

Beyond the Mayflower: History, Culture, and Encounter in Plimoth Colony

*Class 2: Encounter and Exchange: Native
Peoples and English Settlers*

Dr. David J. Silverman, July 2026

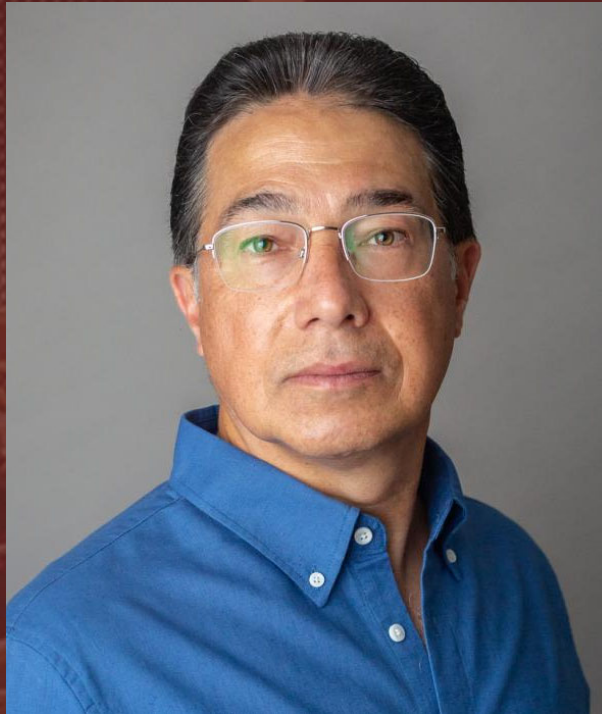
THE BRUE FAMILY LEARNING CENTER



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A NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY HISTORY, HERITAGE & CULTURE

Meet today's presenter



Dr. David J. Silverman
George Washington University

OVERVIEW

- **Presentation** (60 mins.)
 - Old worlds meet
 - Alliance
 - Things fall apart
- **Q&A** (30 mins.)

The Wampanoags, Plymouth Colony, and History and Memory In Three Acts



Act 1: Old Worlds Meet

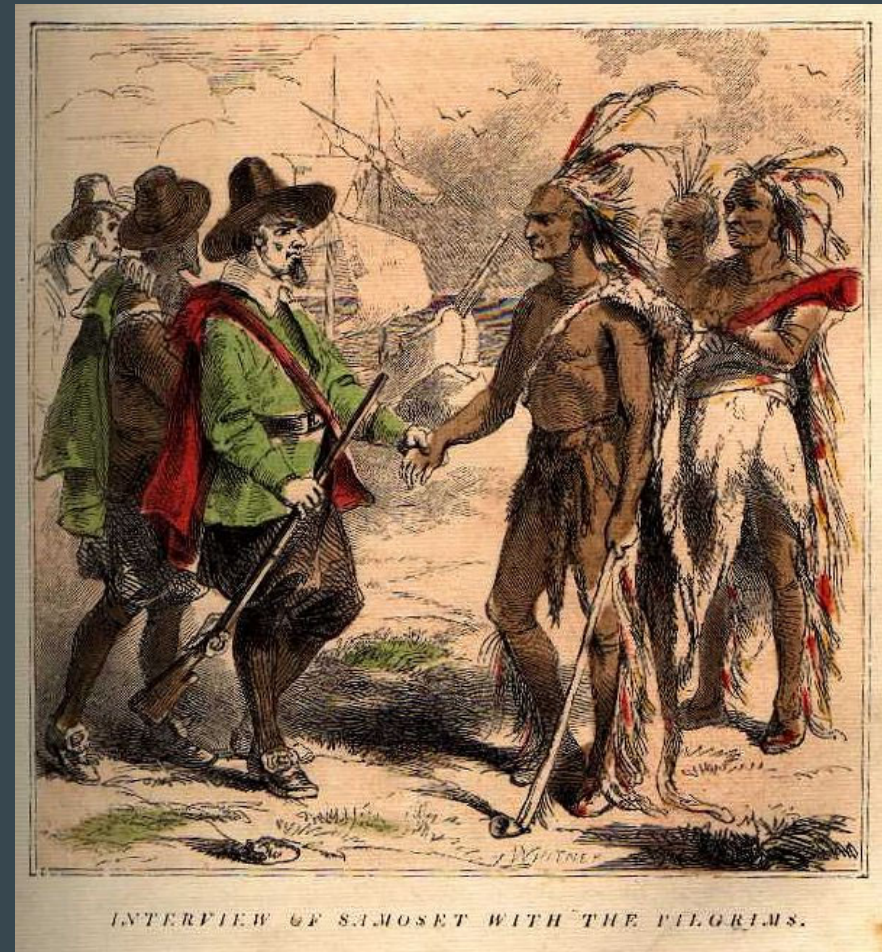
“The First Thanksgiving” Jennie Brownscombe (1914)



"The First Thanksgiving" Jean Leoc Gerome Ferris



Welcome
Englishman!



Enrico Causici, Landing of the Pilgrims, United States Capitol



Chestnut Street School Thanksgiving, Portland, ME, 1924



Macy's Thanksgiving Parade, 1935



Thanksgiving Parade, Detroit, 1974



Oldest archaeological site with human artifacts in New England: Avon, CT. 12,500 years old.





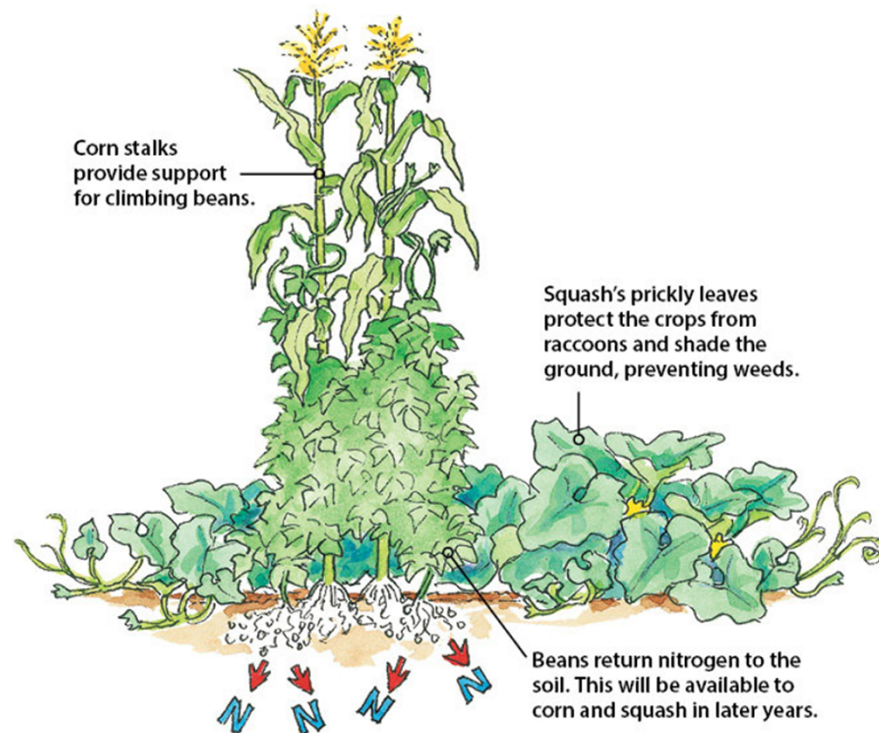
Boylston St. Fish Weir, Boston, 2,500 years old



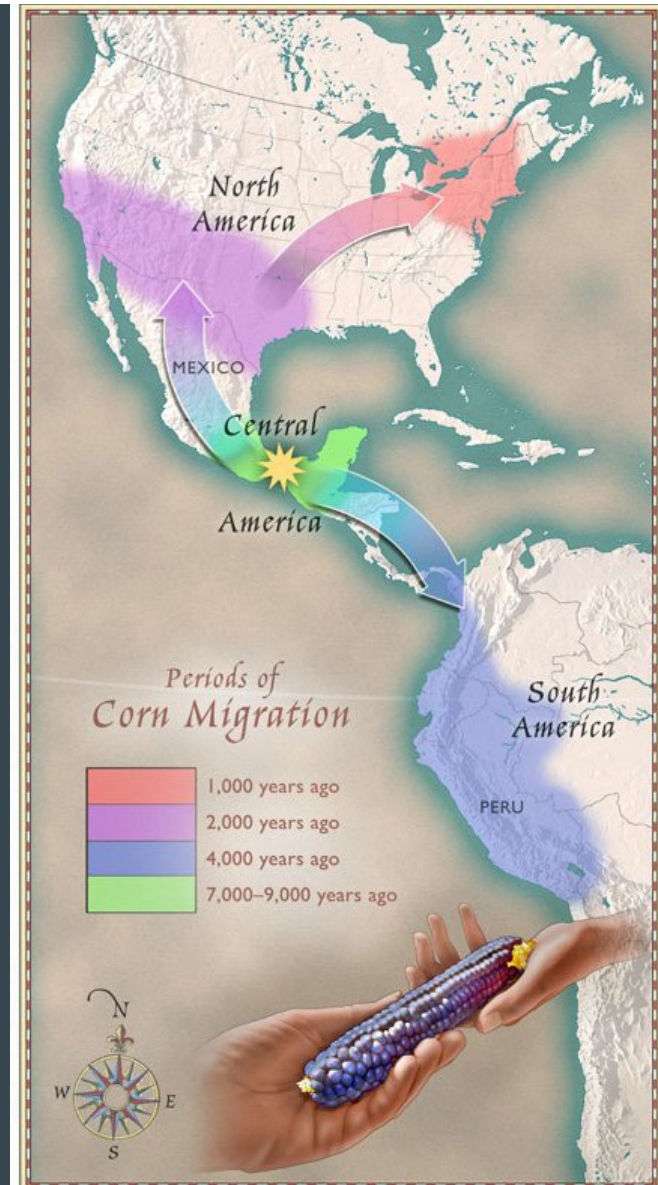


"Woodland Hunter"

The bow and arrow first appeared in the Eastern Woodlands about 1,400 years ago.



Maize arrives in southern New England around 1000 AD, though the date is a matter of debate.





Mississippians (Midwest and Southeast), 800-1600 CE. Earthen pyramids, fortified towns, long-distance trade, hierarchy, horticultural surplus.



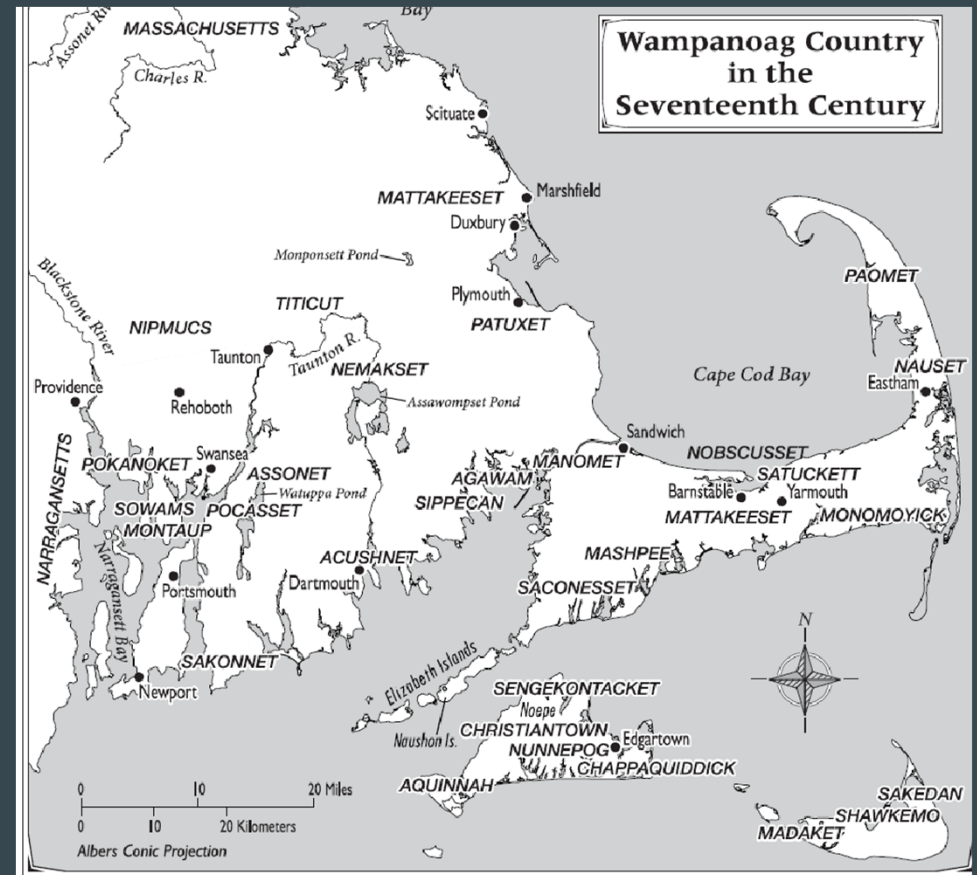
The Wampanoag
community of Patuxet,
(later site of
Plymouth),
1605, as drawn by
Samuel de Champlain



Wampanoag Country, 1600-1700

Sachemship: A local community of extended kin led by a chief (or sachem) from an elite lineage; usually male, but sometimes female (called sunksquaw). Sachem advised by a council of family representatives.

