



## HARD TIMES – THE SURVIVAL OF THE PEOPLE 1800-1950

The Wabanaki communities lost much of their aboriginal territory in a series of land transfers, sales, and expropriations. The state of Maine took over management of tribal assets, doling out annuities to the tribes. In spite of the loss of self-determination and many traditional ways of making a living, the Wabanaki endured the hard times. Entrepreneurial Native performers, basketmakers, and guides took to the road to peddle their wares and an image of their culture to tourists. Many other Wabanaki left reservation poverty, seeking employment in Northeastern urban areas. Postcard, Ferry to Indian Island.



### 1940-1945

Many Wabanaki serve in the U.S. and Canadian armed forces during World War II. During WWII, Micmac basketmaker Donald Sanipass works in a Canadian munitions factory building parts for the Mosquito Bomber. At the time, Donald was 17 years old and New Brunswick's lightweight boxing champion. Photo of Donald at right courtesy Bob Noonan.



### 1941

In 1941, Passamaquoddy and Penobscot tribal representatives are ousted from the Hall of the State House of Representatives. In 1975, seating and speaking privileges are restored. What led to the ousting? Tension and anti-Indian feelings in the State House concerning the roles and rights of the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot tribal representatives had been brewing for the years leading up to this event.

In 1939, a representative from Farmington motioned for a pay increase for tribal representatives from \$200 a year to \$600 a year, or, the same pay as other representatives. His motion was rejected 92 to 29.

In 1941, a bill titled "An Act Permitting Indians to Vote in State Elections" was presented before the Legislature—although all Native people had been made citizens of the United

States in 1924 by an act of Congress, the state of Maine had not granted Wabanaki people the right to vote in state or federal elections. After the refusal of the legislature to vote on the bill, it was withdrawn from consideration.

As the anti-Indian feelings worsened throughout 1941, the Legislature voted to kick the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot representatives out of their seats in the House. Even though the Indian representatives could no longer address the legislature nor receive payment to attend, they still came to the sessions in Augusta, sometimes staying in a nearby park.

In 1975, after a lengthy debate filled with much of the same anti-Indian feelings as before, the Legislature voted 107 to 40 to reinstate the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot tribal representatives' seats and speaking privileges. Tribal representatives can serve on committees, sponsor bills, and address the legislature, but cannot vote.

### **1935**

Department of Interior Memorandum to Commissioner, BIA

A Department of the Interior report to the Commissioner, Bureau of Indian Affairs, describes deplorable health conditions of Passamaquoddy people:

The undernourished bodies of the tribal members are easy prey for tuberculosis and apparently, no attempt is made to weed out suspect cases to give proper treatment. A boy of 19 years has been invalid since he was a child. He suffered from infantile paralysis and did not receive proper medical attention. No effort was made on part of the State authorities to have given him treatment in a hospital and he spent his life enduring physical and mental suffering without a chance. Now his frail wasted body cannot be made strong because of years of neglect.

The State pays for medical aid rendered to the Tribe, with the exception of maternity cases. I wonder why the mothers and their babies are not given the best of care at the expense of the State or their expenses paid out of the Tribal funds. Unsanitary living conditions and impure water from condemned wells are not conducive to good health. In 1934, State authorities had done nothing about the water supply and as a result typhoid fever and pneumonia were prevalent during the year and the death rate was high, as many as 20 members of the Tribe are listed as dead.

The small dwellings in which they live are so old and in need of repair that the Indians suffer from the cold in winter. There are holes in the roofs and sides and windowpanes are broken in some. In the case of one large family, the sleeping quarters are inadequate and 5 older boys and girls are obliged to sleep in one small room. Certain families do not have beds, not even mattresses to put on the floor on which to sleep.

Another contributing element to the unhealthy condition of so many in this community is the fact that for many years they have been using aniline dyes in the basket making.

### 1931

*The Handicrafts of the Modern Indians of Maine* is published by the Abbe Museum, documenting the Wheelwright basketry collection and the continuity of traditional arts and crafts by Wabanaki people. One of the most interesting objects included in the publication is the crooked knife.

