutrality, partially acceded to this demand, which they must have viewed with outrage. When they did turn over some weapons, the English made a feast for them at which Thomas Lake passed out rum and tobacco and the ancient sachem Robin Hood made a dance of good will. Temporarily, tensions eased and good will prevailed.  

Soon afterwards Thomas Lake saw how impractical the situation was, since he could not protect the Androscoggin and Kennebecs from random violence when they went hunting, nor could he feed them at Taconic. He asked them to move down river nearer to Arrowsic where they could be protected and fed, as well as watched for signs of rebellion. He attempted to force their compliance by threatening to cut off the trade in gunpowder, effectively disarming them. The Indians must have realized that they would not be safe at Arrowsic and they refused the offer.  

To make matters worse, in September 1675 Indians made a series of raids between the Kennebec and Casco Bay. They attacked Thomas Purchase's post as well as five or six other houses. Though no one was injured on the Kennebec, nine Casco Bay settlers perished in the forays. From mid-September to mid-October Indians also assaulted settlements at Saco and Newichawannock. Fortunately for the English, a large snow storm

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on October 16 signaled the early beginning of winter, making further Indian incursions impossible. Snow also ruled out retaliatory strikes planned for the Indian villages of Pejebscot, Pegwacket, and Ossipee. When the troops were finally ready to march on December 10, the four feet of snow that already lay on the ground forced cancellation of the maneuvers. 24

It is difficult to determine the tribal affiliations of the Indians who carried out these and most of the other raids in King Philip's War, for the reports of confrontations frequently lacked detail. However, the Sacos were probably the main participants in these early attacks. Hubbard identified Squando, sachem of the Sacos, as "the chief actor or rather the beginner of all the mischiefs Eastward." 25 The Sacos were probably accompanied by some Indians from southern New England who had come north to spread war. Strange Indians from the south were observed several times in 1675. The Indians who burned the Wakely homestead had some link with King Philip, for a young girl taken captive there traveled with the Indians for a year to points as distant as Narragansett Bay, home of King Philip. 26

Squando was provoked to war by an act of violence against his family. According to Hubbard, the wife of Squando and her infant were traveling by canoe when they were accosted by several English sailors. They threw the baby into the water to test the theory that Indian children could swim as naturally as animals. Although the mother rescued the baby, it died several days later. This event turned Squando from a peacekeeper to a man bent on revenge, and his considerable influence among the Indians of southern Maine pushed them into war. What is amazing about this incident is not so much the brutality of several fishermen as the sheer fact that after fifty years of contact with the Indians,

24 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 99-129; Massachusetts Archives, LXVII, 260-61; LXIX, 61.


26 Ibid., 104.
Englishmen still believed such stories. Surprisingly, not only ignorant fishermen believed the myth that Indian babies could swim. Even the educated traveler John Josselyn accepted it. Its survival demonstrates just how little understanding the English had of their neighbors. 27

In addition to the avenging Sacos, at least some members of the Androscoggin joined the fighting. Hubbard went so far as to assert that the Androscoggin held the "bitterest enmity against the English." 28 Despite this claim, it is difficult to assess the degree of Androscoggin involvement in the war. Although settlers observed them fighting, the Androscoggin made few, if any, forays into the Sagadahoc. Except for several brief raids in September 1675, the Sagadahoc settlements remained peaceful during the first year of the war. Androscoggin fought elsewhere however. Some of the young Androscoggin warriors fought with King Philip, and Hope Hood, son of Robin Hood, led the raid on Newichawannock. This pattern suggests that perhaps the tribal elders wanted peace and used their power to maintain quiet on tribal lands, but that they were not strong enough to prevent their young warriors from joining the war in southern New England. 29

Despite the raids of the Androscoggin and Sacos, the Eastern Abenakis (the Kennebecs and Penobscots) remained peaceful. Unfortunately, the state of war in southern New England, combined with Squanto's raids, increased English paranoia and led them to demand that the neutral Kennebecs and Penobscots surrender their arms. The Indians refused, leading the English to ban the sale of powder and shot to them. While this order was intended to safeguard the English settlements in the Sagadahoc from attack, it eventually had the opposite effect. To understand how this law drove the Abenakis to war,

27 Ibid., 135; Josselyn, "A Narrative of Two Voyages," 142.

28 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 153.

29 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 93, 99-101, 113. The identity of the Indians who raided the Sagadahoc region and Casco Bay in September 1675 is unknown, so that it is possible that the Androscoggin were not even involved in these attacks.
it must be realized that the Indians had become increasingly reliant on European goods, particularly guns. While the Abenakis had always hunted for food, the arrival of Europeans and their guns tied the Indians even more strongly to hunting, not only for food but also for furs. 30

As fishermen and other Englishmen moved into the Sagadahoc they relegated the Abenakis and Androscoggins to the backcountry, away from coastal fishing grounds and clam beds they relied on seasonally for food. As a result, the Indians became even more dependent upon game and English food supplies. By 1675 the Indians depended heavily upon English guns and ammunition for survival, claiming that without these supplies many would die from starvation. In September 1675 Thomas Gardner pleaded with Governor Leverett to repeal the trade ban, commenting that "the Indians in these parts did never appear dissatisfied until their arms were taken away." 31 He feared that they would be driven to the French for these supplies. The following summer Gardner observed the striking accuracy of his predictions, noting that numerous Indians had died the previous winter for want of powder to shoot game. Apparently, skills with traditional weapons, once passed on from one generation to the next, had been largely lost as the Abenakis and Androscoggins came to depend on guns. Firearms helped harvest pelts and food; the pelts in turn were used to buy powder, shot, and other goods. By entering into this cycle, the Indians had unwittingly given the English tremendous power over their lives. 32


Archaeological data recently collected from an Indian encampment on the St. George River demonstrates this loss of skills and the problems it created during the English trade embargo. The site, briefly occupied sometime between 1670 and 1680, included European manufactured goods as well as traditional stone chipping debris. The crude quality of the chipping debris indicates that whoever was flint knapping did not really know how to do it. This suggests that the Indians occupying the site had lost the ability to make stone tools. Once cut off from English trade, however, they were forced to try to regain this lost skill. 33

Events in 1675 created hardships for the English as well as the Indians. The raid on Pejebscot and several other local incidents led English residents to seek protection at the Clarke & Lake garrison at Arrowsic. Among the refugees was James Gyles, owner of a farm on the northern side of Merrymeeting Bay. He later recalled that "about the latter end of November, the winter setting in so violent, and the house being so full of people, as we could not endure there any longer, five families of us joining together went to Sylvanus Davis house on the westward side of the river, where we stayed all the winter." 34

The winter was even more uncomfortable for the Indians who barely survived without English powder. Many starved; others moved to Canada seeking French goods and aid. The spring of 1676 brought no improvement in relations because the Abenakis discovered that a coastal trader had kidnapped eight to ten Indians in Machias the previous December. In the fall of 1675, soon after the General Court issued a warrant to seize hostile Indians, Bostonians Henry Lawton and John Leverdure sailed the ketch Endeavor eastward to capture Indians. While visiting Portsmouth, Thomas Gardner heard that the ship, equipped with shackles to restrain prisoners, had arrived at Monhegan. Gardner wrote them, "warning not to take any Indians east side of the Kennebec River because we had

33 Arthur Spiess has directed the excavation of the site. Personal Communication, Spiess to Baker, February, 1986.

made peace with them." Unfortunately, Lawton and Leverdure either never received the letter or ignored it, for they proceeded to Machias and Cape Sable, where they kidnapped nine peaceful Indians. Although the participants were arrested and convicted in the summer of 1676, the damage had already been done. This action, combined with the devastating previous winter and the continued suspension of trade, pushed the Abenakis to war.

That summer it appeared that peace would be restored, for on July 3 the Indians of Piscataqua and Casco Bay signed a treaty with the English at Dover. The most significant combatant to sign the treaty was Squando, sachem of the Sacos. Seven other Indians signed the treaty, including Samuel Numphow, the sachem of the Christian Indians of Wamesit (present-day Lowell, Massachusetts), and Dony, leader of the Kennebunk Indians. Even Wannalancet signed the treaty, although the Pennacooks had remained peaceful. Both sides promised to keep the peace, and anyone who broke it would be subject to prosecution under English law. In addition, the Indians agreed not to harbor or aid those Indians still at war in southern New England.

About a month after the signing of the Treaty of Dover, Sylvanus Davis and either Thomas Gardner or John Earthy traveled to Taconic to arrange a pact with the Androscoggins, Kennebecs, and Penobscots. The Androscoggins were the sole Maine tribe at war, so negotiations with them were most important. The Kennebecs and

35 Suffolk County Court File, 1592; Noyes, Libby, and Davis, Genealogical Dictionary, 1; Massachusetts Archives, XXX, 213a.