Paramount sachemship: A regional network of sachemships under the leadership of a particularly influential sachem who collects tribute from outlying communities in exchange for military protection and diplomacy. Sometimes these relationships rely on force. Paramount sachems contended for tributaries.



Portrait of anonymous sachem, ca. 1690

sachem=he that goes in front

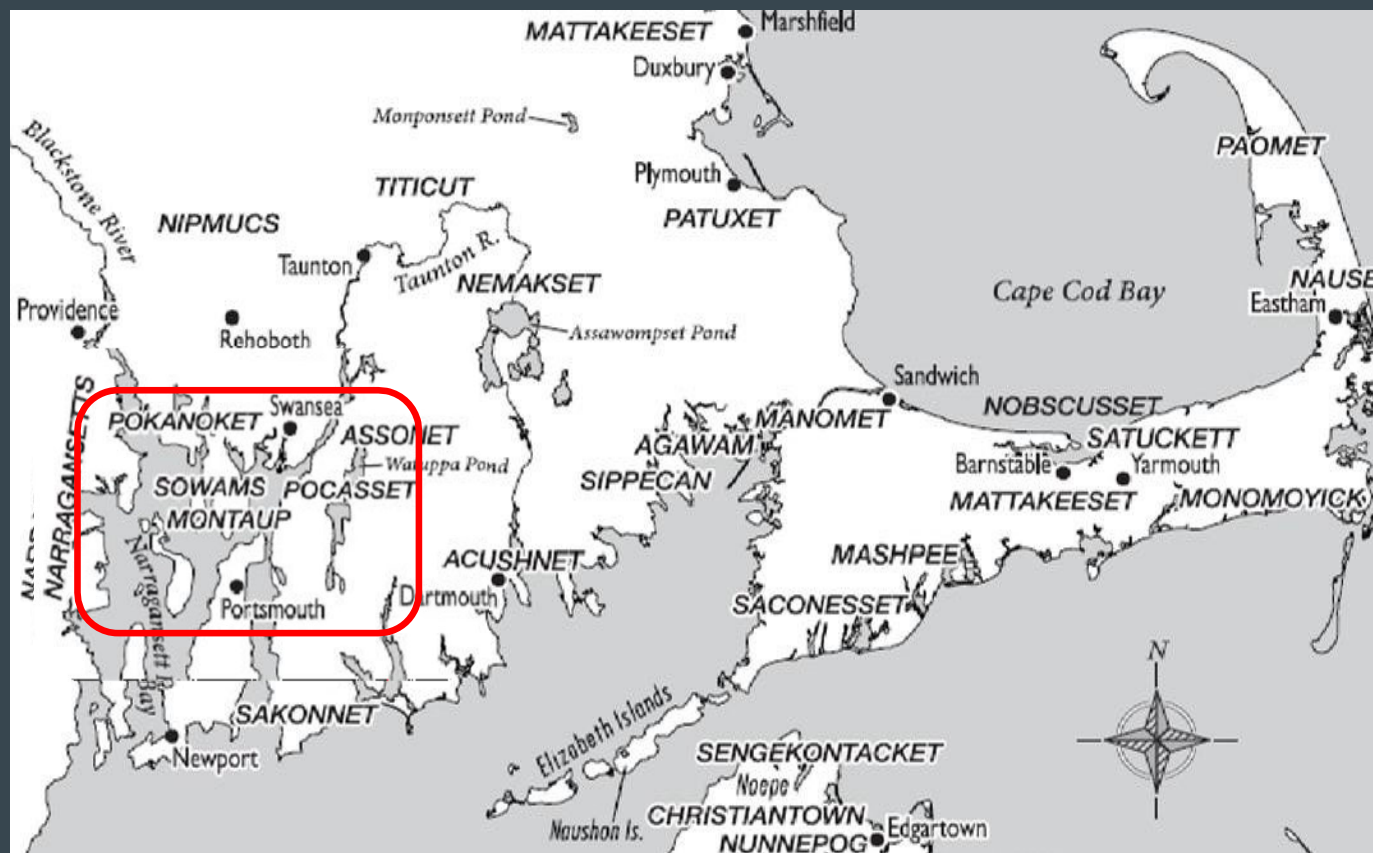
sunksquaw=titled woman

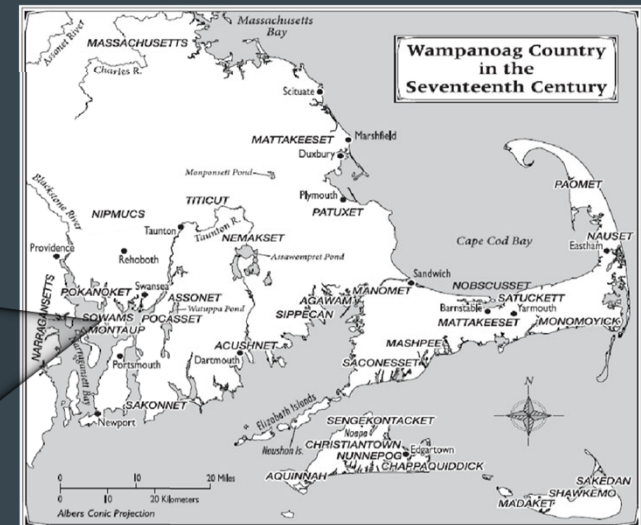
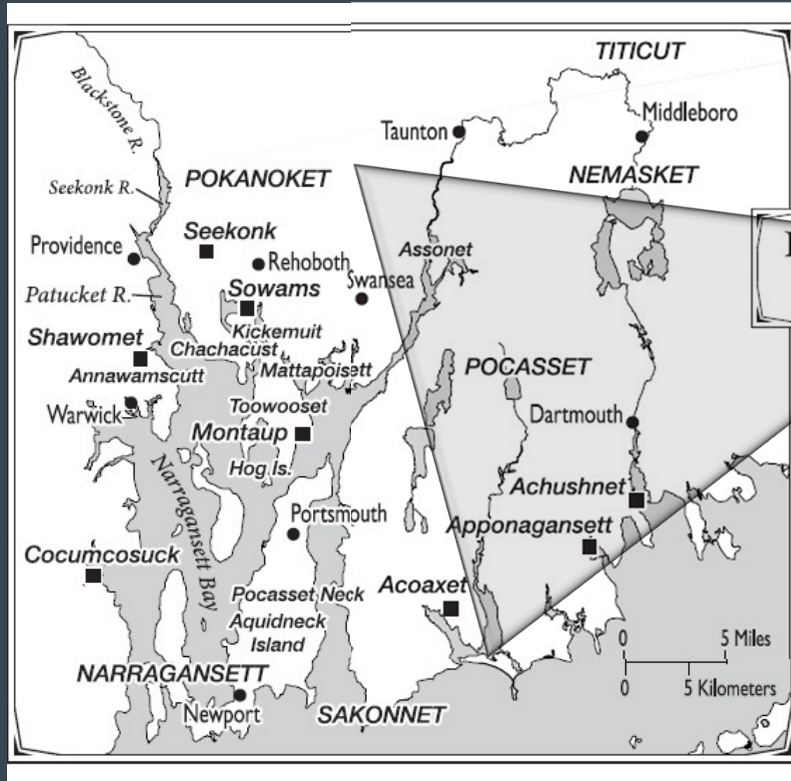
sachemonk=sachemship