### [Learn more \(Appendix A\)](#)



Crooked Knife, made in the woods by Sebattus Solomon about 1863 shown in *The Handicrafts of the Modern Indians of Maine*.  
Abbe Museum Collections

### 1930

Molly Spotted Elk, Penobscot, stars in *The Silent Enemy*, a docu-drama about Ojibwe (Anishinabe) struggling to survive in wintertime. The film is unique for its adherence to factual representations of Native American societies and for casting Native Americans. In the image at right are Molly Spotted Elk, Long Lance, and Cheeka. From the “How the Silent Enemy was Made” souvenir booklet.



### 1929

Pleasant Point Reservation receives electric lights. A contemporary account from *The Eastport Sentinel* newspaper:

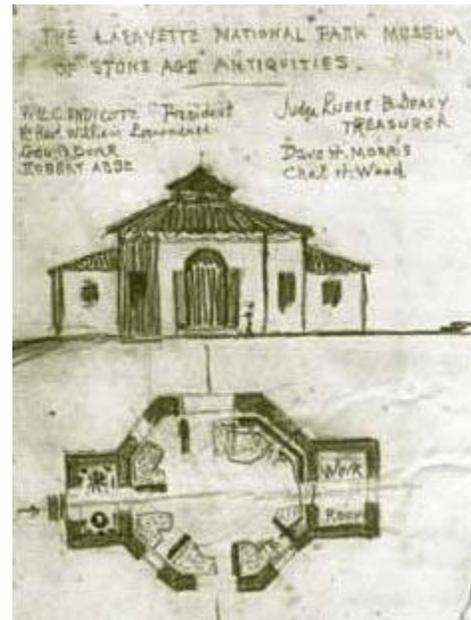
“The families of the Passamaquoddy Tribe can now toss away their obsolete tallow candles and kerosene lamps as electricity has been introduced into their reservation on the St. Croix River. It was no great expense for poles and wiring as the State highway is less than 2 miles from the reservation. Even the town of Perry, 2 miles from the reservation did not have electric lights installed

until late last fall and the country roads were then properly lighted for the first time and in many of the Perry farm houses and country stores electricity is now enjoyed." Courtesy of Donald Soctomah.

### [Learn More \(Appendix B\)](#)

#### **1928: Abbe Museum at Sieur de Monts Spring Opens**

The opening of the Abbe Museum increases local interest in archaeology, leading to the Museum's first excavation in Frenchman Bay. In 1929, the first in a series of Abbe Museum research bulletins is published on the project. At right is an Architectural sketch of museum by Dr. Robert Abbe.



#### **1924**

Native people become United States citizens by an Act of Congress, but in Maine and many other states they are not given the right to vote in either state or federal elections. Many Native people reject citizenship, refusing to give up their tribal sovereignty.

#### **1920**

The Passamaquoddy Tribe petitions Maine Governor Carl Milliken to support the Tribe's exemption from United States citizenship.

*"We, the undersigned members of the Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians, humbly beg the State of Maine to use her influence against making Indians citizens of the United States, for the following reasons... We are satisfied with our lot as Indians. The Passamaquoddy Tribe is always loyal to America. In the Revolutionary War, the Passamaquoddy Tribe gave her whole strength for the cause. We fought under Col. Allan. In his speech when the Massachusetts Congress voted for thanks, Col. Allan said in part; "These Indians who have been in the service of the United States shall be taken care of in a fatherly way, by the United States, and they shall enjoy every right and privilege." In the Civil War we raised a company of 14 men, and in the World War we raised a company of 24 men out of our male population of 100. Please use your kind influence. If the law be already passed, let us be exempt from it."*

A petition signed by 64 Passamaquoddy presented to Maine Governor Carl Milliken by Passamaquoddy Governor William Neptune, Feb.29, 1920, from the Maine State Archives.

Courtesy of Donald Soctomah.

### **1914-1918**

Many Wabanaki serve in the U.S. and Canadian armed forces during World War I. The following excerpt is from "The Indian Heroes of Patriotic Pleasant Point World War I-Full Quota Volunteered."