37 Massachusetts Archives, XXX, 206; While most of the Christian Indians had remained peaceful, several, including Simon and Andrew, had taken part in the raids.
Penobscots, however, had become restless after the arms embargo and the various hostile acts committed against them. Both sides had prepared for war. The Indians had retreated upriver, abandoning their lower villages and cornfields, and during the summer of 1676 the English residents again sought refuge at Arrowsic and other garrisons. Thomas Lake ordered Sylvanus Davis to abandon the isolated trading post at Taconic and to bring all the trade goods, powder, and shot to the garrison at Arrowsic. 38

Amid these strained relations the Taconic conference began. The English negotiated with two groups of Indians, the Androscoggin and the Eastern Abenakis. Discussions went well with the Androscoggin, who were represented by Tarumkin, their chief sachem. Tarumkin said that although some of the western chieftains were not ready for peace, he and three other sachems were. Thus Tarumkin and seven or eight other Androscoggin gave their hands in peace. 39

Tarumkin had only recently become the chief sachem of the Androscoggin, for during the summer of 1675 Robin Hood had held that position. Hubbard noted several Androscoggin at the conference, including Robin Hood's son, but he did not mention the great sachem himself. It is unlikely that Robin Hood was at Taconic and not named by Hubbard, for a sachem of his stature would have actively participated in the negotiations. It is much more likely that he had died or fallen out of power since the summer of 1675. The chief was never mentioned again after his celebration of peace at Arrowsic. As Robin Hood had been a sachem since at least 1639, when he signed his first deed, he would have

38 Bodge, Soldiers in King Philip's War, 304; Bodge, like Drake, identifies Dony as an Androscoggin because he was at Pejebscot fort when it was attacked by Colonel Church in 1690. However, Dony was also active in the Saco region and is listed as the sachem of Kennebunk in a map drawn during King William's War. Most likely Dony had merely sought refuge with the Androscoggin during the war. This eastern movement was not unusual. Mugg, too, had moved from the Saco region by King Philip's War, and Kankamangus was a Pennacook sachem who fled to the Androscoggins during King William's War; Drake, Book of the Indians, 113-14; "Map of the Eastern Country," Maine Historical Society.

39 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 154-56.
reached an advanced age by 1675, and his death would not have been entirely unexpected. While the point is argued largely from negative evidence, the disappearance of Robin Hood and the coincident Androscoggin raids suggest that Robin Hood's death brought a change of tribal policy. It is possible that Tarumkin did not get along with the English as well as Robin Hood had, or that perhaps he simply did not have solid control over young warriors such as Hope Hood who desired war. 40

While Robin Hood was notably absent from the conference, Mugg was among the Androscoggin at Taconic. Mugg, or Mogg Heigon, was the son of Walter Heigon, a sachem in the Saco region. Hubbard claims that he "had from a child been well acquainted with the English, and had lived some years in English families." 41 Despite this recognition of his Saco origins, Hubbard gave him several different tribal identities. At the Taconic conference of 1676, Mugg signed the peace treaty as a member of the Androscoggin. Yet, in November 1676 he traveled to Boston, where he negotiated and signed a treaty on behalf of the Penobscot sachems Madockawando and Chebartina. Thus not only was Mugg affiliated with two tribes but both were distinct from his natal tribe. 42

Was Mugg a Saco, an Androscoggin, or a Penobscot? Francis Card, one of his captives, solved the mystery. Card called him "Mugg the Rogue," an appellation that historians have interpreted as a derogatory remark made by a captive about his keeper. The word rogue, however, in its original definition, implies a wanderer or a person without a home. Though both meanings of the word were used in the seventeenth century, the homeless interpretation seems to make more sense for Mugg. Not only did he belong to no

40 Ibid., 155-56; Lincoln County Deeds, I, 16-17.

41 Hubbard, "A Narrative of Troubles," 172.

particular tribe but he seems to have been a humane man, undeserving of the darker meaning of word "rogue." 43

In his dealings with the English, Mugg showed himself to be a kind and honorable man. He seems to have been the Indian most interested in keeping the peace in Maine. Not only did he participate in the Taconic conference but he personally went to bring Squando to the meeting. As a powerful chieftain whose family had suffered an injustice at the hands of the English, Squando's participation in the treaty was necessary to produce a lasting peace. After the peace attempt failed, Mugg dealt fairly with the English. He granted full liberty to the settlers who surrendered the Black Point garrison and several times freed captive Englishmen who were sick or abused by their captors. Even William Hubbard, the Puritan apologist and despiser of Indians, had warm words for Mugg. In a comment probably as close to a compliment as Hubbard could come, he said that Mugg "showed more courtesy to the English . . . than could be expected from any of those barbarous miscreants." 44

Probably Mugg was a survivor of one of the southern Maine tribes ravaged by disease. This would explain both his presence at an early age in southern Maine and his living with English families. It also clarifies his prominence there during King Philip's War. Though Mugg was a lesser sachem (if indeed a sachem at all) when the Indians attacked English settlements in southern Maine, he led them in battle. Probably the Indians deferred to him since they were fighting on his tribal territory. Since Mugg had no formal tribal affiliation, he acted in King Philip's War independently, sometimes fighting with the Penobscots and at other times with the Androscoggins. 45

43 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 203.

44 Ibid., 153, 156, 172-73, 176, 189-89; quotation on 172.

45 Indeed, the Saco Indians appear to have stayed under the leadership of the Heigon family after Mugg. During King William's War the leader of the Saco Indians was a Heigon. See "Map of the Eastern Country," Maine Historical Society
Negotiations at Taconic did not run as smoothly with the Abenakis as with Mugg, Tarumkin and the Androscoggins. The Penobscot Madockawando sat as the chief of the Eastern Abenakis while the Kennebec Assiminisqua served as orator. The Abenakis were troubled by the way the English had negotiated with them in the past. When fourteen Indians had gone to parley with them in the summer of 1675, the English seized their guns and put a guard around them. The repeated English threats and demands for Indian guns also disturbed Assiminisqua. After English threats, the Kennebecs had abandoned their fort and corn fields and retreated upriver to Taconic. Without corn, their situation had worsened because they were increasingly dependent on hunting. Finally, the Abenakis were concerned with the random acts of violence committed against them, particularly the kidnappings at Machias. The English apologized for these acts and feebly pointed out that the crimes occurred outside the bounds of their tenuous authority. 46

The negotiations finally broke down over the issue of shot and powder. Madockawando pointed out that once they had used up their corn, the Abenakis, without powder or shot for the winter hunt, would starve or be forced to go to Canada. The English agents first argued that they did not have the power to revoke the ban on arms sales. When Madockawando persisted, the English said they would not provide arms, for "your selves say, many western Indians would not have peace, and therefore if we sell you powder and you give it to the western men, what do we but cut our own throats?" 47 The Abenakis were offended by the English lack of trust, and negotiations collapsed.

The Taconic conference revealed not only English distrust but also the tribal alliances of the Maine Indians. The Kennebecs and Penobscots were closely allied. Notably, the chief of both tribes was the Penobscot Madockawando, stepson of the Kennebec leader Essemenoque. The Androscoggins were not associated with these

46 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 154-56.

47 Ibid., 156.
Abenakis but rather with the Sacos and other western tribes. At Taconic the English said they wanted to "treat with the Androscoggin sachems, and that they were sorry that Squando was not there." While this statement appears to suggest that Squando was an Androscoggin, he was more likely just an ally. The division of the Maine Indians into these two camps suggests the continuance of traditional tribal affiliations. The Kennebecs and Penobscots were Abenaki tribes who had moved south to inhabit the lands of the Western Etchemins. The Androscoggins and their allies on Casco Bay and the Saco were probably the remnants of the once great Almouchiquois.

The English distrust of the natives, which principally took the form of the continued arms embargo, destroyed negotiations with both the Abenakis and the Androscoggins. Three days after the parley, Indians raided several Casco Bay settlements, foreshadowing what was to come. Just as King Philip's War was ending in southern New England, hostilities again erupted in Maine. On the evening of August 13 a party of Kennebec Abenakis seized Richard Hammond's trading post, killing at least three members of his family and taking others captive. The Indians then worked their way south from Hammond's to attack the strategically important garrison at Arrowsic. The Clarke & Lake settlement was the key to the defense of the Sagadahoc, for it was the most populous of the region and contained a warehouse full of goods that the Abenakis had been denied for nearly a year.