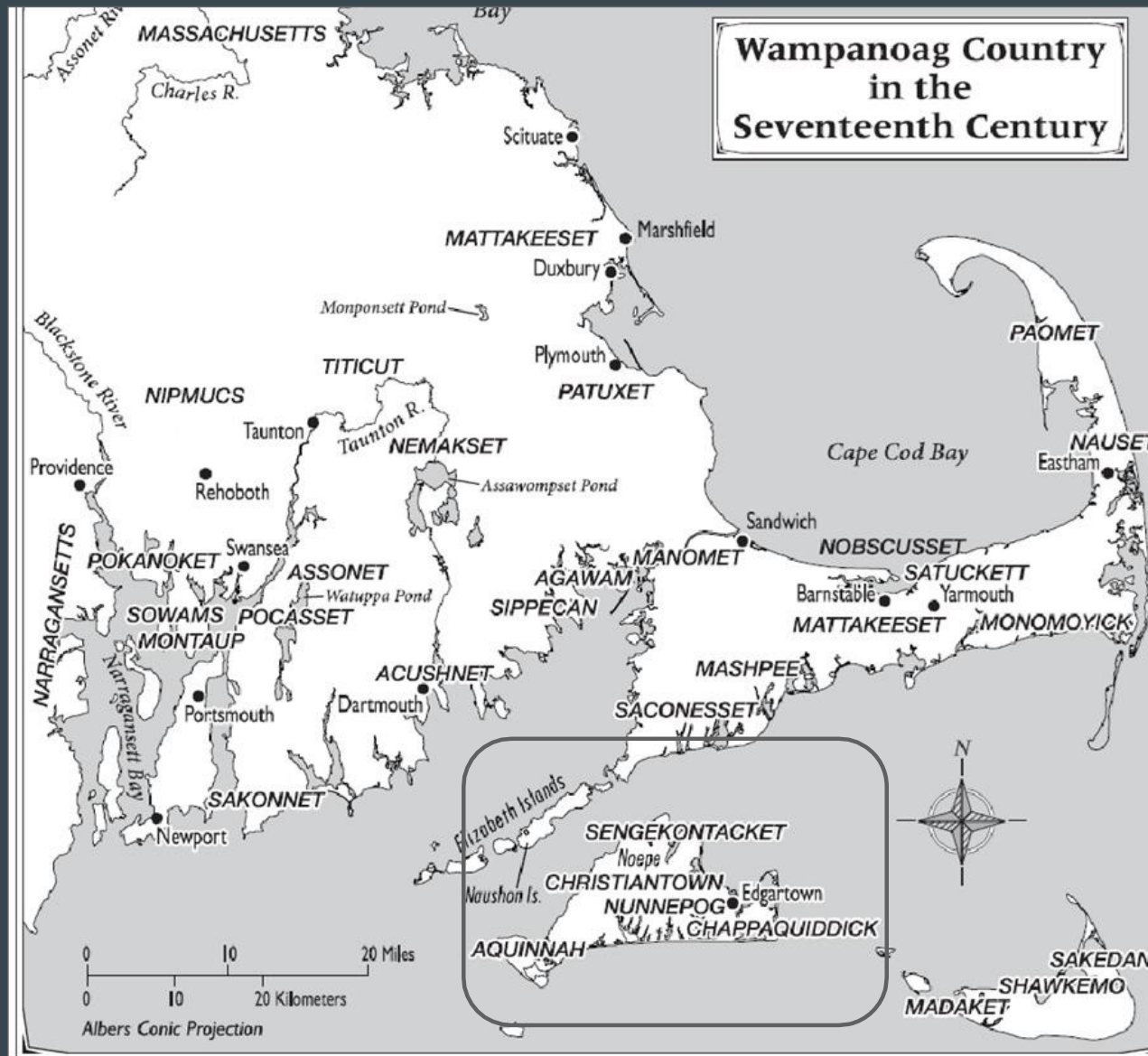
ketassachemog=great sachem

Ousamequin= highest chief that
speaks on behalf



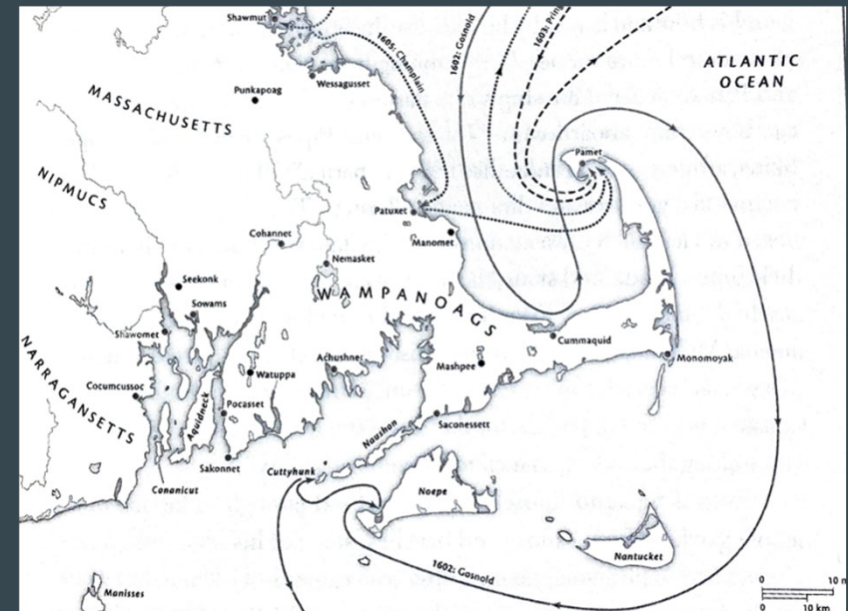


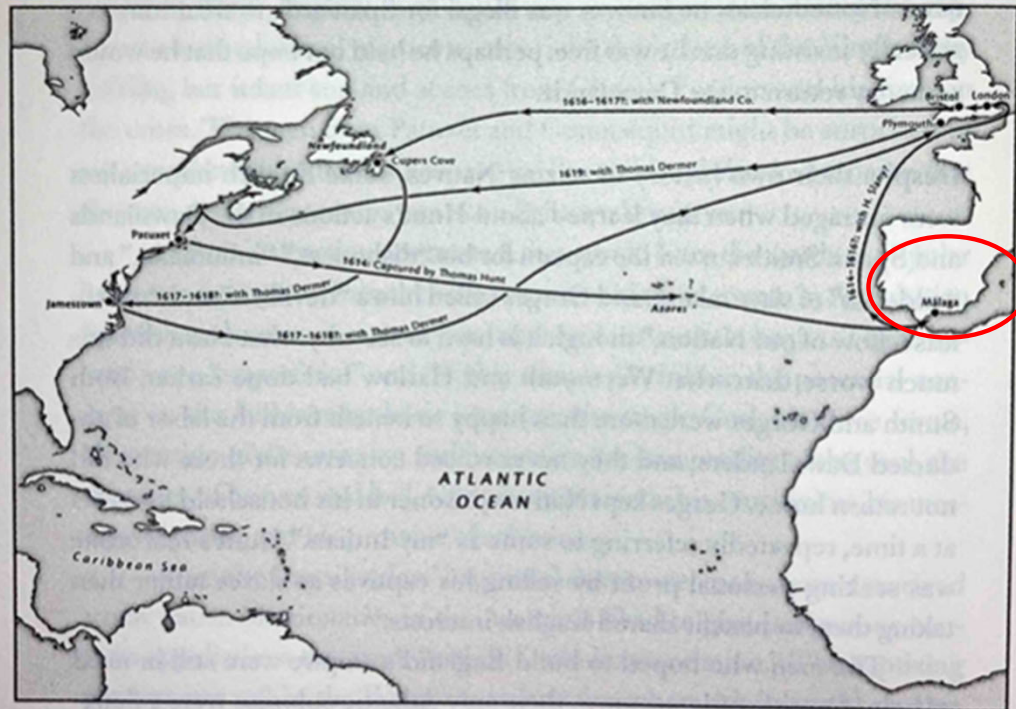




Documented Contacts

- 1524:** Verrazano encounters Wampanoags at Narragansett Bay.
- 1602:** Gosnold clashes with Wampanoags at Elizabeth Islands.
- 1603:** Pring clashes with Wampanoags at Pamet.
- 1605:** Mons/Champlain clash with Wampanoags at Nauset.
- 1605:** Waymouth seizes Abenakis captive in Maine.
- 1606:** Poutrincourt/ Champlain clash with Wampanoags at Monomoy.
- 1611:** Harlow takes two Maine Abenakis captive, then seizes Wampanoags Epenow from MV and Sakaweston from Nantucket.
- 1614:** Hobson returns Epenow. MV Wampanoags attack crew.
- 1614:** Smith/Hunt. Hunt takes 24 Wampanoags captive at Patuxet, including Squanto.
- 1616:** Unnamed voyage results in French captives among Wampanoags.
- 1619:** Dermer returns Squanto. MV Wampanoags kill most of crew.





Tisquantum's Atlantic odyssey, 1614-1619. Erin Greb Cartography.

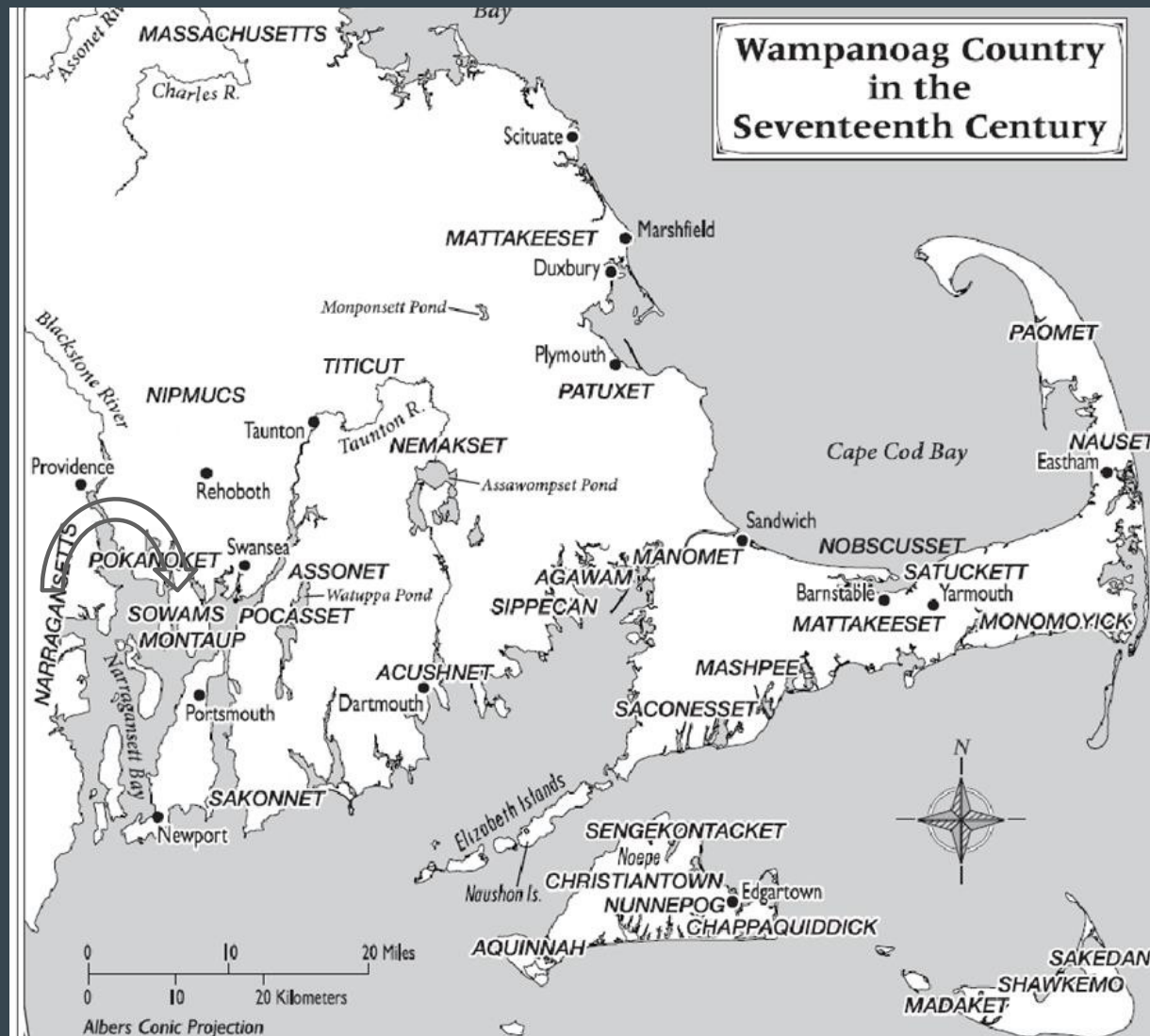
Englishman John Guy in Newfoundland, trading with Beothuks, early 1600s



The Wampanoag
community of Patuxet,
(later site of
Plymouth),
1605, as drawn by
Samuel de Champlain