August 6, 1919

“Perhaps nowhere else in the world not even in our good old USA did an entire village contribute its quota of soldiers to the world war independent of conscription, as did the Passamaquoddy Indian Tribe located at Pleasant Point, Perry, Maine. The town of Perry, Washington County, displays a single gold star on the service flag, for enlisted man Roger Sullivan, a mere lad. But from the Indian reservation, located at Pleasant Point went forth 37 native men, eager to do their bit, scornful of the tardy draft; 15 enlisted in Canadian ranks before our colors challenged the German flag, 9 entered on the struggle under the Army Stars and Stripes, and the others are with the Navy. On the service flag before the little Tribal chapel the crimson of five proud stars has already turned to shining gold. Two boys linger in France, others yet sail the seas, one is in the hospital, and three "by the skin of their teeth" were returned with battle-scarred Company 26.

A call at the gubernatorial home reveals Tribal Governor William Neptune, a middle-aged man possible with a little white blood, but speaks direct English. When approached on the subject of his son who claimed burial in France, there is no demonstration of grief. The letters of his boy are without comment laid in the inquirer's hand, and only silence betrays the heartache of him and of the lad's mother- a daughter of a white woman. There is another boy left, and three girls, but Moses Neptune, enlisting at 19, "while dead, yet speaking through the correspondence that was never allowed to lag till his pencil was stilled forever. His handwriting is uncommonly graceful and legible, and he urged his people 'You must not let a week go by if you can help it. Every chance I get I always write.'"

Courtesy Donald Socomah.

To the Tribal settlement came this letter from the company chaplain:

"Dear Governor Neptune: Your son gave his young life for freedom on the day the Armistice was signed... "

### [Read the rest of the letter \(Appendix C\)](#)

#### **Corpus Christi Day, 1913**

A contemporary account from *The Eastport Sentinel* newspaper, courtesy of Donald Soctomah:

The greatest event of the entire Passamaquoddy Tribe is the celebration of Corpus Christi Day conducted Thursday, June 21. The day was clear and warm and 400 strangers visited the reservation, making trips from many towns in Washington County in autos and trains. There were prominent Indians from Indian Township and Old Town as they are closely related from frequent marriages. American flags were conspicuous in all parts of the village, and the large church flag occupied a prominent place near St. Anne's \$10,000 church and handsome convent. All doors were thrown wide open for the annual festival and a welcome was given to white visitors. Although the average house is small, and yet there are a few pianos and phonographs owned by the natives and they were not overlooked on Thursday. Chief Sopiell Mitchell, the aged chieftain and leader of the Tribe, extending the keys to the village to all visitors. The famed Passamaquoddy brass band, under the leadership of Professor Bennett Francis, known as one of the best solo clarinet players of Maine, furnished music during the day. Headed by Sabattus Mitchell as Marshall; Andrew Lola carrying a large cross; Indian brass band; Rev. Sullivan carried the Blessed Sacrament under the canopy held up by 4 altar boys; Sisters of Mercy, followed by numbers of Indian girls and boys from the convent school and church; then the men and women villagers. There were picturesque native costumes conspicuous during the day. It was the day of rest for the Tribe, although the afternoon was given over to sports and games. Several stores in the village carried on a thriving business in refreshments; the musicians gave several selections on the village green, and then followed an interesting ballgame on the diamond a short distance from the streets. It was a novelty for many, and Indians composed the teams. They were dressed in regular suits. It was late in the afternoon when the annual Corpus Christi came to an end, and will go on file as a successful and enjoyable event among the Passamaquoddy Tribe, who are devout Catholics, a quiet and peaceful Tribe of citizens who live among themselves and expect no favors but their just dues from the State. One of the conspicuous Indians during the day was Chief John Nicholas, who celebrated his 102nd birthday on June 15th.

## 1912

Native performers and crafters sell images of themselves in regalia and costumes. Postcards are popular souvenirs and Native entrepreneurs capitalized on the public's interest in Native Americana.



Surrounded by a growing cash economy and no longer able to survive on hunting and gathering, Wabanaki women and men struggled to get by while trying to hold onto at least some of their traditional liberty. Avoiding the miserable confines of factory jobs requiring long hours for low wages, they worked independently, making and selling crafts, especially moosehide moccasins used in logging camps and woodsplint baskets used for harvesting and storage. Most Wabanaki men continued to hunt to feed their families. Many took up logging and river driving, which allowed them to spend their days in the familiar setting of the forest. Some began farming small reservation plots to earn government crop bounties.