Early on the morning of August 14 the Kennebecs surprised the sleeping Arrowsic garrison, killing many inhabitants, taking prisoners, looting, and burning the settlement. The Indians carried away a large amount of goods from the Clarke & Lake warehouse, particularly cloth and linen. Figures given by Hubbard and Gyles suggest that between

48 Ibid., 155.
49 Ibid., 147-48, 157-58; Baker, Clarke & Lake, 14-15.
thirty-seven and fifty people were killed or captured during the attack on the garrison at Arrowsic. Thomas Lake lay among the dead. 50

The attack on Arrowsic and the other Indian raids compelled surviving settlers to abandon the Sagadahoc. First they retreated to Damariscove Island and Cape Newagen, but after several days they realized that these places were indefensible and took refuge on Monhegan Island. For three weeks they sat at Monhegan, awaiting help from Boston. Finally, with supplies running low, they abandoned the island and sailed to the safer ports of Boston, Salem, and Portsmouth. About the same time, an Indian raid on the English refuge at Jewell's Island convinced the residents of Casco Bay to desert their sanctuary. With these abandonments the English had left all of Maine north of Black Point, and the Indians soon turned their attacks to this settlement. 51

In September 1676 Joshua Scottow, the captain of the beleaguered Black Point garrison, explained his desperate situation to Governor John Leverett. Scottow disclosed that the Indians had burned all houses on the south side of Casco Bay and then headed toward Black Point where they burned several more houses, killed a settler, and took others prisoner. One captive escaped and hid in the bushes where he observed the Indian forces at close range. He saw seventy or eighty warriors and two or three Frenchmen. One of the Frenchmen, dressed "with blue, black, and yellow ribbons on his knees, a hat buckled with a silver buckle," spoke only French and required an Indian interpreter. 52

This sighting of the French was apparently seized upon by the hysterical residents of Maine. The next month Major Brian Pendleton reported "300 of French and 100 of Indians at Mr. Foxwell's house" at Black Point. Since no correspondence either confirms or refutes

50 Baker, Clarke & Lake, 14-15; Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 158-64; Vinton, The Gyles Memorial, 114-15; Massachusetts Archives, LXIX, 51

51 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 164-68.

52 Joshua Scottow and Henry Josselyn to Governor Leverett, September 15, 1676, Maine Historical Society.
Pendleton's report, its validity is unknown. Perhaps Pendleton had seen or heard of French activity. But it is extremely unlikely that a force of 300 French soldiers could have operated in Maine and not have been sighted by other officials. Probably English fears of the French spurred Pendleton to exaggerate greatly the number of Frenchmen aiding the Indians. 53

Given these reports, the General Court and others believed that the French aided the Indians. While James Sullivan accepted the idea of widespread official French support, modern historians have been much more careful about dragging the French into King Philip's War. Some, such as John Noble and Douglas Leach, have suggested that French traders and Canadian Indians, at least, may have provided some unofficial support to the New England Indians. More recently, however, Kenneth Morrison has completely dismissed the idea of French involvement in the war. He believes that Hubbard's accusation of the French was merely a reflection of the English fear of an "unholy alliance" of Indians and French "heathens." Morrison suggests that the General Court's accusations were either "deliberate fabrications" designed to protect their pride and win support from the King and Parliament, "or the rationalized products of distraught Puritan imaginations."

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As further proof of French innocence, Morrison cites their efforts to remain neutral. Louis XIV ordered Governor Frontenac to maintain peace with the English, and Frontenac ordered the commander of Acadia to avoid the conflict. The French did allow Indian refugees to take up residence in the mission villages but only on the condition that they not return to Maine to fight. Morrison oversimplifies this issue, however, for official policies,

53 Brian Pendleton to the Governor and Council, Documentary History, ed. Baxter, VI, 141.

whether formulated in Boston or Quebec, did not always receive strict enforcement along the frontier. 55

Even though the French forbade the Catholic mission Indians to participate in the war, Mugg planned to gain their aid. In the winter of 1676 he bragged to his captive Francis Card that come spring he would travel to Canada to enlist their support. This was not mere wishful thinking, for Card also observed that "four Indian women came from Canada and did tell the Indians that the Governor of Canada did thank them for what they had done and told them that they would help them with one hundred men and ammunition." 56 Another prisoner, Thomas Cobbett, escaped when his Indian captor sent him to purchase shot and powder from Baron Castine, the French fur trader living near the mouth of the Penobscot. When Cobbett spotted an English vessel in the vicinity he made his way aboard to safety. While the French officially voiced a policy of neutrality, they seem to have provided some clandestine support to the Indians. Their meager unofficial efforts were greatly exaggerated by the paranoid residents of Maine and Massachusetts. 57

Massachusetts authorities had already responded to the deteriorating situation in the east even before they received Scottow's letter implicating the French. With the war over in the south, Massachusetts could spare troops for Maine. In early September the General Court sent 130 English soldiers and 40 Natick Indians eastward under Captains William Hathorn, Joseph Sill, and Samuel Hunting. These forces went first to Dover, where they met Richard Waldron, sergeant major of the Yorkshire militia. 58

Waldron had gathered in Dover about four hundred Indians, including Pennacooks and Indians from southern New England. While the Pennacooks had remained firmly

57 Hubbard, Narrative of Troubles, 195-96;
58 Bodge, Soldiers in King Philip's War, 319-20.
neutral during King Philip's War, many southern Indians had sought refuge with them after the collapse of resistance in the south. Waldron concocted a devious plan to ensure their capture. After calling the Indians together under the pretense of a peace parley, the English seized them. Waldron determined that two hundred of the Indians came from southern New England tribes who had fought against the English. The English executed ten of the southern Indians and eventually sold the rest into slavery. Although Waldron released the two hundred Pennacooks, his false negotiating under a flag of truce cost him and the English in general any respect and trust the Indians still harbored toward them. 59

Having captured the southern Indians, on September 8 Hathorn and his forces journeyed east from Dover to restore peace to Maine. Although the troops marched as far as Falmouth, they could not prevent the Indians from attacking the surrounding settlements. Hathorn's men did catch the sachem of the Pegwacket Indians, who claimed he had fewer than forty men at Pegwacket and that there were no Frenchmen among them. Unfortunately, Hathorn believed that the sachem was lying and condemned him to death, turning him over to friendly Indians who gladly carried out the sentence. Thus, before returning to Portsmouth in early October, Hathorn did little except further antagonize the Indians and increase their distrust for the English. 60

As soon as Hathorn's force marched southward, the Indians attacked the Black Point garrison, the northernmost remaining English settlement. Black Point was strongly defended by sixty-three men who lived within or near the garrison, but the settlement was wracked by internal turmoil. The commander of the garrison, Captain Joshua Scottow, had departed for Boston to defend himself against charges that he had failed to aid a patrol under attack and that he had used his soldiers to make improvements on his own property.

59 Massachusetts Archives, XXX, 218; Bodge, Soldiers in King Philip's War, 305-6; Noble, "King Philip's War in Maine," 43-44.

The charges, made by Brian Pendleton, George Munjoy, Edward Rishworth, and other leading magistrates of Maine, appear to have been politically motivated. These men disapproved of Scottow, a recent arrival from Boston who staunchly supported Massachusetts Bay. Other residents of Scarborough, including Captain Henry Josselyn, backed Scottow, and the courts eventually exonerated him of all charges. 61

Soon after charges were leveled against him, Scottow verbally attacked his accusers. Scottow and Henry Josselyn, another Scarborough magistrate, warned Governor Leverett that Edward Rishworth and his accomplices planned to reestablish an independent government in Maine. Scottow explained that "our poor people having lost two crops sink under discouragement." 62 Rishworth, he charged, planned to use Maine's wretched condition and lack of support from Massachusetts as an excuse to restore the independent Province of Maine.

Scottow had much to gain by discrediting his opponents. The independent proclivities of many Maine residents were well known, however, and it is doubtful that Josselyn, a prominent and respected magistrate, would make such accusations of a conspiracy against Massachusetts without good reason. Josselyn seems to have been a particularly unbiased source, for he had always been a strong adherent of Sir Ferdinando Gorges. He had served as deputy governor and chief justice of the Province of Maine and had led the opposition to Massachusetts' annexation of the colony. Considering Henry Josselyn's long support of the Province of Maine, he probably would have co-signed Scottow's complaint only if he felt the conspiracy threatened the region's security. Whether or not the charges made by Josselyn and Scottow were accurate, their implications were tremendous. If true, the charges implied that Rishworth and his supporters did little to help

61 Bodge, Soldiers in King Philip's War, 325-41; Massachusetts Archives, LXIX, 28, 72. Suffolk County Court File, no. 1828.