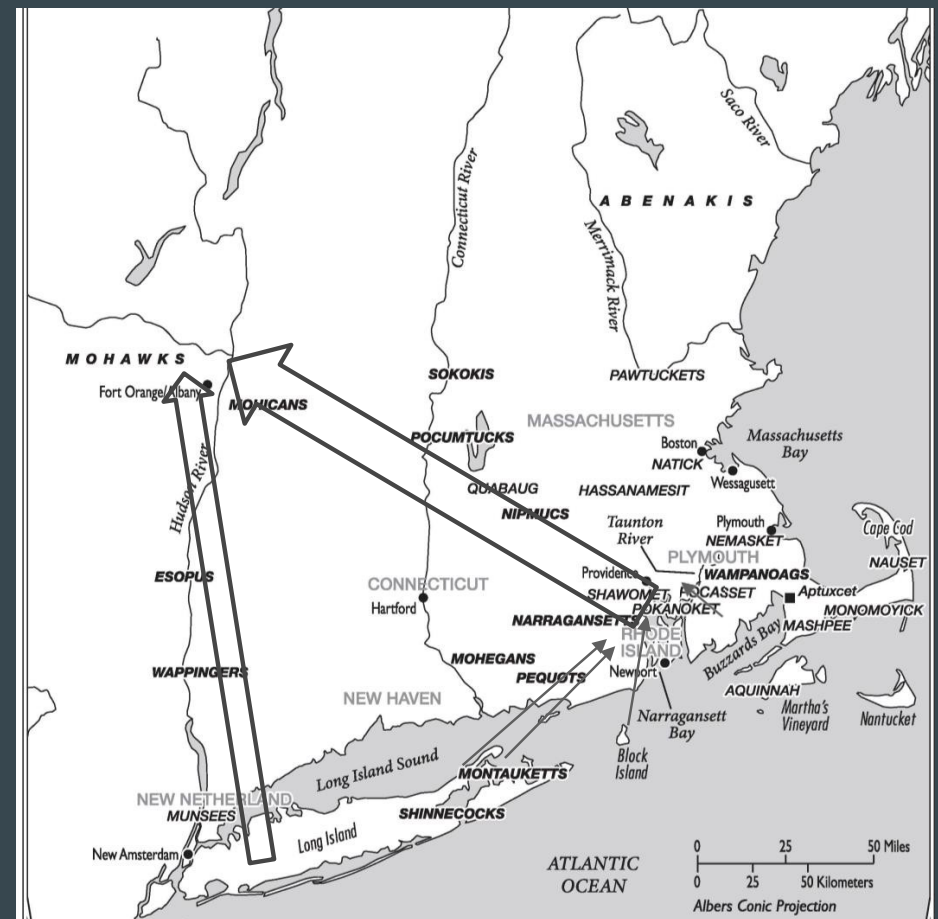






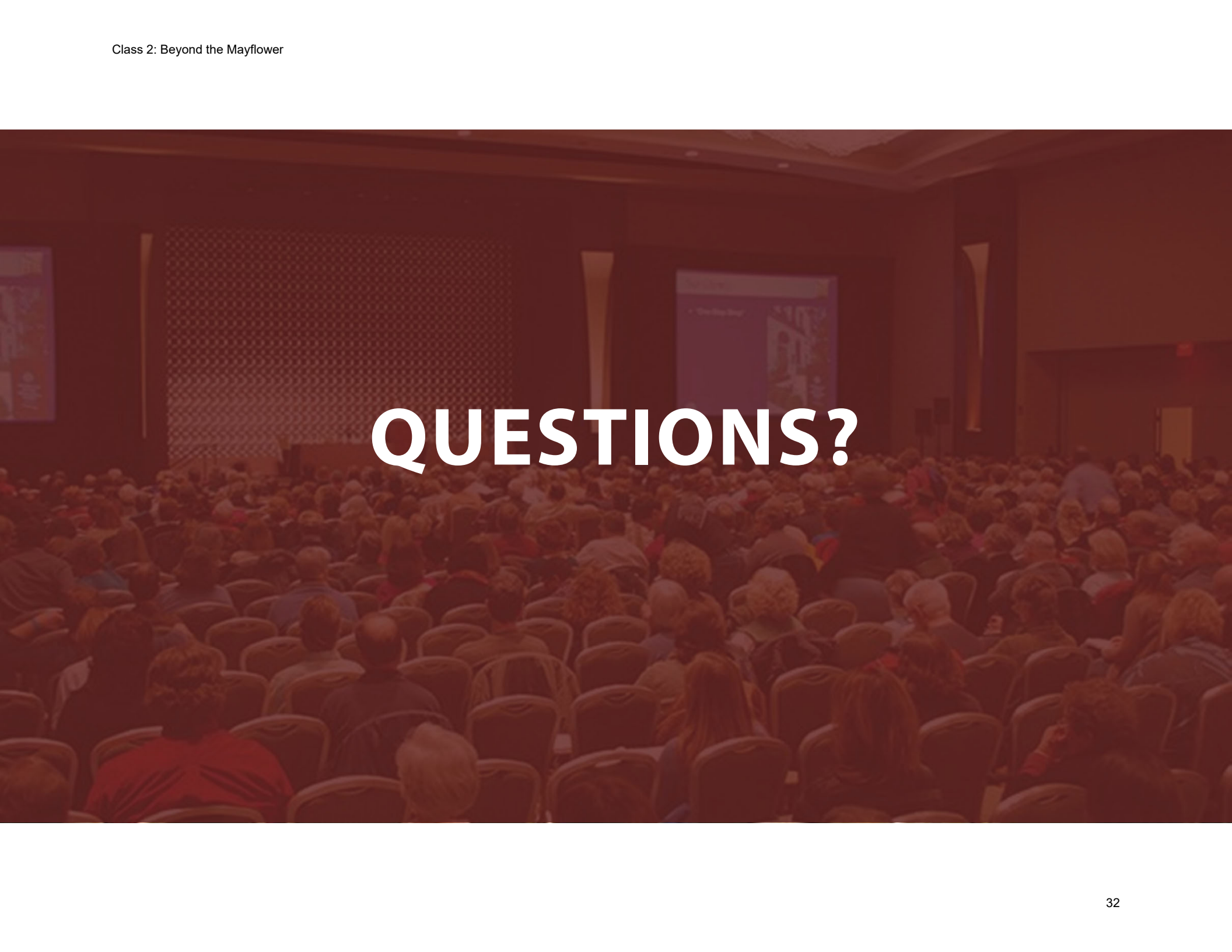
The flows of wampum tribute, ca. 1600–1620

- Local flow
- Regional flows





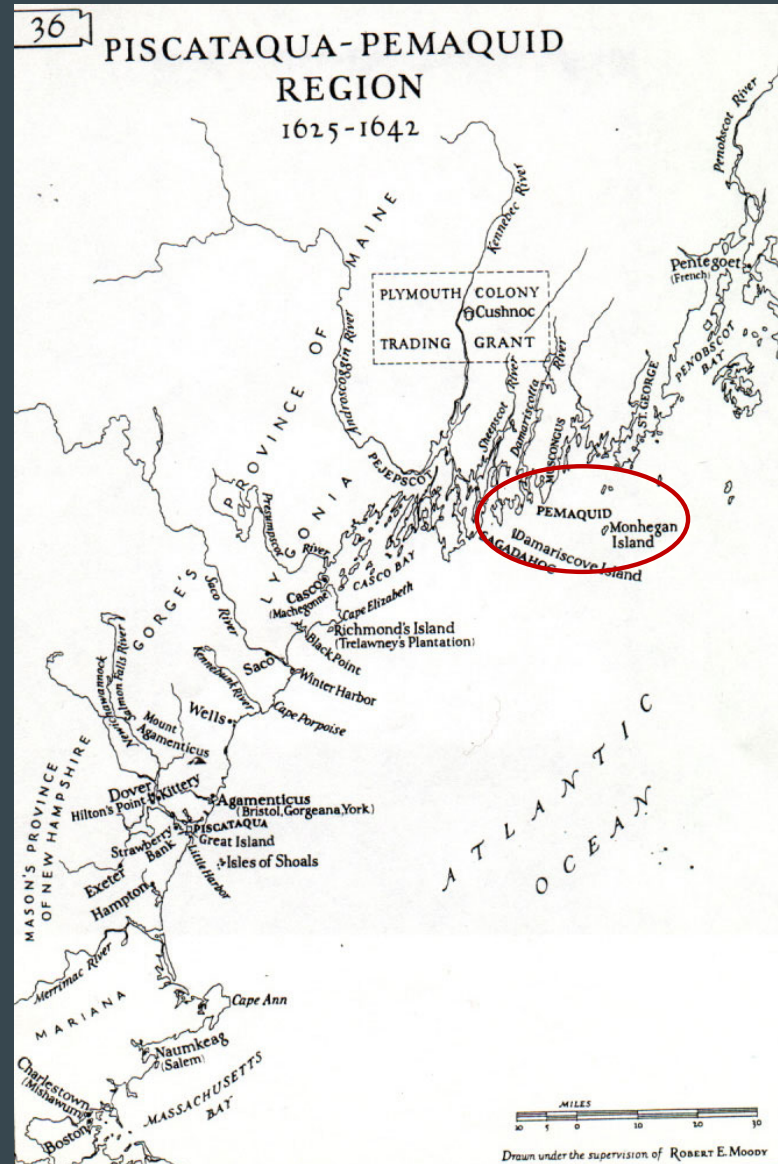
QUESTIONS?

A large audience is seated in a lecture hall, facing a stage. The audience is seen from behind, filling the foreground and middle ground. The stage features a large presentation screen displaying a slide with a building image. The room has a high ceiling and decorative wall panels. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent reddish-brown filter.

Act 2: The Alliance



Samoset's neighborhood of Monhegan Island



Reenactment of Massasoit (Ousamequin) meeting the English

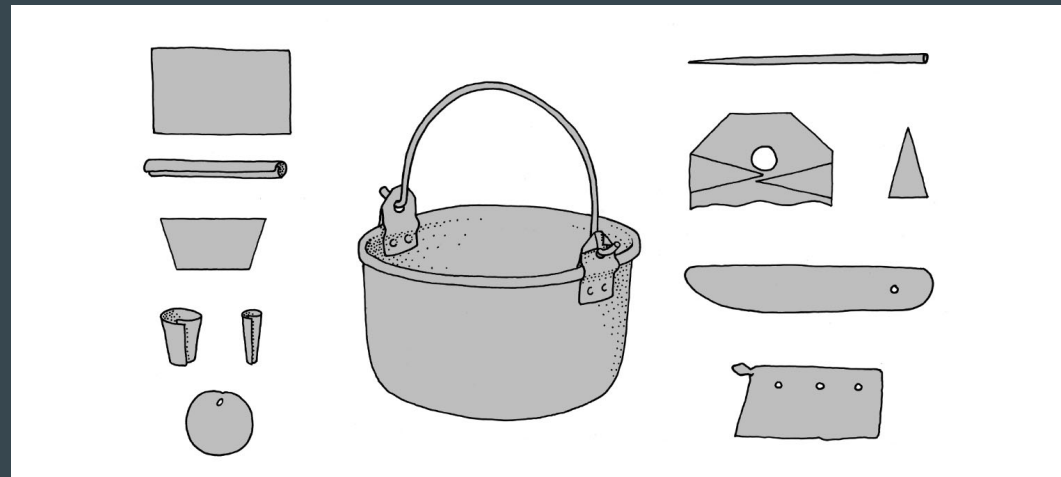
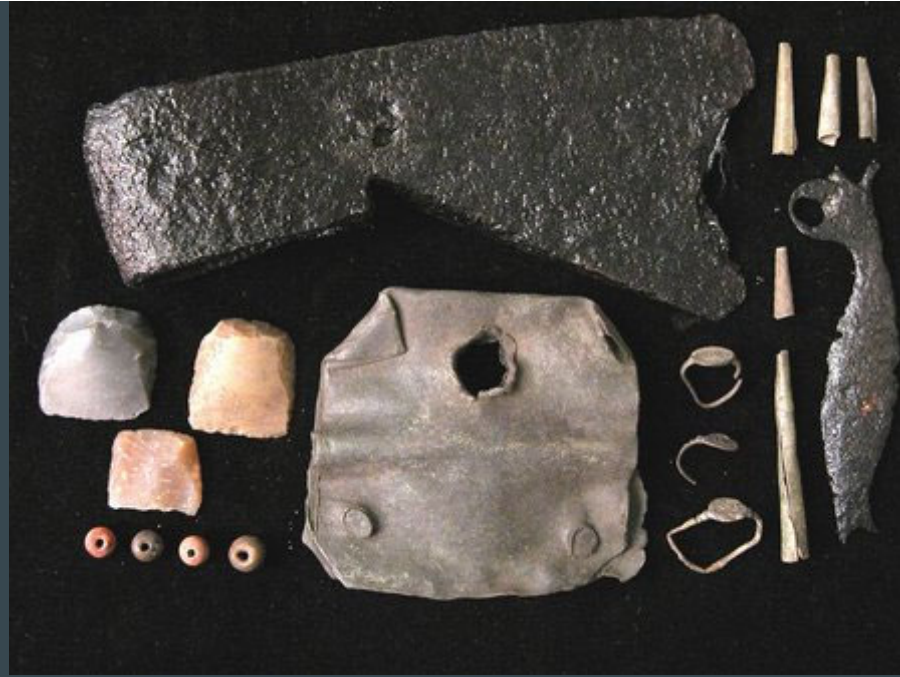


William Bradford's account of Plymouth's peace with Massasoit, written twenty-four years after the fact.

after friendly entertainment, & some gifts given him [Massasoit], they made a peace with him (which hath now continued this 24 years) in these terms—1. That neither he nor any of his, should injure or doe hurte, to any of their people
2. That if any of his, did any hurte to any of theirs, he should sent the offender, that they might punish him.
3. That if any thing were taken away from any of theirs, he should cause it to be restored, and they should doe the like to his
4. If any did unjustly warr against him, they would aide him; If any did warr against them, he should aide them.
5. He should send to his neighbours confederats, to certifie them of this, that they might not wrong them, but might be likewise comprised in the conditions of peace.
6. That when ther men came to them, they should leave their bows & arrows behind them.

In acquainting them with many things concerning ⁵⁷ of ⁵⁸ cuntry in ⁵⁹ East-part whor ho lived which was after wards profitable unto them; as also of ⁶⁰ people hear, of their names, number & strength, of their situation & distance from this place, and who was cheefe amongst them. His name was SAMASSET, he told them also of another Indian whos name was Squanto, a native of this place, who had been in England & could speake better English then him selfe. Soing after some time of entertainment, & gifts dismissed, a while after he came againe, & so more with him, & they brought againe all ⁶¹ tools that were stolen away before, and made way for ⁶² coming of their great sachem called Massasoret. Who about 4. or 5. days after came, with the choise of his friends, & other abundance with the aforesaid Squanto. With whom after friendly entertainment, & some gifts given him, they made a peace with him (which hath now continued this 24 years) In these terms. 1. That neither he nor any of his, should ~~haue~~ ⁶³ injure or doe hurte, to any of their people.
2. That if any of his, did any hurte to any of theirs, he should send ⁶⁴ offender, that they might punish him.
3. That if any thing were taken away from any of theirs, he should cause it to be restored; and they should doe ⁶⁵ like to his.
4. If any did unjustly warr against him, they would aide him; If any did warr against them, he should aide them.
5. He should send to his neighbours confederats, to certifie them of this, that they might not wrong ⁶⁶ them, but might be likewise comprised in ⁶⁷ conditions of peace.
6. That when ther men came to them, they should leave their bows & arrows behind them.
After these things he returned to his place about some 40. miles from this place, but Squanto continued with them, and was their interpreter, and was a speciall instrument, sent of god for their ⁶⁸ good, beyond their expectation, he directed them, to set their corns, wher to take fish, and to procure other comodities, and was their pilot to bring them to unknowne places for their profit, and never left them till he dyed. He was a native.