Some Wabanaki women and men capitalized on the white society's growing romantic fascination with the primitive wilderness that was being destroyed by "progress." Marketing themselves as Indian doctors or performers, they took to the road as entertainers in various venues, including medicine shows. Wabanakis who made a living as small-town entertainers were treated as backward, county fair material. Those who succeeded in the greater venues of Wild West shows and films found themselves forced to portray Plains Indian stereotypes wildly popular with the American public.

Quite a few Wabanaki men became hunting and fishing guides, and many women began making fancy woodsplint and sweetgrass baskets designed specifically to suit the Victorian tastes of well-to-do visitors. Most Wabanaki ventured to Maine's coastal and lakeside resorts each summer to market their wares. Everyone knew that sales increased if one dressed in Indian costume or had their children perform an Indian dance or song.



By the end of the century, most Wabanaki households in the state depended on basketry as their primary source of income—and women were the major makers and marketers of the craft. Despite hard work, many suffered from poverty.

## Oral Tradition: How Glooskap left the World

In the beginning, there was just the sea and the forest - no people and no animals. Then Koluskap came. He possessed great magic. Out of the rocks, he made the Mihkomuwehsisok, small people who dwelt among the rocks and made wonderful music on the flute. Next

Koluskap made the people. Wiith his bow he shot arrows into the trunks of Ash trees. Out of the trees stepped men and women. They were strong and graceful people with light brown skin and shining black hair. Koluskap called them Wabanaki, people of the dawn.

Adapted from The Algonquin Legends of New England  
by Charles G. Leland, 1884

### **1912**

Salmon spear-fishing is outlawed by the state, eliminating an important traditional hunting practice for the Wabanaki. The image at right shows Joe Piel Pole, Passamaquoddy, spearfishing circa 1910, courtesy of Archives & Special Collections, Harriet Irving Library, Univ. of New Brunswick.



[Read more about fishing rights \(Appendix D\)](#)

### **1910**

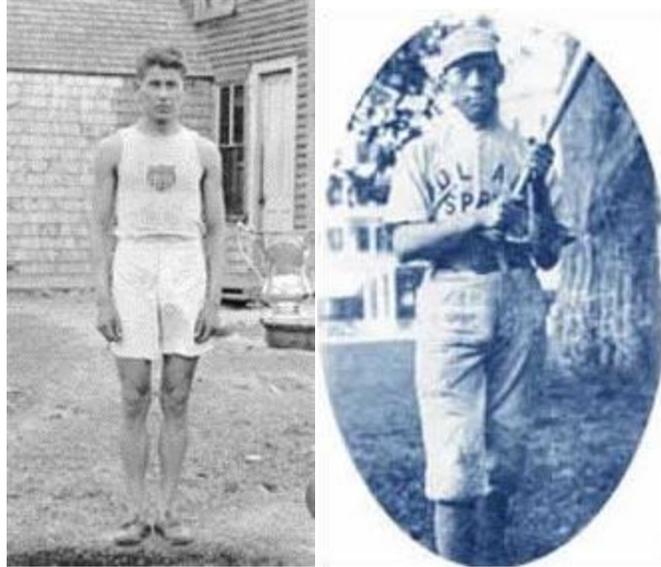
Census indicates for Passamaquoddy and Penobscot populations near all-time lows.

[Read more Wabanaki population shifts \(Appendix E\)](#)

### **1897**

Louis Sockalexis, Penobscot, joins the Cleveland Spiders baseball team in 1897. As a rookie, he bats .331.

His cousin, Andrew Sockalexis, Penobscot, finished second at two Boston Marathons (1912 and 1913) and placed fourth at the Stockholm Olympics in 1912. In 2000 Andrew and Louis were inducted into the American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame, Tulsa, Oklahoma.



Courtesy of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum

**1887**

Lewis Mitchell, Passamaquoddy, speaks to the Maine State Legislature, decrying the state's failure to live up to its treaty obligations.