Maine's war cause because English victory would alleviate the need for a change in government. Even if the charges were false, the resulting political infighting severely hampered Maine's ability to defend itself. 63

The mere act of Scottow's recall may have gravely hurt Maine's cause. Officials called the captain away at an inopportune time. Many Black Point residents who had expressed their discontent with the war wanted to abandon the settlement. Captain Henry Josselyn, acting commander while Scottow was in Boston, kept the residents from leaving. However, on October 12 their fears were realized when Mugg, leading a party of one hundred Indians, attacked Black Point. Josselyn left the fort to parley with Mugg, but while their commander negotiated, the settlers secretly abandoned Black Point. When Josselyn returned to the garrison he found only his family inside. They quickly surrendered to Mugg, who treated them well and soon freed them. If Scottow had remained at Black Point, perhaps he and Josselyn together could have prevented the desertion of the strongest English garrison in Maine. 64

The loss of Black Point deeply injured the English cause, for after its fall settlers temporarily abandoned Saco, leaving Wells, York, and Kittery as the only substantial Maine settlements. Mugg was so confident of victory that he did not even destroy the fort. Believing that he and his allies could permanently drive the English from Maine, he instead planned to use the garrison for his Indians. In less than two months the Indians had forced the English to abandon all the prospering settlements from the Sagadahoc to the Saco, giving Mugg good reason for complaisance. 65

Soon after Black Point fell, Walter Gendall, James Fryer, and several others sailed a boat to its vicinity to remove what goods had not been taken or destroyed by the Indians.

63 Noyes, Libby, and Davis, Genealogical Dictionary, 380.
64 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 172-73; Bodge, Soldiers in King Philip's War, 335-37.
65 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 173; Bodge, Soldiers in King Philip's War, 335-37.
At Richmond's Island Indians surprised the group, wounding Fryer and taking them all captive. The Indians, led by Mugg, treated them well and even allowed Gendall to return to Portsmouth to raise a ransom to free the crew. Gendall and two other men gathered the ransom and headed back to Richmond's Island, but before they arrived they met a party of Indians who knew nothing of the ransom arrangements. These Indians killed one of the men and took their goods. After the English explained the situation to them, they allowed Gendall to return to Portsmouth. 66

Several days after Gendall arrived in Portsmouth, so, too, did Mugg, along with his wounded prisoner, James Fryer. Mugg explained that Gendall had been ambushed without his knowledge and that he would still keep his word and release the rest of the prisoners. He also expressed a desire on behalf of all the Maine Indians to reach a peace with the English. Major General Dennison, then at Portsmouth, seized Mugg and took him to Boston to negotiate a treaty with Massachusetts authorities. 67

On November 6 Mugg and Governor Leverett signed an accord. The treaty stipulated that the Indians would return all English captives, as well as all the vessels, weapons, and goods they had appropriated during the war. In addition, the Indians were to pay the English for any damages they had done. If the Indians could not currently pay the debts, they would contract to pay them off after future beaver hunts. The English promised to continue supplying powder, shot, and firearms to the Indians, but the natives had to agree to buy them only from agents designated by Massachusetts. In this way Massachusetts hoped to return to its policy of licensing only responsible traders, which would eliminate trade abuses and let the colony stop trade completely again, if need be. The treaty further stipulated that if the Androscoggins or any other Indians refused to accept the accord, those Indians who had come to terms must take up arms against them. The English

66 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 173-76.
67 Ibid., 175-76.
had previously enlisted Christian Indians to wage King Philip's War and had also tried to bring the Mohawks to their aid. Now they hoped to add the Eastern Abenakis to their list of Indian allies. In addition to all these conditions, Mugg assented to remain an English hostage until the Indians had returned their captives and goods. 68

This treaty clearly favored the English. The Indians acceded to all English demands, including war reparations, and received little in return. It is unbelievable that Mugg would voluntarily sign such a treaty while the Indians were at the height of their military success. Presumably Mugg signed this agreement because he was at least unintentionally intimidated by the Massachusetts officials. Mugg's and the Indians' subsequent behavior shows they had no real interest in living up to this lopsided treaty. 69

On November 21 Mugg traveled to the Penobscot with two vessels carrying the goods to pay the captives' ransom. When Madocawando heard the treaty explained, he agreed to it, but said he had only two prisoners with him to turn over. The Penobscots then delayed releasing their captives, presumably because they disapproved of the treaty and intended to give Mugg a chance to escape. Eventually Mugg convinced the English to let him go ashore to find the captives, and he used this mission as a convenient means to escape the English. 70

Since the Indians refused to accept Mugg's treaty, on February 5, two companies of sixty men sailed from Salem. Major Richard Waldron commanded the force that included a company of Natick Indians. The addition of Major Charles Frost's Yorkshire militia brought its total strength to two hundred. Waldron's Eastern Expedition was occupied more with parleying than fighting. Unfortunately, it was a frustrating set of negotiations, for neither side trusted the other. They first met on February 18 at Maquoit.

68 Ibid., 189-92.
69 Ibid., 191.
70 Ibid., 193.
Waldron negotiated with Simon, an Indian from the Piscataqua region who fought with the Androscoggins and Kennebecs after escaping from prison in Dover. Simon said he would deliver the captives the next day upon payment of a ransom. Waldron then told Simon to bring Squando to him to negotiate. Squando responded that he would meet Waldron alone, halfway, if the major would come alone in a canoe. This was a reasonable offer from the sachem, considering Waldron's recent treachery at Dover. Waldron, however, showed his arrogance and distrust of the Indians by answering that "he would not venture himself in your leaky canoe, and that if he had no more to say, the treaty was ended." 71

Despite Waldron's obstinacy, Squando agreed to return the captives the next morning. The Indians arrived a few hours late, and without captives. After landing several miles up river from the English they proceeded to burn a settler's house and insulted the English scouts, taunting them to attack. It is possible that the Indians did not mean to incite an attack by this blatant behavior, but they may have wished to show that, despite their willingness to negotiate a peace, they were still brave and powerful warriors. Yet the Indians must have realized that the English would perceive their actions as a truce violation. Either way, the Indians made a mistake. If they meant to attack, they were breaking a truce, just as Waldron had done at Dover. If they meant only to demonstrate their strength before negotiating, they underestimated the effect their show would have on the English. A skirmish naturally ensued, during which Waldron's men wounded several Indians. The English then raised a white flag to negotiate for the captives' release. Simon met John Paine, Waldron's head scout, halfway between the two armies. Both sides demanded to know why the other had broken the truce. Paine asked why the Indians had fired the house and noted that the English would not have attacked had it not been for such warlike gestures. Simon weakly replied that the house had caught fire accidentally and that the Indians had arrived late and without captives because of bad weather. Again he promised to

71 Ibid., 95, 134, 140-41, 211-14; Massachusetts Archives, LXIX, 100-1, 106.
bring the captives the next day, though he also expected the English to provide satisfaction for the two warriors who were wounded when the English broke the truce.  

By February 26 there was still no sign of the Indians or their captives so Waldron left a garrison on the Kennebec under the command of Sylvanus Davis. Waldron then sailed with sixty men in two ships toward the Penobscot to negotiate with Madockawando. Later that day they pulled into Pemaquid, where they began to parley with Indians occupying Thomas Gardner's fort. The Penobscots, led by Mattahando and other sachems, seemed very eager for peace. They claimed that they had not participated in the war and that they had received their captives from the Kennebecs. As Mugg had previously told Francis Card that he had given gifts of captives and goods to encourage the Penobscots to join him in battle, Mattahanado probably was telling the truth about the prisoners. The Penobscots promised to bring their captives the next morning.  

Some of the English did not believe the Penobscots' pacific claims, for they recognized several Indians who had fought in earlier raids. In particular, they spotted Megunaway, a participant in the Turners Falls fight and raids on Casco Bay. Waldron, who had little trust or respect for the Indians, did not believe their peaceful intent, so he planned to free their captives and attack the Indians under the flag of truce. During the next negotiating session the English surprised the Indians, killing Mattahando and six others. They also captured Megunaway, Madockawando's sister, and several others. The next day they executed Megunaway.  

Once again, misunderstanding and distrust led to treachery and continued war. It is difficult to tell, however, where misunderstanding and fear left off and deliberate treachery.

72 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 214-15. This was apparently the same John Paine who had previously served as Waldron's truckmaster at Pennacook.


74 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 218-22.
began. While Waldron intended to break the truce, he made the plan only because he believed that the Indians were going to attack the English. Furthermore, he did not signal an attack until "he espied the point of a lance from under a board, hid there, as were other arms nearby for a treacherous design." 75 It is quite possible that the Indians did not mean to be misleading when they protested their innocence. Instead, they probably did so to alleviate English fears and encourage an atmosphere of peace. Likewise, the arms may have been hidden to maintain a peaceful atmosphere during negotiations. Since the biased William Hubbard is the only source for this and other such confrontations, determining intentions and assessing blame is extremely difficult. What is clear from the incidents at Maquoit and Pemaquid, however, is that both sides genuinely desired peace but neither side really trusted or understood the other enough to achieve it. 76

When the major and his men returned to the Kermebec, they freed a captive and sent her to tell the sachems at Taconic to come down and negotiate. Not surprisingly, the Indians were now quite wary of Waldron and refused to treat with him. Despite no real successes in battle or negotiations, Waldron believed he had broken Indian resistance and thus in early March, he ordered the expedition to set sail for Boston. 77

Massachusetts authorities did not share Waldron's optimism, for in the spring of 1677 they began negotiating with the Mohawks to fight the Abenakis. In January 1677 Sylvanus Davis had specifically recommended recruiting them to fight against the Maine Indians. Four months later Major John Pynchon, the Springfield fur merchant, traveled to Albany to negotiate with Governor Andros and the Mohawks. The Mohawks agreed to send a band to Maine and to replace them with a second group two months later. The English advertised the Mohawks' arrival to prevent any misunderstandings between them.