Wampum:
White from whelk
Purple from quahog



Trade beads

Wampanoag reenactment of Tisquantum (in green shirt) speaking with Ousamequin (in wampum head band).



One of the two primary source accounts of Plymouth's feast with the Wampanoags, co-authored by William Bradford, Edward Winslow, and William Brewster. It was published in this form in 1841. Footnote 3 by editor Alexander Young is the first assertion that the historic feast was the precedent for the Thanksgiving holiday.

The famous footnote

Our harvest being gotten in, our governor² sent four men on fowling, that so we might, after a special manner, rejoice together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors.³ They four in one day killed as much fowl as, with a little help beside, served the company almost a week. At which time, amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest their greatest king, Massasoyt, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted; and they went out and killed five deer,⁴ which they brought to the plantation, and bestowed on our governor, and upon the captain and others. And although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God we are so

¹ Or rather *alewives*. Morton, in his *New English Canaan*, b. ii. ch. 7, says, "There is a fish, by some called shads, by some allizes, that at the spring of the year pass up the rivers to spawn in the ponds; and are taken in such multitudes in every river that hath a pond at the end, that the inhabitants dung their
in one township a hundred acres together set with these fish, every acre taking a thousand of them;

and an acre thus dressed will produce and yield so much corn as three acres without fish." The Indians used to put two or three fishes into every corn-hill.

² Bradford.

³ This was the first Thanksgiving, the harvest festival of New England. On this occasion they no doubt feasted on the wild turkey as well as venison. See note ² on page 220.

⁴ See note ² on page 175.

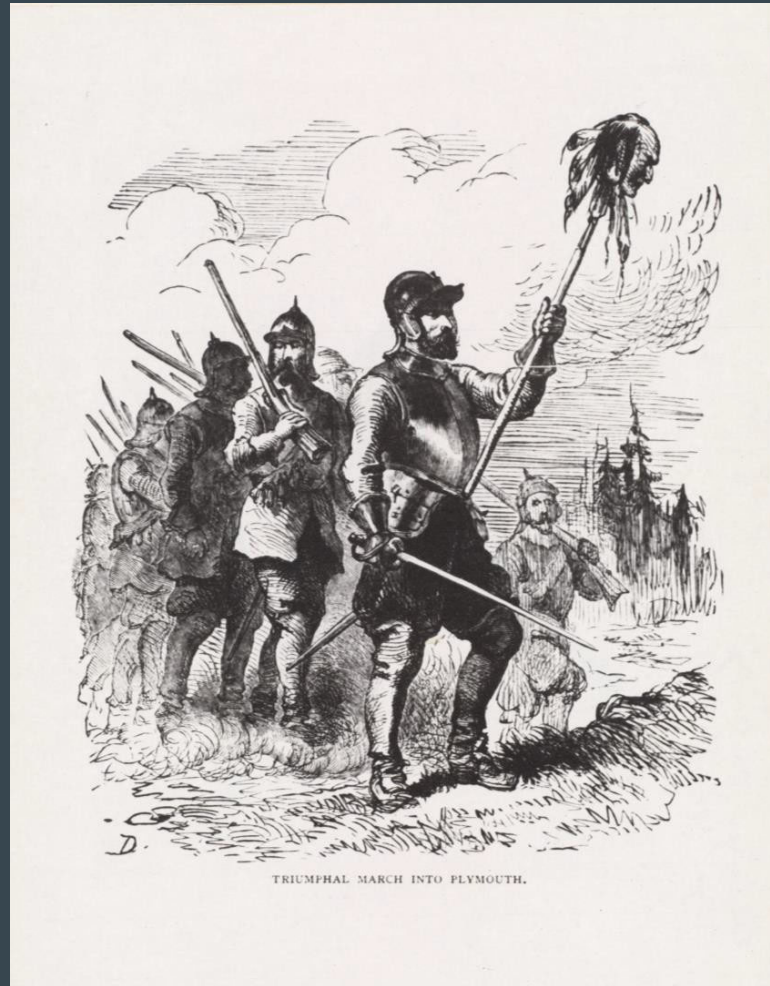
Edward Winslow

Plymouth's first diplomat to the Wampanoags. Began to learn the Wampanoag language. Slept over at Massasoit's home several times. Doctored Massasoit and many of the Wampanoags of Pokanoket in spring 1623. Afterward, Massasoit revealed a Wampanoag-Massachusetts plot to wipe out Plymouth and the trading post of Wessagusset on Massachusetts Bay.



Purported plotters

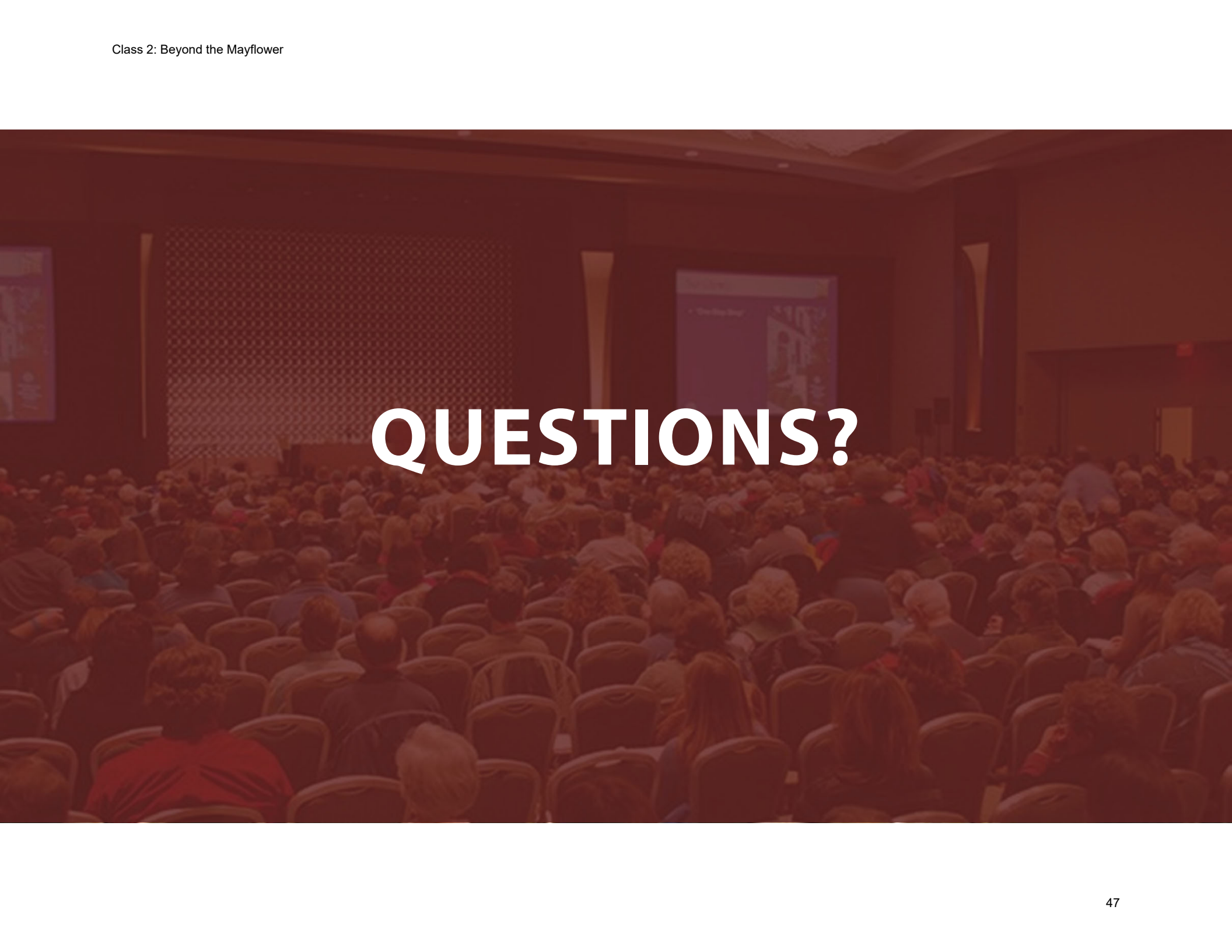




TRIUMPHAL MARCH INTO PLYMOUTH.