[Read the entire speech \(Appendix F\)](#)

**1884**

Electric lights come to Bar Harbor, one of the largest resort communities on the east coast and one of the primary summer markets for Natives selling their wares. The postcard at right shows the Indian encampment in Bar Harbor circa 1890



**1881**

The first money order from Bar Harbor is sent by a Passamaquoddy Indian to Eastport.

**1881**

Big Thunder, the famous Indian Chief, gave an exhibition at the pavilion on West Street last evening. He was supported by his wife and family. The exhibition consisted of an exemplification of Indian customs and ceremonies. Image at right courtesy of the Mt. Desert Herald documents the



Native summer community.

### [Learn More \(Appendix G\)](#)

#### **1879: "Kill the Indian and save the man."**

The U.S. government establishes the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, the first of many co-educational, government funded, residential schools designed to assimilate Native peoples into the mainstream of American society. Carlisle's founder, Henry Pratt, coined the phrase "Kill the Indian and save the man."

Carlisle's rosters include 5 Abenaki, 8 Passamaquoddy, and 44 Penobscot students.

#### **1872**

The Wabanaki Alliance, a political alliance of tribes in the northeast that existed for several hundred years, is effectively dissolved when the Penobscots and Passamaquoddies withdraw from the Great Council Fire Alliance.

#### **1870**

Joseph Attien (1830 –1870) drowned while working as a log driver on the Penobscot River. Like many Penobscot men of his time, he earned seasonal wages working on the river drives.

Mr. Attien acted as Henry David Thoreau's guide on Thoreau's second trip to the north Maine woods in 1853. He also served as Governor of the Penobscot Tribe from 1862 to 1869.



#### **1860s**

Civil War veteran Peter Mitchell, Passamaquoddy served in the 7th Maine Volunteer Regiment. His widow, Alice, finally received his pension in 1902, 37 years after his death, and built herself a new house at Pleasant Point. Image at right courtesy of Joseph Nicholas, Waponahki Museum.



#### **1842**

International boundary established between Maine and Canada after the Aroostook War divides Passamaquoddy and Maliseet territory.

### 1840

Most Passamaquoddy tribal homes are wooden structures with only a few wigwams left.

### 1833

Maine sells about 100,000 acres of Penobscot tribal lands, leaving the tribe with less than 5,000 acres and opening the Penobscot Valley for large-scale lumbering.

### 1821

Deacon Sockabasin lives in the only wooden framed home at Pleasant Point Passamaquoddy Reservation.

### 1820

Maine becomes a state and assumes responsibility for the Indian communities. The annuity supplied to each tribe as their treaty provision includes: 500 bu corn, 15 ba wheat flour, 7 ba clear pork, 1 hogshead molasses, 100 yards broadcloth, 1 year to be red, the next blue, 50 good blankets, 100 lb gunpowder, 400 lb shot, 6 boxes chocolate, 150 lb tobacco, \$50 in silver.

Annuity cloth: the black, red or blue cloth annually given to Native people as part of the State of Maine's treaty responsibilities.

### [View clothing made with annuity cloth \(Appendix H\)](#)

#### 1812: War of 1812

This image of a young Passamaquoddy woman depicts her in traditional dress of the time. She wears a peaked cap and dress made from red trade cloth and sewn with glass beads and silk ribbon. Notice the soldiers drilling on the parade ground through the window.



She was probably painted by an English officer during the War of 1812. Both Great Britain and the United States claimed the Eastport region. The British Navy seized the fort without a shot being fired. They held it for four years until 1818. Portrait at right of Denny Soccabeson, Passamaquoddy, painted in 1817 by Lt. Villars at Ft. Sullivan, Eastport, Maine. Courtesy of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum, Williamsburg, VA.

## APPENDIX A

### **The Origin of the Crooked Knife**

Archaeologists believe that before trade with Europeans, Native people used blades made from beaver teeth in crooked knives.

Native people quickly switched to metal blades as soon as they became available through trade. After the arrival of Europeans, there are many written descriptions of Native people using crooked knives with iron blades.

Native people used crooked knives for whittling and scraping cedar, pine and spruce. Crooked knives were also used for working birchbark and spruce root. They were used everywhere in the forested areas of North America, across Canada and into the northern subarctic forests from Quebec west to Alaska.