75 Ibid., 220.
76 Ibid., 217-23.
77 Ibid., 224.
and settlers or friendly Indians. Despite these efforts, soon after their arrival the Mohawks killed Blind Will and several other friendly Pennacooks. 78

The Mohawks may have been the best fighting force to deal with the Maine Indians, but their intrusion did have repercussions. Friendly Indians were alarmed by the death of Blind Will and several other incidents. The hostile Indians were even more upset, for the introduction of the dreaded Mohawks, combined with the false dealings of Waldron, convinced them that the English planned to exterminate them. This perception led the Indians to renew their raids. In April 1677 Simon led raids on York and Wells. The next month Mugg again attacked the recently reoccupied Black Point garrison. Led by Lieutenant Bartholomew Tippen, the garrison repulsed attacks for three days. Finally, Tippen shot and killed Mugg, and his disheartened warriors broke off the attack. 79

In response to the new wave of attacks, on June 22 two hundred friendly Indians and forty soldiers under Captain Benjamin Swett sailed from Massachusetts to Black Point. Learning that the enemy was nearby, Swett took a detachment of his men ashore, where local residents joined them. Together they pursued a fleeing band of Indians for two miles until suddenly the Indians sprang a trap. The fleeing Indians turned and attacked while their cohorts ambushed the troops from all sides. In the bloodiest battle of the Maine campaign, twenty friendly Indians and forty Englishmen, including Swett, were killed. At Black Point the Indians proved not only that they were good strategists and fierce fighters, but also the instability of the Maine settlements. Before the defeat at Black Point the English prospects


79 Bodge, Soldiers in King Philip's War, 335-36; Massachusetts Archives, LXIX, 112a, 117, 126.
seemed to be improving, but after the Indian victory the residents of Maine must have felt that the war would never end. 80

Surprisingly, peace came during the summer of 1677 when Sir Edmond Andros, governor of New York, sent an armed expedition to Pemaquid. From 1665 to 1674 the Sagadahoc had been the nominal possession of the duke of York, but his authority had lapsed since it was administered by the distant governor of New York. In 1674 Massachusetts had used this collapse and the temporary Dutch capture of New York as an excuse to annex the region as the County of Cornwall. Four years later Andros used King Philip's War as his pretext to regain the duke's lost territory. 81

Andros ordered Lieutenant Anthony Brockhols, the commander of the New York force of four ships and one hundred men, to take possession of the country and establish peace with the natives. Brockhols quickly made a peace with the Indians, who in return, released thirty-five prisoners. Although this treaty does not survive, contemporary correspondence indicates the tribes involved. On July 17 Brockhols reported making peace with "the Indian sachems of Kennebec, which are all between that river and Penobscott." 82 Eight sachems signed the peace, headed by Moxis, the chief sachem of the Kennebecs. Temporarily, all Indians south of the Penobscot, even the Sacos, put themselves under Moxis. The Sacos had deserted Squando because they favored peace while he wanted to continue fighting. After this break with his tribe, Squando flew into a rage, killed several hostages, and then apparently departed for Canada. In August, however, Squando,

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Madockawando, and the sachems of the Androscoggin and Pegwackets came to Pemaquid to ratify the accord. The treaty simply called for fighting to stop and for the Indians to return their captives. In return, Brockhols promised to try to free Indians held prisoner by Massachusetts. 83

Massachusetts did not sign Brockhols' treaty, for in doing so they would have had to recognize the duke of York's right to the Sagadahoc region. Yet soon after the treaty, Massachusetts began to make conciliatory gestures to the Indians. The war had dragged on for almost three years, and Massachusetts could only reestablish its slipping authority over the region if a true and lasting peace was signed. Massachusetts appointed Nicholas Shapleigh, Francis Champernowne, and Nathaniel Frye to negotiate a treaty, which was finally signed at Casco Bay on April 12, 1678. 84

The Casco Bay treaty was a partial victory for the Indians. Under it the Indians released all captives without ransom and allowed the settlers to return to their homes. In return, Massachusetts agreed to pay the Indians a quitrent of a peck of corn for every English family, thus admitting that the Indians retained some rights of land ownership. Gone were the earlier English demands that the Indians pay war damages. While the power of the Indians of southern New England had been broken in King Philip's War, the Eastern Abenakis and their allies remained an important force. 85

Why did the Indians fare so much better in Maine than their counterparts in southern New England? The demography and geography of early Maine were among the most important factors that shaped the outcome of the war in Maine. In southern New England, such established settlements as Boston and Plymouth provided a haven and


rallying point for settlers forced to abandon the frontier. In Maine since every town was on
the frontier, no effective avenue of retreat existed except to Massachusetts. The settlement
pattern in Maine also left the English vulnerable to attack. Most towns were seated along
rivers, dispersed in a ribbon-like pattern of development. Scholars have recently attacked
the once popular perception of the nuclear Massachusetts village, but, in general, settlers in
southern New England lived much closer to each other than their northern neighbors. The
isolated farmsteads of Maine were much more difficult to defend during King Philip's War
than the compact villages of southern New England. 86

The settlers must also have been concerned about the numerical odds they faced.
There are no reliable contemporary estimates for the Indian population of Maine during
King Philip's War. The only reckoning of Indian population in this era took place
approximately fifteen years later during King Williams War (see table 1). This crude
census, made by an anonymous Connecticut mapmaker, indicated that the combined
strength of the Sacos, Androscoggin, and Eastern Abenakis was over two hundred
fighting men. The Indian strength would have been much greater than two hundred in 1675
because the casualties of King Philip's War and the Indian migrations to Canada during and
after the war substantially reduced the population. Considering the extensive casualties and
migrations, it is quite possible that the Indians were twice as strong in 1675 as they were in
1690. 87

86 Baker, Clarke & Lake, 62; Joseph Wood, "Village and Community in Early New

87 Using treaties and other sources, John Noble also estimated the Indian strength at
Maine Historical Society. Another set of estimates for the year 1690, made by Jacob
Wendall, are considerably higher than the figures on this map. However, Wendall probably
estimated these figures in 1727, and may not have had accurate information to work with.
Gordon Day, The Identity of the St. Francis Indians (Ottawa, 1981), 30-31; Jacob
Wendall, "An Estimate of the Inhabitants, English and Indian, in the North American
Colonies, also there Extent in Miles - 1726," New England Historical Genealogical
Register XX (1866), 7-9.
Table 1. Adult Male Indian Populations Circa 1690. From figures given in the "Map of the Eastern Country," Maine Historical Society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Number of Men</th>
<th>Leader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kennebunk</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Done (Dony)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saco</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Hegens (Hegon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pegwackit</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Androscoggin</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Wiarumbe (Worombe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taconic</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Iggerimit (Edgeremet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norridgewock</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Nimmenet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penobscot</td>
<td>90 (about)</td>
<td>Mauchauxis, Rocmasma, and Madockawando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>207</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The English of Maine had more able-bodied men than the roughly four hundred Indians they faced. In 1675 a Massachusetts official estimated that the Yorkshire militia alone could field seven hundred men, but in reality, it was somewhat weaker than this. For example, one hundred men were listed as residing at Scarborough, but the principal settlement of Scarborough, the Black Point Garrison, was defended by only sixty-two men, seven of whom were Massachusetts soldiers temporarily stationed there. Probably the English enjoyed a small majority in troop strength in 1675, but it was not significant enough to give them any real advantage. Indeed, the Yorkshire militia had a huge territory to defend and rarely took the offensive. Raiding Indians could concentrate their numbers at a chosen point of attack, thus usually greatly outnumbering the English in any given raid. This disparity in forces increased during the war when English settlers retreated to the safety of Massachusetts. Even though Maine and Massachusetts officials had outlawed the abandonment of settlements, they could do little to stop wholesale desertions. The population of Maine was cut in half during the late summer and fall of 1676 when the Sagadahoc settlements, as well as those at Casco Bay, Scarborough, and Saco, were abandoned. Thus the small numerical superiority the English enjoyed had never translated into a military advantage.88