Celebratory imagery of 1621 Wampanoag-English treaty

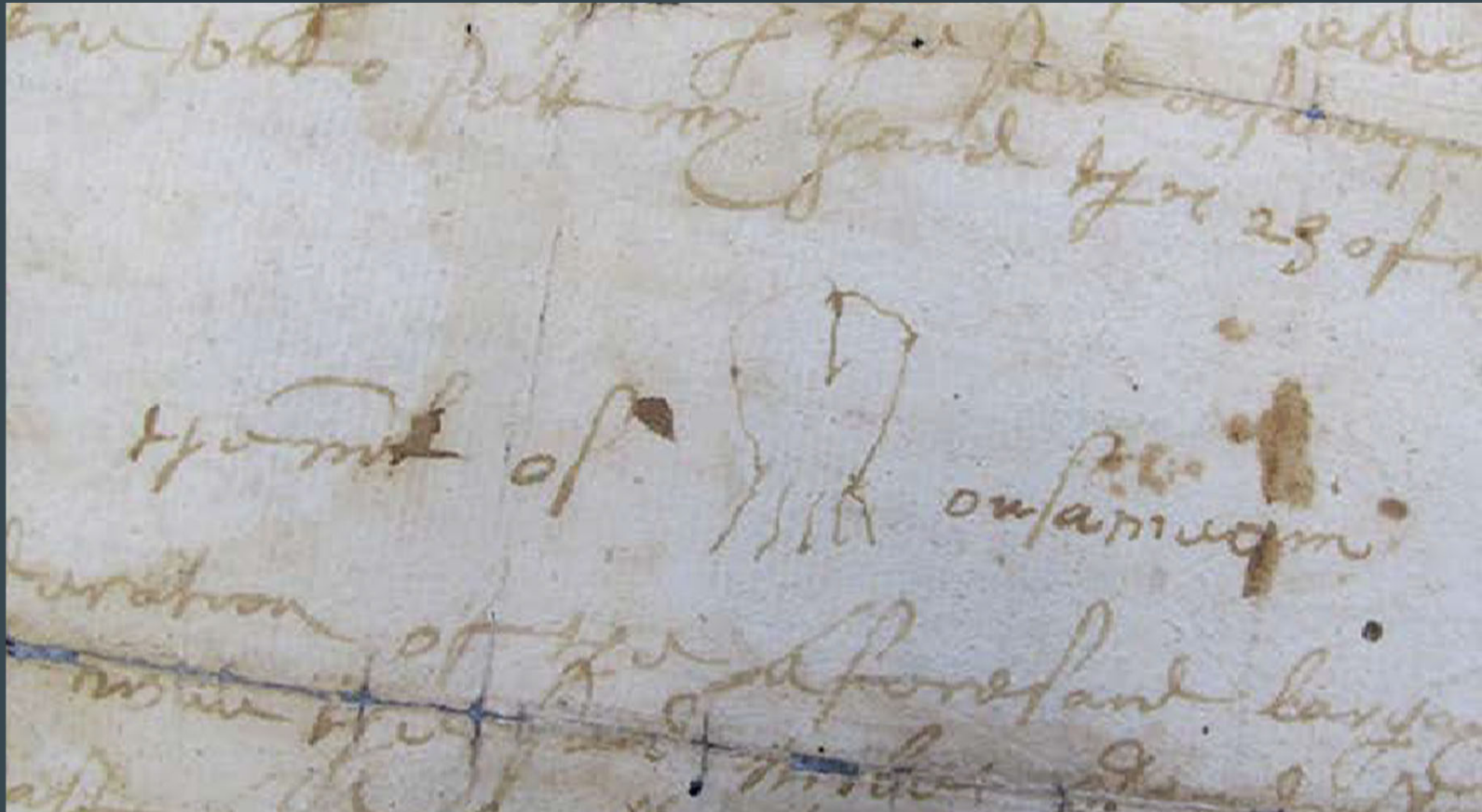


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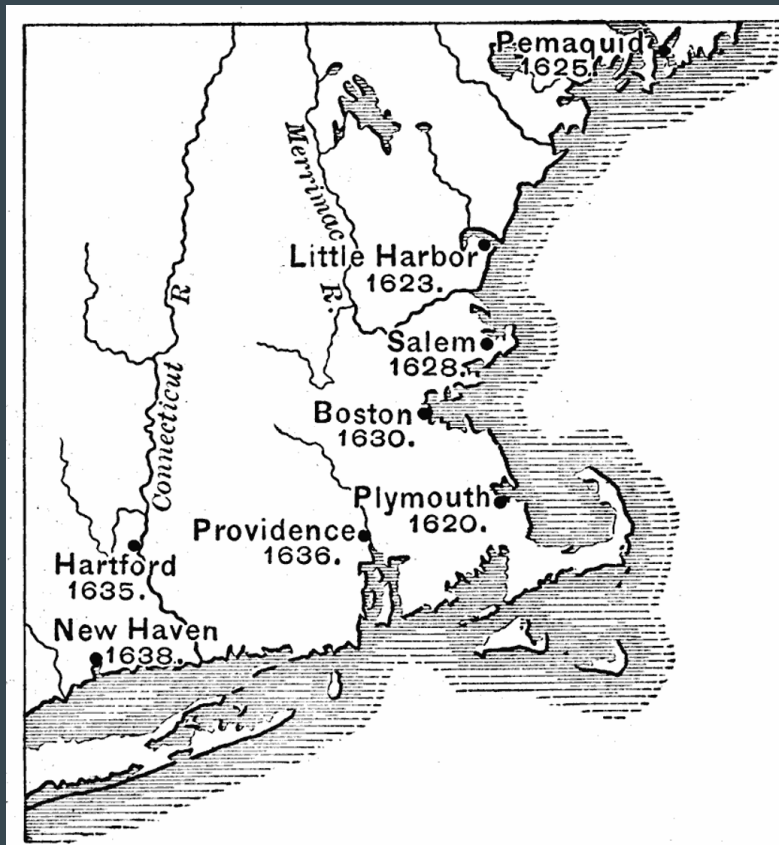
QUESTIONS?

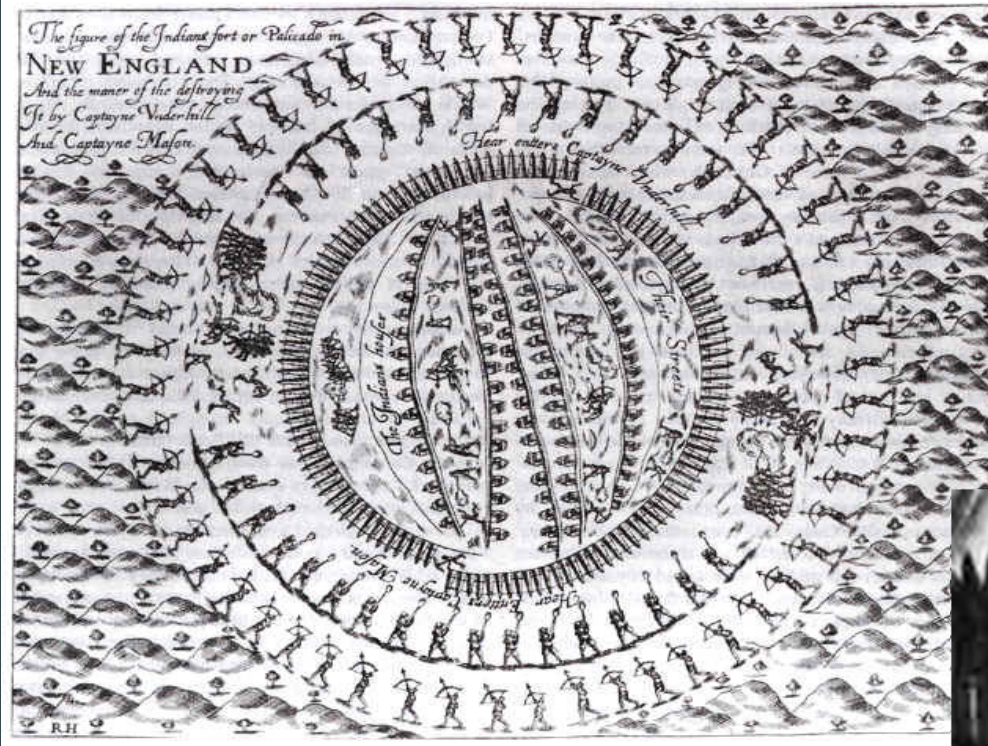
Act 3: Things Fall Apart

Mark of Ousamequin, 1649



Great Migration, 1629–40

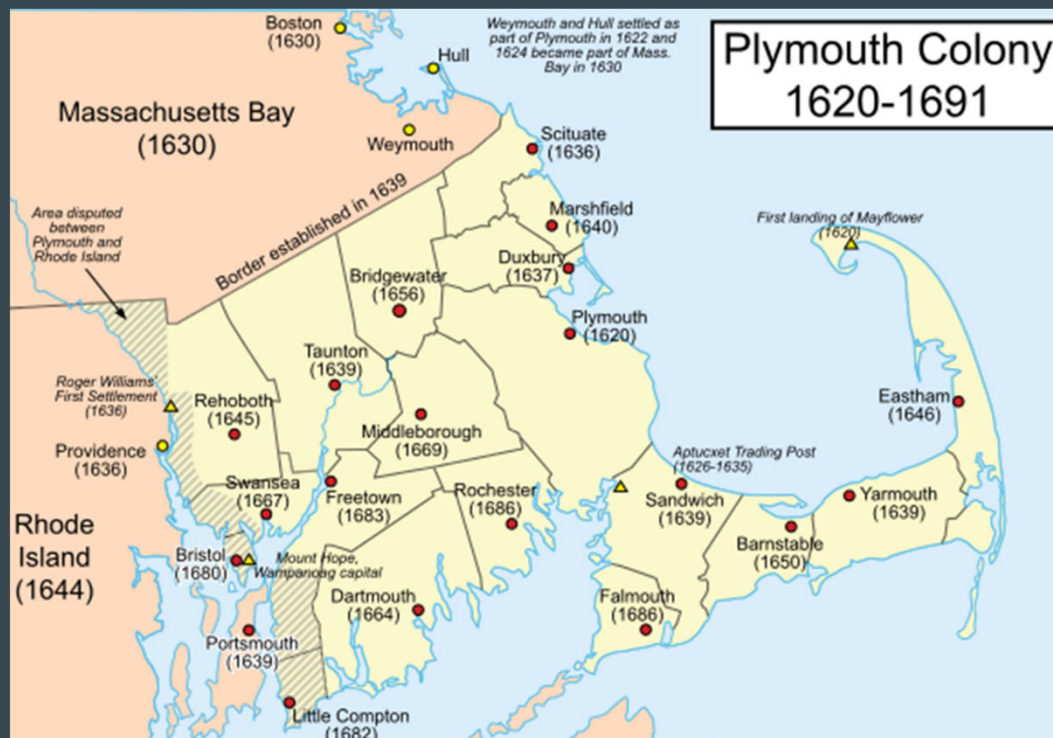




Mystic Massacre, 1637:
CT and MA English, backed by
Mohegans and Narragansetts,
slaughter hundreds of Pequots,
then hunt down and kill or
enslave the survivors.



1651 Wampanoag Land Deed & Map of Plymouth



It is known unto all men that the Indians that were
 Augustus Names are gone Indian written being of the
 blood and kindred and their names or printed writings
 upon the parchment and in witness of our beloved colony
 we have given a part of the tract of land belonging upon
 the East side of the East river of the Bay of the
 Massachusetts to the Indians that were our friends
 Richard Morris his heirs Executors Administrators and
 assigns for ever a part of land called Nantuxquiquit or
 Pogo of the Nantuxquiquit and other parcels here to be
 sold to the Indians by the Governor and Council for our
 colony our heirs Executors Administrators and assigns for ever
 all claims of right title or interest in any land west of
 the river or to the west of the land or any part or parcel
 of the land all the profits hereunto appertaining or
 any way belonging and so by the said parties given unto
 Captain Richard Morris our first approbation and full consent
 unto the purchase of the said land and so the
 Indians have received the said land from our
 colony but Captain Richard Morris is full and right out all
 controversies should out of their own proper jurisdiction
 no waives depending upon the or any larger part con-
 fining the Indians and for as much as the
 said Captain Morris of a great tract of land confining
 upon the Indians of this my beloved colony and so the
 my land under the Plymouth government to be sold to the
 Indians did not intend to put the Indians in any
 of my beloved land but my land in the colony and to be
 for the Indians of any pretended claims to the land
 should be in the colony and so the Indians have received
 to Captain Richard Morris by the Indians or the Indians
 and of the Indians and so the Indians have received
 from me or any through my hands in the colony and so
 do let to our market and so the Indians have received
 of the Indians and so the Indians have received
 witness given unto
 James Sands his mark
 Richard Bridgman
 The mark of William Smith
 The mark of Talamarton

Praying towns—some Indian towns were primarily Christian without being officially designated as such.



War scares before King Philip's War

1640–42: The Narragansett sachem Miantonomo attempts to rally Long Island Sound tribes against the English and Dutch.

1653: Niantic/Narragansett sachem Ninigret rumored to be rallying various tribes and Dutch against the English and Mohegans.

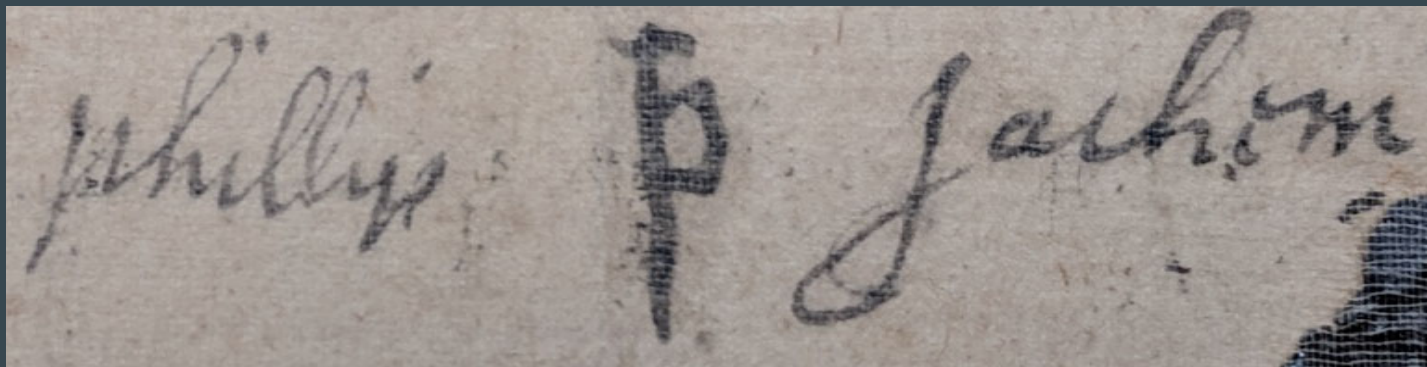
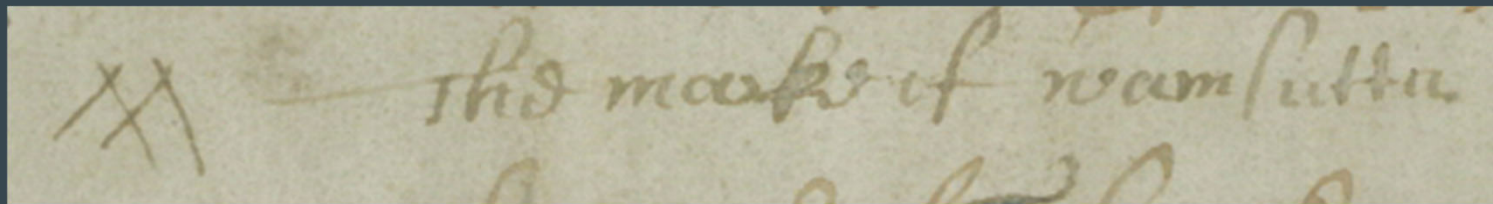
1662: Rumors that Wampanoag sachem Wamsutta is plotting with the Narragansetts against the English.