### **At the Junction of Two Worlds**

As quickly as Native people switched to iron blades for their crooked knives Europeans adopted the crooked knife for their own. Voyageurs, trappers, traders and soldiers found crooked knives so useful they made them one of their basic tools.

The exchange of ideas also applied to the decorated knife handles. The French fleur de lis, Irish shamrock and Scandinavian floral designs were first used by immigrants and then borrowed by Native artists.

This intertwining of North American and European cultures adds another dimension to crooked knives as they became splendid examples of cultural exchange.

## APPENDIX B

### **Poverty on Reservations**

When Maine separated from Massachusetts and became a state in 1821, it took over Massachusetts's treaty obligations and responsibility for the Indian communities. The state of Maine controlled the tribes' money and resources—they held them in "trust." "Indian agents" were assigned by the state to oversee the Native communities and to manage tribal money. The State of Maine did not allow Native people to manage their own money and resources. For instance, whenever money needed to be spent on the reservation the Indian Agent had to approve the project and give permission for their money to be spent.

Each week, the Indian agent gave each family a stipend to buy food, clothing, firewood and other necessities. This money belonged to the Native people, not to the State or to the Indian agent, but they were not allowed to have control over it! Many times the money given for a family's necessities was far less than the necessities cost. For instance, in 1910, a cord of wood cost between \$4 and \$9, but only \$3 was given to widows for their winter supply of wood.

Over the next 150 years, the State of Maine illegally and without permission from the tribes sold off, leased and transferred thousands of acres of Native land. The State also illegally authorized the harvesting and sale of Native timber and hay—and sold the timber and firewood back to the Native communities. In some cases, the State added money to the trust funds for the illegal sale of land and resources. In other cases, no payments were made. Interest on the deposits to these funds was supposed to be paid at six percent per year. From 1859 until 1969 no interest was ever paid to the tribes. Instead, it went to the Indian agents.

Without control over their own money and tribal resources, Native people suffered. Reservations were places of extreme poverty. Native language was outlawed through an act of the State Legislature. Sickesses such as tuberculosis, measles and whooping cough swept through the communities. Native people were forced to learn farming and raise crops. Native children attended convent schools run by nuns and taught in English. In most cases, the only buildings recommended by the Indian agents for repair were the churches, schoolhouses and homes for nuns and priests. Indian agents remained in control of tribal resources and money until the mid-1970s.

## APPENDIX C

### **A Letter Home**

May 10, 1918

To the Tribal settlement came this letter from the company chaplain:

"Dear Governor Neptune: Your son gave his young life for freedom on the day the Armistice was signed. He was in the last great drive, at the so-called second battle of Verdun. Tenderly we carried the bodies to a beautiful spot on the hillside and laid your boy with ten of his companions to rest. The entire battalion gathered around them. The American flag was spread over them, while touchingly and fitting the band played 'Nearer, my god to thee.' After the Christian service, the army guns salute was fired and the bugler blew Taps, the call in the army which summons soldiers to rest. Just as the service was finished we noticed 3 German officers coming, flying the white flag of surrender. It was a most fitting close; the very thing for which your son and his comrades had given their lives had come to pass. I am sure that from Heaven they looked and saw that they had not lived in vain. We marked their graves with crosses, and the cemetery with a large white cross that could be easily seen from a distance, and sent the exact location to Washington. "That is a good letter", was the quiet comment of Governor Neptune and turned back to re-read another paragraph of Moses' last letter. "I am glad the service flag is raised and that our people went to Holy Communion for soldiers in the army. I am proud of my people; school children and all who help."

From "Passamaquoddy at the Turn of the Century 1890-1920 Tribal Life and Times in Maine and New Brunswick," Donald Soctomah, 2002.

## APPENDIX D

### **Wabanaki Hunting and Fishing Rights**

long before Europeans arrived, Wabanaki people provided for their families by hunting and fishing throughout their homelands. During European colonization and settlement, Native nations made treaties with the state of Massachusetts in which they retained these important traditional rights.