The English military effort was also hindered by men who placed their economic self-interest above the well-being of the colony. William Hubbard complained that Captain Hathorn’s expedition never encountered the enemy because one of his scouts deliberately led the English away from the Indians. The guide, a fur trader, did not want his former clients killed because it would ruin his postwar operations. Other traders maintained their business even during the war. Obediah Walker was accused of trading with the Indians, and several others were convicted of similar charges. While the court acquitted Thomas

Gardner of trading with the enemy, his son-in-law, John Earthy, was caught trading with the Indians. In the winter of 1676-1677, Earthy sailed to the Sagadahoc several times under the pretense of salvaging goods and produce left by the settlers. Instead, he traded with Mugg and Madockawando. Earthy was so concerned with his own profits that he refused to pay a ransom to free the captive Nathan Bedford. 89

In addition to the impact of economic interests, the political divisions in Maine adversely affected the war effort. Edwin Churchill has shown the political turmoil Falmouth faced in the years immediately preceding King Philip's War. The issue of annexation by Massachusetts, raised in the 1650s, was only the most recent political upheaval to divide Falmouth. In addition to proprietary disagreements, fishermen and farmers fought over their conflicting visions of the town's future. The deep rifts in Falmouth left it weak and unable to withstand the physical and psychological ravages of war. Rather than uniting over a common problem, settlers quickly abandoned Falmouth even before it was seriously threatened. While Falmouth may have been an extreme case, similar conflicts took place in other towns. At the same time, heated debates occurred at a county-wide level. The charges exchanged by Joshua Scottow, Edward Rishworth, and others indicates that regional factionalism also damaged Maine's efforts to fight the war. 90

When complaining to Governor Leverett about Rishworth and his accomplices, Scottow and Josselyn noted that factionalism was by no means the sole reason for Maine's suffering. They also contended that Massachusetts had failed to protect Maine. The captains concluded by hoping to "find favor from those who have taken us under protection as well


90 Churchill, "Too Great the Challenge," 166-254, 322; Reid, Acadia, Maine, and New Scotland, 110-16, 133-35, 143. The political squabbles and instability in Maine contributed to what Reid labels as its "marginal" status.
as government." 91 It is unlikely that Massachusetts officials deliberately conspired to withhold aid from Maine, but at the same time it is clear that Massachusetts provided only limited aid, even after hostilities ended in southern New England. The suffering residents of Maine may have viewed this lack of aid as a conspiracy, but it probably resulted from Massachusetts' huge war costs. The Bay Colony had deeply strained its economy and manpower in fighting Philip. Efforts to convince the United Colonies to help fight the war in Maine had failed, so Massachusetts had to rely on its own resources. With little aid from Massachusetts, Maine had to fight the war largely by itself. This put Maine in a desperate situation, for as a frontier, or what John Reid has recently called a "marginal colony," Maine had few resources to utilize. Scottow and Josselyn candidly admitted to Governor Leverett, "we shall without your Christian passion be inevitably exposed to the ruin and rage of the heathen, for want of ability to bear our own charges." 92

For a combination of reasons, therefore, the war in Maine ended differently than the conflict in southern New England. The war and its outcome marked a watershed in Maine's history. As a lightly defended frontier region, Maine was hit hard by the war. Over half of the region's settlements were abandoned, and none were completely spared the scars of Indian attacks. Because of the destabilization created by the war, it took generations to rebuild the economy of Maine to its pre-1675 level. Admittedly, southern New England also suffered during the war, but the war in the south had different effects. Many of the older settlements in the south were never attacked during the war. The defeat and removal of Philip and his allies meant that at the end of the war Massachusetts could quickly rebuild the frontier from these established settlements. The devastations wrought by the northern

91 "Joshua Scottow and Henry Josselyn to Governor Leverett, September 15, 1676," Maine Historical Society.

war, combined with the survival of the Maine tribes, had severe repercussions on the history of the region. The Indians remained very much a force to be reckoned with in northern New England. As the Kennebec warned Governor Leverett in 1677, "we are owners of the country and it is wide and full of Indians and we can drive you out but our desire is to be quiet." 93

While the power of the Indians of southern New England was broken by King Philip's War, the northern conflict drew the Indians of Maine together. During the war the Maine Indians functioned both as individual tribes and as members of different alliances. However, it was not until the Treaty of Pemaquid in 1677 that the Indians were united. Not only did sachems of all the major tribes sign the accord, but all Indians from Piscataqua to Penobscot temporarily put themselves under one leader, Moxis. This pattern of Indian unity became more pronounced in the 1680s, making the Indians even tougher foes in King William's War. 94

Even though peace was restored by the treaties of Pemaquid and Casco Bay, Anglo-Indian relations had been seriously damaged. False dealing and misunderstanding had increased distrust on both sides. The Indian manner of fighting served to convince the English that the Indians were truly unrepentant "heathens," incapable of redemption. The English disapproved of the Indian manner of fighting, highlighted by ambushes and raids on lightly defended garrisons. The Indians showed a penchant for attacking during times which violated the Puritan concept of war. Many attacks occurred on Sundays. Worse yet, the Indians repeatedly attacked English burial parties. When Roger Plaisted, captain of the Berwick militia, led a group to bury the dead at the Tozier garrison, Plaisted, both his sons,


and another man died in an Indian ambush. Indians also killed nine out of thirteen members of a burial party on Arrowsic Island in the spring of 1677. 95

Likewise, the settlers' actions during the war led the Indians to lose all faith in them. The arms embargo severely hurt the Indians' economy and forced them to seek other trading partners. The treacherous dealings of Richard Waldron and others convinced the Indians that the English could not be trusted. When the Kennebecs wrote to Governor Leverett in 1677, they complained that "Major Waldron has been the cause of killing all that have been killed this summer," and that peace would have come quickly if it had not been for the major's actions. 96 In their refusal to trade munitions to peaceful Indians and in their treacherous negotiations, the English demonstrated just how little they trusted the Indians.

In Maine there was no clear-cut winner in the war. Still, although both sides suffered losses and made concessions, the Indians came out ahead, at least in the sense that they had avoided the fate of their southern neighbors. The Indian tribes of Maine remained intact on their own lands. The treaties that ended King Philip's War in Maine basically restored the uneasy peace that prevailed in the early 1670s. In 1678 the fate of Maine was not sealed. There was still time to build cultural understanding and to bring a lasting peace. The decade following 1678 would be a second chance for the residents of Maine, an opportunity to correct past cultural misunderstandings before it was too late.

95 Hubbard, "Narrative of Troubles," 120-22, 229.

96 "Moxes and Other Indians to the Governor," Documentary History, ed. Baxter, VI, 179.
Chapter 7

"THE HATCHET HUNG OVER OUR HEADS:"

EFFORTS AT A POSTWAR SETTLEMENT

In describing the end of King Philip's War in Maine, Cotton Mather observed that "when the time arrived that all hands were weary of war, a sort of peace was patched up, which left a body of Indians, not only with horrible murders unavenged, but also in possession of no little part of the country, with circumstances which the English might not think very honorable." 1 According to Mather, King Philip's War ended with a truce rather than with a real peace that might have solved the problems that had caused the conflict. While some efforts were made to repair Anglo-Indian relations, these efforts were aimed more at temporarily preventing war than encouraging a lasting peace. Also, officials in Massachusetts and New York were principally responsible for implementing these programs in Maine. Because these men had little firsthand knowledge of the situation in Maine, many of their policies damaged rather than improved Anglo-Indian relations.

Shortly after the Treaty of Pemaquid, the New York Council passed down laws aimed at preventing any recurrence of King Philip's War. Authorities recognized that since many of the problems between the Indians and the English had come through the fur trade, it would have to be regulated by limiting all transactions to Pemaquid. Trade at Pemaquid was confined to a small area and strictly monitored. Coastal trade was discouraged by making Pemaquid the only port of entry into the duke of York's domain, and authorities could seize and make a prize of any vessel caught trading along the coast. Fishermen had

1 Mather, Magnalia Christi Americana, II, 583.

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also been a major obstacle to good relations by providing rum to the Indians, cheating them in trade, and physically abusing them. The council attempted to separate the two groups with new laws that permitted fishermen to work only on the offshore islands and confined the Indians to the coast.  

Unfortunately, these laws treated only symptoms. Instead of solving problems in Anglo-Indian relations, and promoting better understanding between the two cultures, the government tried to closely regulate people's conduct. By monitoring the fur trade and segregating the fishermen and the Indians, the council in effect admitted that the two groups could not get along. The English based their policy as much on expectation of conflict as on development of good relations with the Indians. While the settlers demonstrated a desire for better relations with the Indians in their treaties, the English still prepared for confrontation. The governor of New York ordered that all settlements should consist of twenty or more homes, defended by a fort. Gone were the isolated homesteads which had proved impossible to defend during King Philip's War. Besides Pemaquid, settlers built fortified settlements at Sheepscot (renamed New Dartmouth) and Newtown (on the southern end of Arrowsic Island). Even the fishermen built a fort on Sagadahoc Island, at the mouth of the Kennebec. Laws also specified that all fishermen and planters should possess arms and ammunition to defend themselves. 