1667: Rumors that Wampanoag sachem Pumetacom is fomenting a multiribal resistance to the English.

1671: Rumors that Pumetacom is plotting with the Narragansetts against the English.



Marks of Wamsutta (1651) and Pumetacom or Philip (1668)



Assawompsett Pond: site of the death of John Sassamon

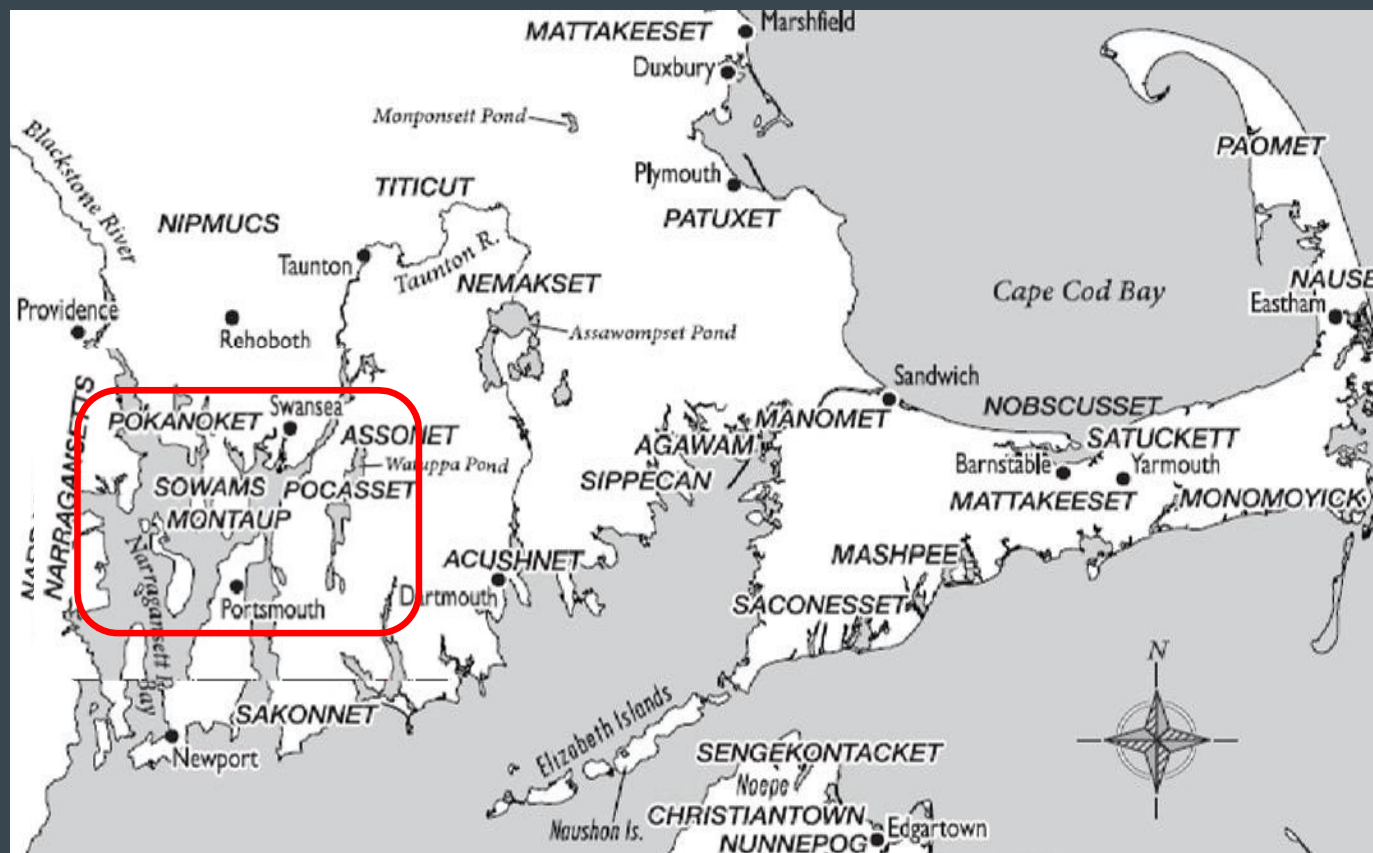


To noe more at present but
king phillip att Mount Hope
Writin by me John Sassamon

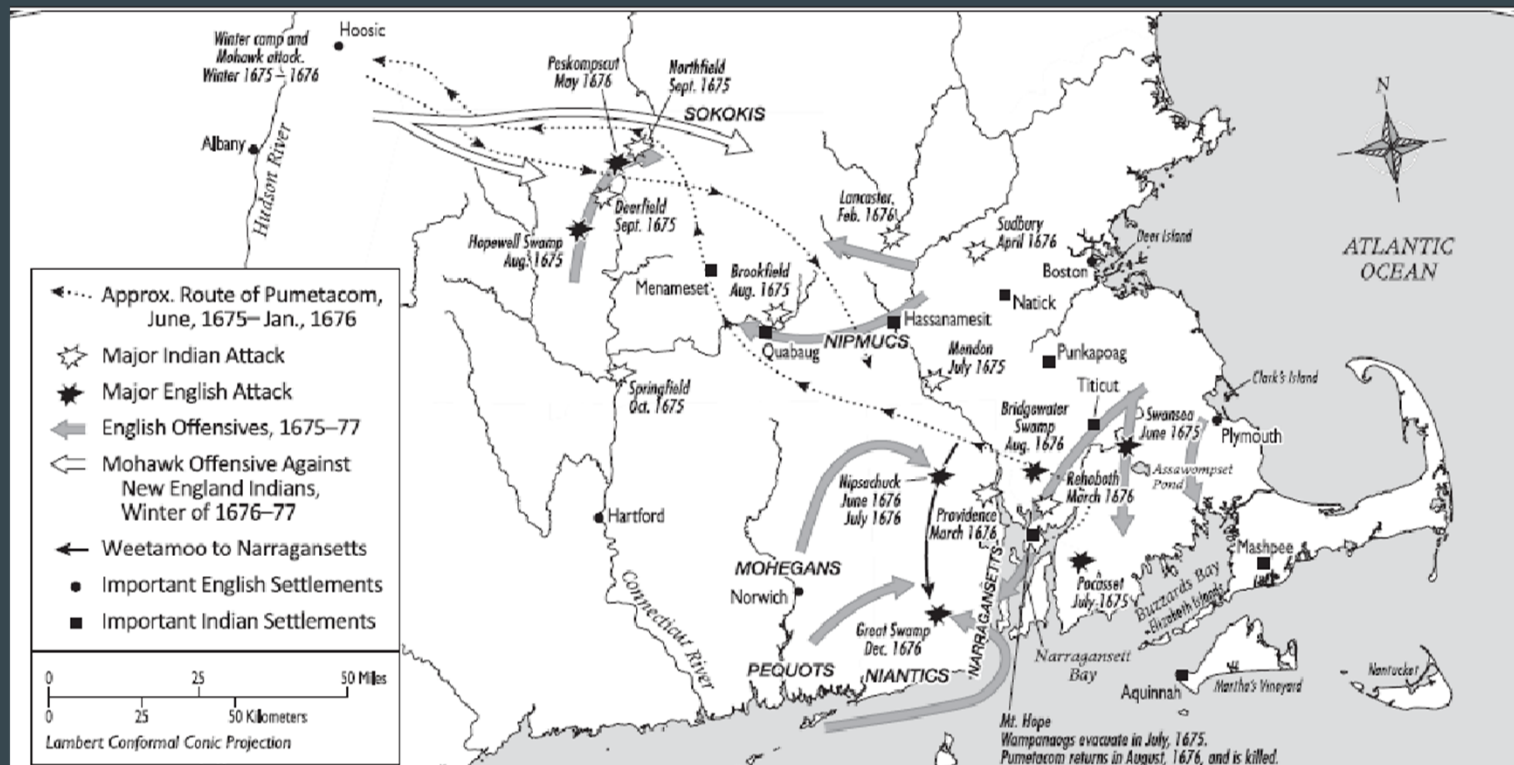




Josiah Winslow



Geographies of King Philip's War



Uncas, Mohegan sachem



Death of Pumetacom, August 1676



DEATH OF KING PHILIP.

Delus. by Pyle

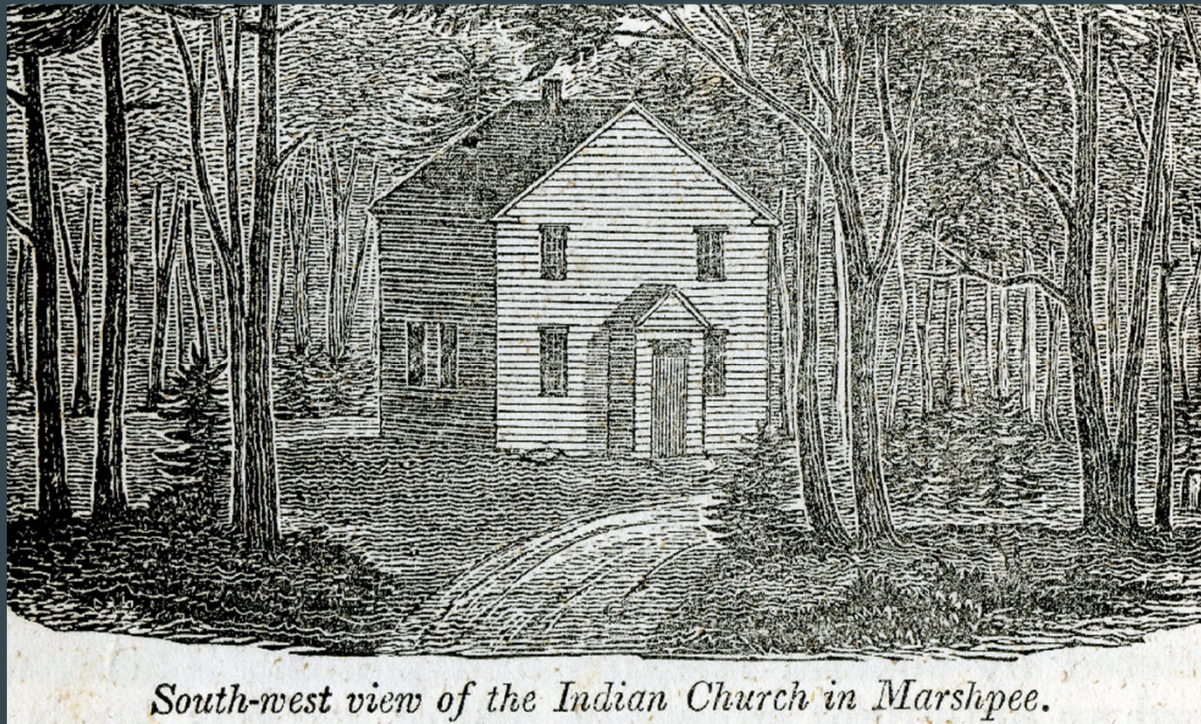
The Gates of Plymouth



John Account Book,
Martha's Vineyard,
containing dozens of
Wampanoag accounts



Old Indian Meeting House, Mashpee, where Apess preached



Plymouth County court docket, 1716

Plymouth March 7th 1716

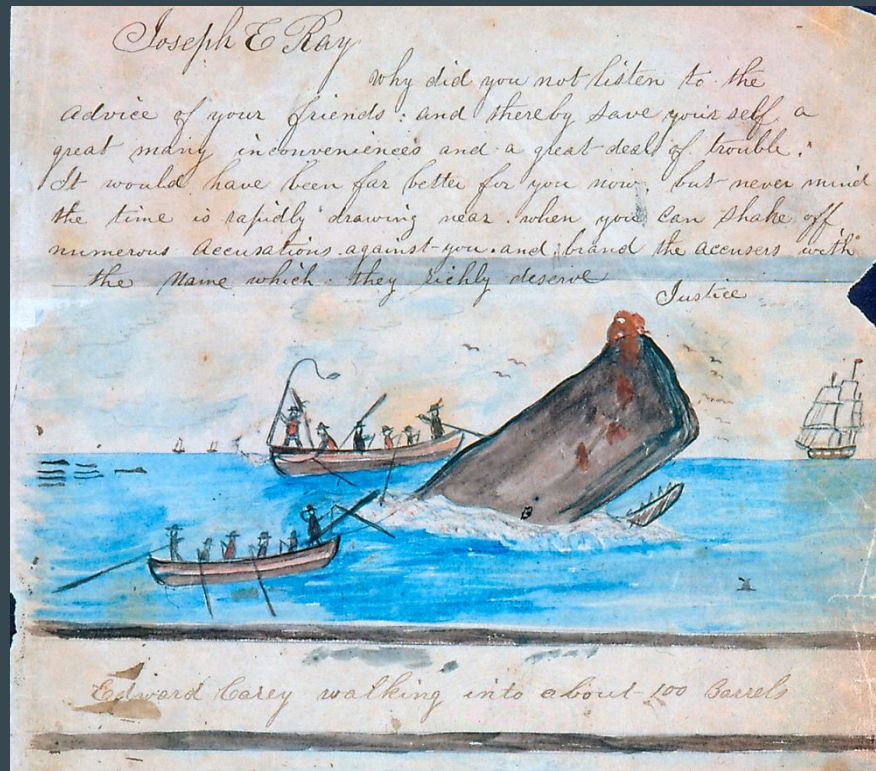
Presentments made and Exhibited By the
Grand Jury for y^e Body of y^e County of Plymouth
To his Majesty's Justices of y^e Quarter Sessions
of y^e Peace
as followeth