When Massachusetts allowed Maine to separate and become a state in 1820, Maine promised to carry out all of Massachusetts's obligations to the Wabanaki people in its territory, such as their rights to hunt and fish freely. Hunting and fishing was a primary means of support for Wabanaki families throughout several months of the year. However, in 1869, the state of Maine passed laws setting hunting seasons and forced Native people to obey them. These "game laws" violated the various treaties previously made between Wabanaki nations and Massachusetts, and later guaranteed by Maine. Throughout the next century, the State of Maine continued to pass laws that placed limitations on Wabanaki traditional fishing and hunting.

Today pollution and the existence of dams on waterways like the Penobscot River continue to restrict traditional Wabanaki fishing rights.

## APPENDIX E

### Wabanaki Population Change Over Time

**In 1600**, roughly 15,000 people lived in the general region of what is now Maine. There were no European residents, although fishers and traders from across the ocean came to these shores seasonally for codfish and furs.

**By 1620** at least 75 percent of the Wabanaki population had died of alien illnesses.

**By 1700** less than 1,500 of the 15,000 Wabanaki living in what is now Maine had survived the first century of European presence. Already 2,500 whites were permanently settled in the region, and their numbers grew dramatically during this century of chaos and warfare.

**By 1800** Maine's Wabanaki population had dropped even farther to 1000 or less, and the number of white settlers had soared beyond 150,000.

**In 1900** Maine's Wabanaki population still stood at about 1000—having dropped below 800 in the late 1800s. But the number of whites had risen to 700,000.

**By the end of the 20th century**, Wabanaki numbers in Maine had grown to 6000—still less than half of their number before European contact, and just .05 percent of the state's current total population of 1.2 million.

#### Occupations listed by Penobscots in the U.S. Census, 1910

##### Women (107)

- Basketmaker- 85
- Housekeeper (private family)- 3
- Confectionery merchant- 1
- Retail sales Dept. Store- 1
- No occupation listed- 17

##### Men (107)

- Basketmaker- 11
- Basket peddler- 2
- Snowshoe maker- 2
- Hunter/trapper- 2
- Guide- 5
- Sporting Camp proprietor- 1
- Canoe factory worker- 7
- Lumber mill worker- 4
- Pulp mill worker- 5
- Laborer, woods & river- 35
- River driver-3
- Laborer, odd jobs- 11
- Teamster- 1
- Carpenter- 2
- Musician- 1
- Policeman- 1
- Retail, self-employed- 1
- Barber, self-employed- 1
- Plumber-1
- Ferryman-1
- Ballplayer-1
- Brickmason-1
- Weighing & Tagging- 1
- No occupation- 7

## APPENDIX F

### **Speech by Lewis Mitchell**

Before the 63rd Maine State Legislature, 1887

Lewis Mitchell, Representative of the Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians

I was authorized by the Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians to come here before you for the purpose of making known to you what the Passamaquoddy Indians have done for the American people, and how we have been used by the American people and how we used them. In 1775 or 1776, in the struggle between Great Britain and America, your people came to us for assistance. You authorized Col. John Allan to speak to us and you said, "He is our mouth, believe what he says to you." After many kind words and promises, Francis Joseph, who was the chief of the tribe at that time, accepted his offer. He promised to go and help his people gain their independence. Immediately he sent his captains to different parts of his country to notify his people to prepare for immediate war. In a few days Francis Joseph gathered an army of six hundred men. At that time, and many years before that, the Passamaquoddy Tribe was the headquarters of the Abnaki Nation.

Passamaquoddy Tribe can show you by a letter from Col. John Allan when he authorized the Passamaquoddy Indians to guard the coast from Machias to Passamaquoddy, and authorized them to seize the enemy's vessels. And according to his orders we can show you by the affidavit, Capt. Sopiell Socktoma, with fifty others of his tribe, captured an armed schooner in Passamaquoddy Bay, and they ran her to Machias and gave her up to Col. John Allan.

We know the Indians who served in that war are passed out of existence, but the Passamaquoddy Tribe helped the Americans in that war, and the tribe is still in existence. Now we bountily ask your attention to help us by letting the Legislature examine the papers and refer them to Congress, if they see fit.

In the treaties of 1725, 1794, and Governor Dummer's treaty of 1727, and in the laws of Massachusetts and Maine at their separation, we were guaranteed the right to hunt and fish forever.