The Indians also seem to have been better prepared for war in the 1680s. In particular, King Philip's War brought the tribes together. The Indians temporarily united behind Moxes to sign the Treaty of Pemaquid, and Indian property deeds from the 1680s suggest that this spirit of unity continued. Few of the Indian deeds of the Sagadahoc were signed after King Philip's War, but most of those later deeds were signed both by Kennebec and Androscoggin sachems. This joint signing marked a distinct change from

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3 Ibid., 79.
prewar deeds which were usually signed by members of one tribe. Two deeds for land on the lower Kennebec were signed by both Moxes and Tarumkin. Moxes and two sons of Tarumkin, Wenungusset and Absolem, sold Seguin Island to Richard Patteshall in 1684. Tarumkin and Absolem, along with the Kennebec sachem Tassocks, sold land on the Kennebec to Lawrence Dennis. These joint deeds may have indicated a new alliance of the Androscoggins and Abenakis, one which made them better prepared to deal with the English. 4

Perhaps no policy could have improved Anglo-Indian relations after King Philip's War. Possibly the accumulated misunderstanding had grown so strong that nothing could have prevented further hostilities. The program put in place on the Sagadahoc only made matters worse, however, for in separating the two societies the Indians and the English had few ways to resolve intercultural tensions. Instead both were left on their own to imagine the worst of their neighbors. This was a particularly dangerous policy with the wounds of King Philip's War still so fresh.

The potential for disaster brought on by this lack of communication was demonstrated in 1684 when some Indians grew restless. John Hornibrooke, a Sagadahoc fur trader, was warned by a friendly Indian that "the hatchet hung over our heads and he did not know how soon it might fall." 5 An Indian woman fled the region because she could not stand to see her English friends killed. Other Indians alerted the English of the coming violence and promised to give them advance warning so the settlers could flee

4 Moore, ed., "Book of the Eastern Claims," VIII, 78, 80-81; York Deeds, IX, 228; X, 261-62. Admittedly, it is impossible to determine the tribal affiliation of every Maine Indian grantor in the seventeenth-century. Still, only one pre-1675 deed strongly suggests the possibility of grantors from two different tribes on the same deed. A 1648 deed from Robin Hood to James Smith for land in present-day Woolwich was also signed by "Mr. Thomas." In 1677 a "Mr. Thomas" also signed the letter from the Kennebec Indians to the Governor of Massachusetts. Drake, Book of the Indians, 100; "Moxes and Other Indians to the Governor," Documentary History, ed. Baxter, VI, 178.

before the fighting began. The greatest concern for these peaceful Indians was that their English friends might be endangered by the threatened violence. 6

Other Indians were not so friendly. James Dennis, a Kennebec resident, overheard the Indians airing their grievances against the English. The sachem Captain Anthony suggested that the wounds of King Philip's War had not healed. He stated that "his heart would never be well till he had killed some of the English again." He went on to threaten that "he would burn the English houses and make the English slaves to them as they were before." 7 The Indians' threats against Sagadahoc residents were not all verbal. Several days after Hornibrook's warning, John Moulton was working in his fields when an Indian attacked him with a knife. Moulton grabbed his axe and warded off his assailant but the message was clear: some Indians were murderously unhappy with the English. 8

In the spring of 1684 tensions momentarily eased and Sagadahoc officials reaffirmed peace with the Indians. However, rumors fueled by Governor Cranfield of New Hampshire intimated that 200 Mohawks were on their way to quell the Maine Indians. Just as the Androscoggin and Abenakis always concerned the English, these tribes feared the possibility of their ancient enemy, the Mohawks, taking the war trail. John Haskins, a Pennacook sachem, was so worried that he wrote Cranfield that "if you never let Mohawks kill us, we'll be submissive to you for ever." 9

Thus both sides showed themselves susceptible to rumor. The ghosts of King Philip's War proved difficult to exorcise. The threat of war in 1684 led New Hampshire

6 Ibid., 60-67.


and Maine officials to sign a new treaty with the Pennacooks, Sacos, and Androscoggins in September 1685. This accord minimized the power of rumor and chance of misunderstanding by establishing policies for Indian-English contact. The treaty established legal recourse for settling disputes. If an Englishman injured an Indian, "the Englishman shall be punished, and the Indian shall have present satisfaction made him. And if any Indian doth an injury to the English . . . the sagamore to whom that Indian doth belong shall punish him in presence of one of the King's justices of the peace." 10 The English promised not to call for aid from the Mohawks, and in return the Indians pledged to warn the English about the activities of any foreign Indians and to help defend the English settlements. To further defuse English fears triggered by Indian movement, the Indians agreed to give fair notice if they changed their usual place of residence. If they failed to warn settlers, they were presumed hostile to the English, who could arrest or attack the offenders. 11

In part, the continuing difficulties between the English and the Indians were related to the breakdown of the deed system and the continued growth of the English settlements. A resident of Dover told Cotton Mather that the Eastern Indians had five main complaints against the English in the late 1680s. Their main provocations related to growing competition for the resources of Maine between the Indians and the English. Although land and the right to use the land may have been an issue before 1675, it became even more important in the 1680s. After King Philip's War, settlers quickly returned to their abandoned farmsteads and others came to the region for the first time. The Indians must have disapproved of the land policy of Edmond Andros, who granted large tracts of land in


11 Sainsbury, ed., Calendar of State Papers, XII, 89; Williamson, History of Maine, I, 576.
the Sagadahoc to his political allies. These tracts were occupied without benefit of Indian deeds. 12

English settlements in York County also grew extensively after King Philip's War. Unwisely, Massachusetts even began a new township, North Yarmouth. In the 1680s thirty-six families took up residence in the settlement located between Falmouth and Pejebscot. This new town was poorly located, for it was on Androscoggin tribal territory, very near their main settlement at Pejebscot. Until this time, few English settlers had resided near the Androscoggin Indians, and those who had were mostly fur traders like Thomas Purchase and Thomas Stevens. The settling of North Yarmouth increased contact between the English and the Androscogginns and thus compounded the chance of friction. An immediate point of contention was the ownership of land. While tracts of land in North Yarmouth had been purchased previously by the English, much of the township remained in Indian possession, and apparently no efforts were made by settlers or by Massachusetts authorities to purchase these lands from the Indians. 13

The Indians were justifiably provoked by the English patenting and surveying of lands. One group of Indians went so far as "threatening the surveyor to knock him on the head if he came to lay out any lands." 14 At the same time that Massachusetts established this policy in North Yarmouth, Governor Andros also began ignoring Indian ownership with his generous grants in the Sagadahoc. By granting land without Indian approval, Andros and Massachusetts ignored the Indians' basic right of ownership. This right had been a tradition, supported by the practice of Indians' deeds, and then confirmed by the corn tribute stipulated in the Treaty of Casco. Unfortunately, the English refused to pay the annual rent to which they had agreed. Thus policy makers in Massachusetts and New York

12 Mather, Magnalia Christi Americana, II, 584.
14 Mather, Magnalia Christi Americana, II, 584.
took pains to regulate the fur trade, but their ignorance of the land trade continued to sour Anglo-Indian relations. 15

The Indians also complained about several other land-related problems with the English. The Sacos argued that Englishmen used large nets to catch fish on the Saco, a right the Indians had reserved when they sold the land along the river. By preventing the Indians from fishing, the English not only denied them a source of food, but also showed that at least some Englishmen would renege on past bargains. Indians also complained that English cattle let loose amid the natives' corn fields rapidly destroyed their crops. In addition to these land disputes, trading abuses continued, despite efforts by New York, Maine, and Massachusetts officials to prevent such problems. With the renewed prosperity of the English settlements came increasing competition between the English and the Indians for Maine's natural resources. 16

In the summer of 1688 these problems, combined with mutual suspicions, again led to war. Difficulties arose in North Yarmouth, where Androscoggins broke into John Royal's home and ran off with a keg of rum. Worombe, sachem of the Androscoggins, later complained that Royal had cheated them in trade, and thus took the rum to even the account. In their subsequent celebrations they threatened Royal's neighbors, the Lanes, as well as other residents, before retreating up the Androscoggin River. 17

At about the same time, the Saco Indians became fed up with infringements on their territorial rights. On August 6 the Indians fired buckshot at a herd of cattle that had wandered into their corn fields. Unfortunately, word of these minor incidents reached Boston just as the Indians of southern New England were also creating disturbances. The lieutenant-governor of Massachusetts panicked at what he believed might be the first signs