Witness We Present Isaac Howland Sen^r of Middleboro.
Edward Thomas for Being Disquiet with Strong Drunk at
& Santa Warden Robert. Chandoms Sind Dorand. Court. Saff
answer

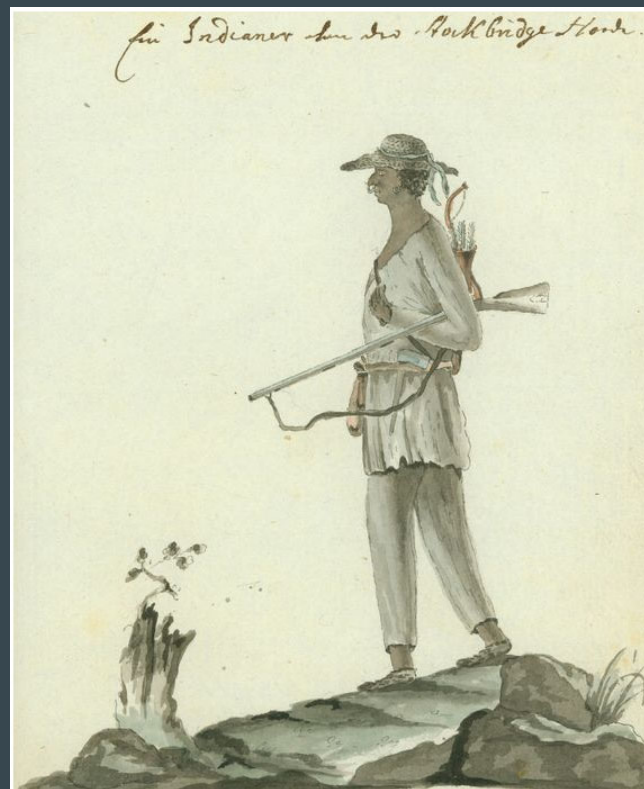
Witness We Present Edward Hall, W. Thomas Joslin
Thos. Bicknell both of Middlebury for Breach of Sabbath. For
Abraham Vainly Spending y^e Sabbath on being Swearing
Burdens. For a some time in upon y^e Fall of 1715
answer

Witness We Present Ephraime Howard of Bridgewater
Isaac Johnson miller for Breach of Law. By Taking
forornah. Howd Three Quarts of y^e Corn out of a Bushel
of Indian Corn. Sind Dorand 1715
answer

Whaling journal and photo Stephen Pharoah, a Montaukett whaler from Long Island



Stockbridge Mohican (western Mass.) during the Revolution



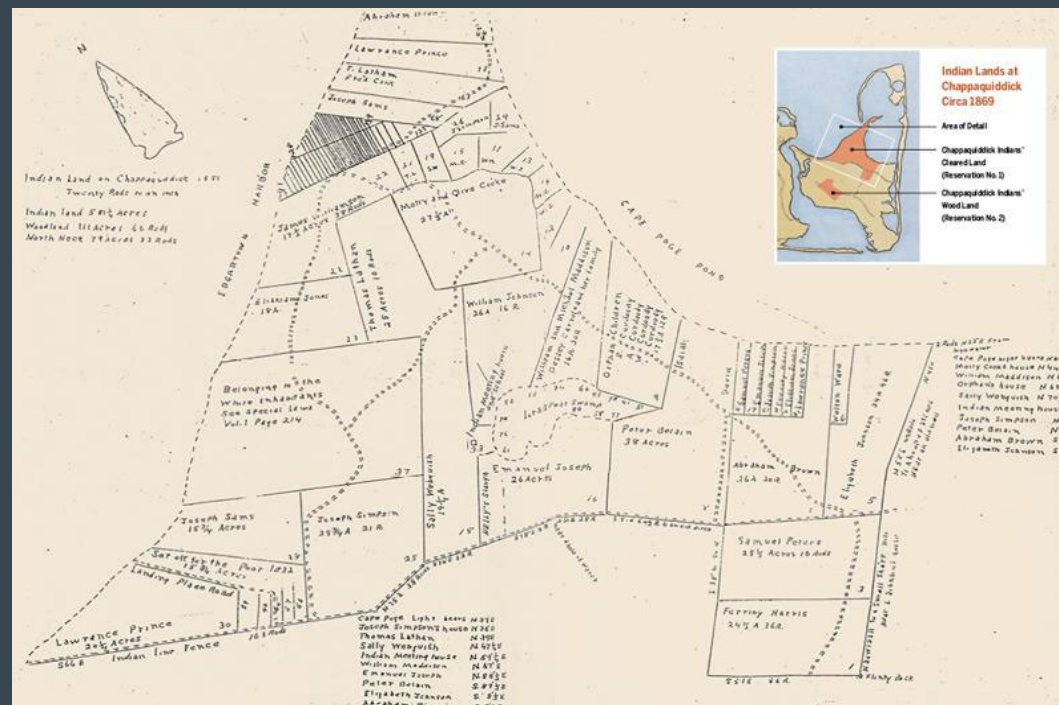
Run-away ad from the *Newport Mercury*, 1772



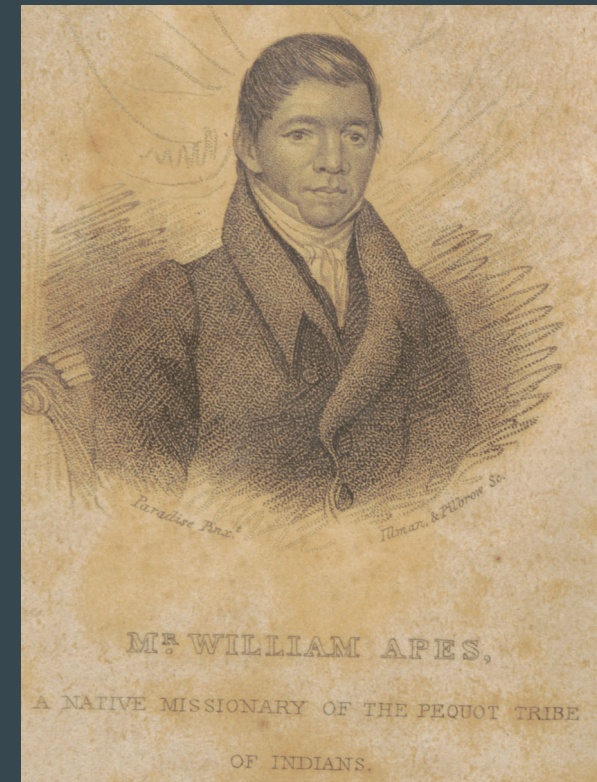
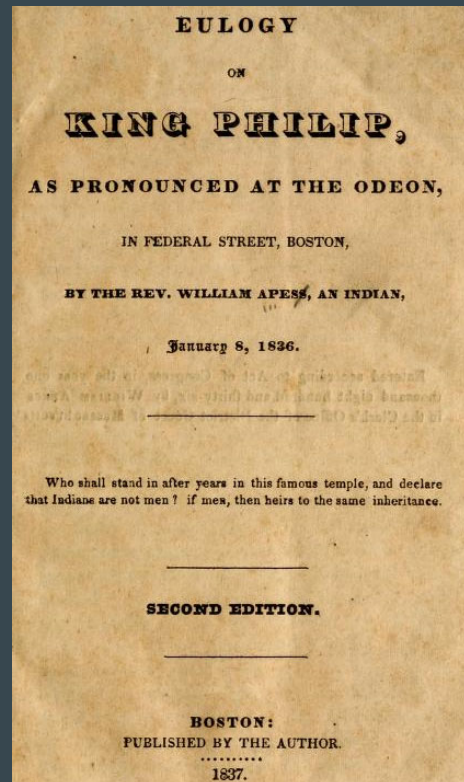
RA N away from the subscriber, in Dartmouth, on the second instant, an Indian boy, called Nathaniel Johnson, about 5 feet 4 inches high, wears his own hair, and had on a felt hat, a blue duffel outside jacket, a checked flannel shirt, a pair of striped flannel trowsers, old shoes and stockings, and carried with him two white Holland shirts, one pair of newly footed, gray yarn stockings, a white tow and linen pillow case, and a pair of dun-coloured trowsers: Whoever will return said Indian Boy to the subscriber a Dartmouth, or secure him in any of his Majesty's jails and give notice thereof, shall have three dollars reward, and all necessary charges, paid by

PHILIP SHERMAN.

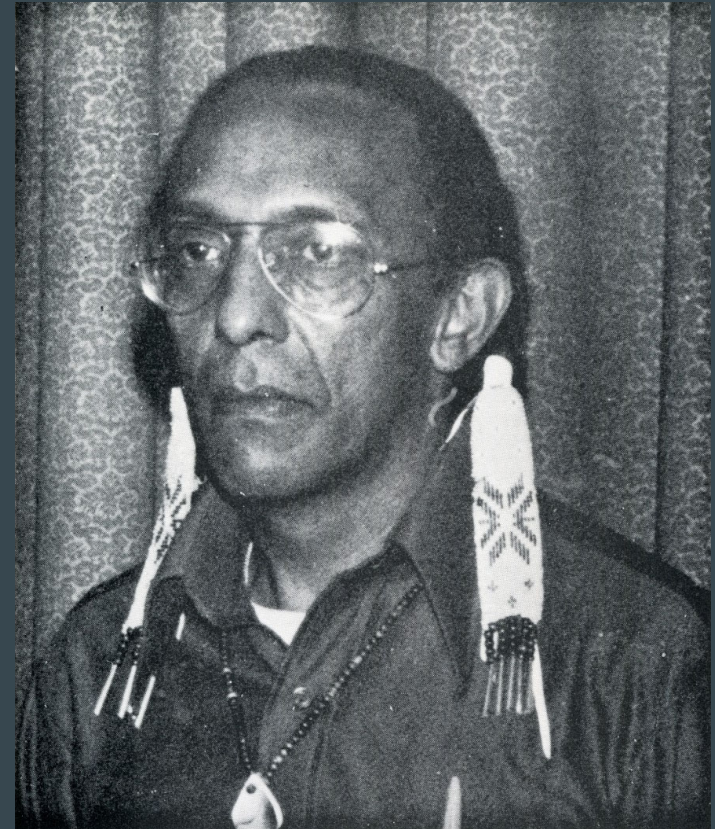
Division of Wampanoag land, Chappaquiddick, Martha's Vineyard



William Apess



Frank (Wamsutta) James



Frank James at a later National Day of Mourning





QUESTIONS?

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