In the year 1854 or 1857 some dishonest person or persons presented a petition to the Maine Legislature, asking the State to sell the Indians' land – Indians did not need it – so the Legislature passed a resolve, that a certain piece of land, situated in the Town of Perry, owned by the Indians, would be sold by public auction, on such day, at Perry (they must have arranged everything so they wouldn't bid against each other) and that land was sold for the small sum of \$500.00. The Indians opposed the sale of it. Now their firewood costs the Indians of Pleasant Point \$1,500.00 a year.

If that land had not been sold, the Indians would not suffer for want of firewood. Thousands of cords of cordwood have been cut, and wood is on it yet. The land cleared by the Indians was also sold. Now we claim again that this is not right. An Indian agent himself bought this land afterward and again when we lost the claim on the Islands the case Granger vs. Indians, we not only lost the claim, but \$2,500.00 out of the Indians in favor of Mr. Granger.

Just consider, today, how many rich men there are in Calais, in St. Stephen, Milltown, Machias, East Machias, Columbia, Cherryfield, and other lumbering towns. We see a good many of them worth thousands and even millions of dollars. We ask ourselves, how do they make most of their money? Answer is, they make it on lumber or timber once owned by the Passamaquoddy Indians.

How many of their privileges have been broken? How many of their lands have been taken from them by authority of the State? Now, we say to ourselves, these Indians ought to have everything they ask for. They deserve assistance. We are sent here to help the poor and defend their rights.

Now, this plainly shows us how much worse a people of five hundred and thirty souls are, stripped of their whole country, their privileges on which they depend for their living; all the land they claim to own now being only ten acres. If one or two men in this body were Indians, they would fight like braves for their rights.

Now look at yourselves and see whether I am right or wrong. If you find any insulting language in my speech, I ask your pardon. I don't mean to insult anybody, but simply tell you of our wrong.

(excerpted)

## APPENDIX G

### **Wabanaki Entrepreneurs: Performers and Crafters**

Surrounded by a growing cash economy and no longer able to survive on hunting and gathering, Wabanaki women and men struggled to get by while trying to hold on to at least some of their traditional liberty. Avoiding the miserable confines of factory jobs requiring long hours for low wages, they worked independently making and selling crafts, especially moosehide moccasins used in logging camps and woodsplint baskets used for harvesting and storage. Most Wabanaki men continued to hunt to feed their families. Many took up logging and river driving, which allowed them to spend their days in the familiar setting of the forest. Some began farming small reservation plots to earn government crop bounties.

Some Wabanaki women and men capitalized on white society's growing romantic fascination with the primitive wilderness that was being destroyed by "progress." Marketing themselves as Indian doctors or performers, they took to the road as entertainers in various venues, including medicine shows. Wabanakis who made a living as small-town entertainers were treated as backward, county fair material. Those who succeeded in the greater venues of Wild West shows and films found themselves forced to portray Plains Indian stereotypes wildly popular with the American public.

Quite a few Wabanaki men became hunting and fishing guides, and many women began making fancy woodsplint and sweetgrass baskets designed specifically to suit the Victorian tastes of well-to-do visitors. Most Wabanaki ventured to Maine's coastal and lakeside resorts each summer to market their wares. Everyone knew that sales increased if one dressed in Indian costume or had their children perform an Indian dance or song. By the end of the century, most Wabanaki households in the state depended on basketry as their primary source of income—and women were the major makers and marketers of the craft. Despite hard work, many suffered from poverty.

## APPENDIX H

### Peaked Cap or Hood

gwənuškwa'kwsə. k "long pointed"

Penobscot, before 1860

Wool, silk, beads, thread

Molly Molasses's peaked cap —

Molly (1775-1867) was a legendary elder of the Penobscot Tribe, well remembered by local people and tribal members alike.

The cap is a beautiful example of the traditional historic headgear of Wabanaki women. By the 1850s, such hats were worn mostly for formal portraits, as in Molly's case.



Molly's cap is made from red wool trade cloth. Cloth was an important material sought after by Wabanaki who traded furs for it. By 1820, this cloth became so important that it was included in the list of items called annuity given out as part of the treaty obligations between the State of Maine and the Passamaquoddy Tribe and Penobscot Nation.