15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
of another Indian rising like King Philip's War, and he ordered officers in Maine to seize any hostile Indians. Upon receiving those orders at Saco, Captain Blackman captured twenty Indians and sent them to Boston. Authorities hoped that the taking of hostages would prevent Indian violence and bring them to negotiate another peace, but these actions did not produce the desired results. In retaliation, the Indians seized a number of English residents on the Sagadahoc. While attempts were made to reach a settlement throughout the fall of 1688, mistrust dominated both sides and eventually led to open warfare. 18

This time war engulfed northern New England for ten years. The outbreak of hostilities in 1689 between France and England turned Maine into a small theater of a vast imperial struggle. King William's War proved even more destructive to Maine than King Philip's War. English residents of northern New England again abandoned their towns in the face of fierce Indian raids. Dover, Newichawannock, Pemaquid, York, and Falmouth all fell to devastating Indian attacks that killed numerous settlers and captured others. All towns in Maine north of Wells were abandoned, quickly wiping out the fruits of ten years of English resettlement. The English were not alone in their suffering. Many Indians died in battle or from the famine and disease that swept through their villages. Even the end of King William's War brought no lasting relief, for it was followed by Queen Anne's War and subsequent conflicts until the fall of Quebec in 1760 brought an end to the colonial wars. While there were some years of official peace between these wars, violence between the Indian and English residents of Maine continued unabated throughout this period. 19

Could these conflicts have been avoided? Certainly King Philip's War had demonstrated the weakness of Anglo-Indian relations in Maine. Why did no one heed this warning? Actually, both sides did make an effort to maintain the peace. They participated in a series of negotiations and signed repeated treaties. The basic problem was that despite

18 Kenneth Morrison, Embattled Northeast, 113-17.
decades of being neighbors and trading partners, the English and the Indians had strikingly little in common. The strains of expanding English settlement and problems of the fur trade increased competition for natural resources, and King Philip's War merely heightened existing mistrust. Perhaps the Indians and the English did not realize the tenuous nature of their peace. They may have viewed the strains of the fur trade and settlement disputes as a natural part of relations between the two groups. After all, since the 1630s relations between settlers and natives had been somewhat less than perfect. King Philip's War presented the residents of Maine with a chance to improve relations, but perhaps neither side realized how serious their differences were nor recognized the need to resolve the problem. Their distrust and limited understanding of each other meant that the second chance would go for naught.

Perhaps the residents of Maine felt that if King Philip's War had not broken out in southern New England, war could have been avoided in Maine. Despite tensions in Anglo-Indian relations, fighting had not commenced in Maine until events in southern New England had precipitated war. Unfortunately, after King Philip's War the continued growth of English settlements escalated problems between the cultures. Meanwhile, outside forces continued to influence events and policy in Maine, thus, the inhabitants were not left alone to settle their differences. During the 1680s Maine became a focus of intercolonial and international conflict. France became more concerned with events in Maine as the Abenakis became increasingly important allies of New France, and both New York and Massachusetts took an interest in Maine's defense. Ironically, the flawed policies put in place by these distant colonial officials helped lead to King William's War, and the destruction of the English settlements in Maine. New York's interference in Maine officially ceased in 1685, when the Sagadahoc returned to Massachusetts authority. Once reunited, Maine remained under control of Massachusetts until it became a state in 1820. Generations of Massachusetts' governors and politicians would make decisions on Indian policy best left to the people who knew the situation in Maine.
In the Pequot War (1637) and King Philip's War, Massachusetts demonstrated its complete inability to get along with the Indians of southern New England. During the 1670s and 1680s, many of the important decisions that led to war were made in Boston, not in Maine. Residents of Maine, such as Thomas Gardner, attempted to keep the peace with the Indians. However, policy makers in Boston usually ignored the ideas of these experts. In 1688 Lieutenant Colonel Edward Tyng, the commander of Falmouth's Fort Loyal, wrote to Massachusetts officials explaining the recent disturbances by the Indians. He also warned the governor to proceed with caution, for "the English were much to blame in the matter" too. 20 Sitting in Boston, the lieutenant governor did not understand that the Indians acted more out of frustration than any real hostility. Unnecessarily fearing war, he sent the fatal order to seize all hostile Indians.

Throughout the seventeenth century, the English residents of Maine had poor relations with the Indians. But while Maine was an independent colony, administered from within, peace was maintained. It is interesting to note that the Sagadahoc, the center of Indian-English contact in Maine, came under Massachusetts' authority in 1674, two years before King Philip's War broke out. In 1678 Edmond Andros restored Pemaquid to the duke of York, but in 1685 James II returned the Sagadahoc to the Bay Colony. Three years after the region was restored to Massachusetts, King William's War began, commencing seventy more years of conflict on the Maine frontier. During these many years of war, Maine remained under the yoke of Massachusetts authority. The coincidence of Massachusetts control of Maine and the outbreak of Indian wars was no coincidence at all.

20 Edward Tyng to the Governor, August 18, 1688, Documentary History, ed. Baxter, VI, 419; Morrison, Embattled Northeast, 115-17.
## APPENDIX 1

**IMMIGRANTS TO THE SAGAHAOC, 1654-1676**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>First Noted</th>
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<th>Born</th>
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<td>?</td>
</tr>
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<td>?</td>
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<td>?</td>
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<td>Arrowsic</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1661</td>
<td>Kennebec</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1676</td>
<td>Kennebec</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
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<td>William Cole</td>
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<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard Collicott</td>
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<tr>
<td>Henry Coombs</td>
<td>1676</td>
<td>Kennebec</td>
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<td>1664</td>
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<td>?</td>
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<td>1662</td>
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<td>London</td>
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<td>----------------------</td>
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<td>-------------</td>
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<td>Pemaquid</td>
<td>?</td>
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<td>1664</td>
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<td>?</td>
</tr>
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<td>?</td>
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<td>?</td>
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<td>?</td>
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<td>1661</td>
<td>Kennebec</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
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<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
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<td>1670</td>
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<td>?</td>
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<td>1670</td>
<td>Kennebec</td>
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APPENDIX 2
SECOND-GENERATION SAGADAHOC REGION BRIDES, 1650-1676

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Father/Daughters</th>
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<td>Richard Pierce</td>
<td>?</td>
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<td>Nicholas Demming</td>
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<td>?</td>
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<td>Richard Redding</td>
<td>Damariscove</td>
<td>Damariscove</td>
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<td>Wells</td>
<td>Sheepscot*</td>
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<td>?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>John Mason</td>
<td>Sheepscot</td>
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<td>Nequasset</td>
<td>Sheepscot</td>
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<td>?</td>
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<td>William Baker</td>
<td>?</td>
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<td>Sarah3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thomas Parker of Kennebec</td>
<td>David Oliver</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Kennebec*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grace3</td>
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<td>James Smith Jr.</td>
<td>Nequasset</td>
<td>Sheepscot*</td>
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<td>Father/Daughters</td>
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<td>Husband from</td>
<td>Residence after marriage</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
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<td>James Phips of Nequasset</td>
<td>_____ Halsey</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret</td>
<td>James Widger</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Kennebec</td>
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<td>John Allen</td>
<td>Sheepscot</td>
<td>Kennebec*</td>
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<td>Rebecca</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Taylor of Sheepscot</td>
<td>Thomas Gent²</td>
<td>Sheepscot</td>
<td>Kennebec</td>
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<td>Sarah</td>
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<td>Jeremiah Hodsdon</td>
<td>Dover, N.H.</td>
<td>Kennebec⁴</td>
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<td>Ann</td>
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<td>John Sellman</td>
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<td>Damariscove⁴</td>
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<td>John Lee</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Sheepscot²</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Key to Appendix 2

2 - indicates husband was a second generation Sagadahoc resident

3 - indicates wife was a third generation Sagadahoc resident

* - indicates the couple lived on land given by the bride's father

⁴ - indicates the couple may have received land from the wife's father

A - indicates marriage may have occurred after 1676.
# APPENDIX 3

SECOND-GENERATION SAGADAHOC REGION GROOMS, 1650-1676

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father/Sons</th>
<th>Wife</th>
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<td>William Dyer of Sheepscot</td>
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<td>Sheepscot</td>
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<td>Christopher</td>
<td>Robert___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Gent of Sheepscot</td>
<td>Sarah Taylor 2</td>
<td>Sheepscot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sheepscot*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Parker of Kennebec</td>
<td>Margaret ___</td>
<td>Kennebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Jr.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kennebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas</td>
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<td>Kennebec</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Phips of Nequasset</td>
<td>Elizabeth Gent 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Mary Spencer Hull</td>
<td>Boston and Nequasset</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Jr.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key to Appendix 3**

2 - indicates wife was also a second generation Sagadahoc resident

* - indicates the couple lived on land given by the bride's father

**NOTE**- Information for all three appendices is drawn from Noyes, Libby, and Davis, *Genealogical Dictionary of Maine and New Hampshire*. 
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VITA

Emerson Woods Baker II