

## Native American History of the Andovers

The area known today as the Merrimack Valley was named for the Merrimack River (Merroh Awke “the strong place or “place of swift waters”) by the Pennacook people who lived here before the arrival of Europeans.

Weir Hill, in present day North Andover, by the Cochichewick pond (Algonquin for “place of the great cascades”) was a seasonal hunting and fishing area for the Pennacook.

After initial coastal settlements of the 1630s expanded, by the next decade English settlers pushed inland from the coast, seeking more land by the authority of royal grants and charters (under the concept of ‘vacuum domicilium’ – vacant land is up for the taking). In 1645 a formative settlement of a few families at the village of ‘Cochichewick’ became the town of Andover with the formation of a Church and the influx of over a dozen families. Once this community was established, the boundaries continued to expand, and established indigenous people’s land and fishing rights were addressed. An example of this is Sagamore Cutshamache appearing before the General Court of Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1646 to report he had received payment (six pounds currency and a coat) for six acres of land south of the settlement of Andover on the condition that ‘Roger and his Company’ be allowed to continue to plant their fields and fish in the brook adjacent to his land (now known as ‘Roger’s Brook).

**Please see below for a timeline of related events in the area and recommend further reading.**

European trappers and traders had been visiting all along the Eastern for well over a hundred years before the Mayflower arrived at Plymouth in 1620. Some key dates for our area:

**1604** French merchant Pierre Dugua, Sieur de Mons reports from the St. Lawrence River “The Indians tell us of a beautiful river, far to the south, which they call the Merrimack [Merruh(strong)Auke(Place) or ‘the place of swift water’]”

**1605** George Waymouth's expedition, from England, captured 5 "savages" to bring back to England. The hope was that after providing some 'show and tell' at Court, they would become guides to future "plantings" in New England.

**1607** Samuel de Champlain explores the Merrimack Valley with native guides

**1614** John Smith's *A Description of New England* reports "...from Penobscot to Cape Cod ...I have seene at least 40 severall habitations upon the Sea Coast..."

**1616 – 1619** A terrible epidemic sweeps through the Indian nations, killing tens of thousands

**1629** Town of Salem is incorporated (settled 1626), originally called Naumkeag, an Algonquian name, renamed Bastable by James I, but called Salem by the planters who lived there

**1630** "Trimountaine" (three mountains) or Boston is settled

**1632 – 1633** Smallpox swept through the Native population

**1635** General Court at Mass Bay Colony make provision for a plantation "about Cochichowicke" (meaning the place of the great falls, or cascade, later known as Bodwell's Falls in Lawrence)

It is ordered, that the land aboute Cochichowicke shalbe reserved for an inland plantaçon, & that whosoever will goe to inhabite there shall haue three yeares iimunity from all taxes, levyes, publique charges & services whatsoever, (military dissipline onely excepted.) John Winthrop, Rich: Bellingham, & Wittm Coddington, Esq̄, are chosen a comittee to licence any that they thinke meete to inhabite there, & that it shalbe lawfull for noe pson to goe thither without their consent, or the maior pte of them./

**1640** In May it was declared by the General Court "that Rowley bounds is to be eight miles from their meeting house in a straight line; and then a cross line diameter from Ipsweich Ryver to Merrimack Ryver when it doth not prejudice any former grant." At that same session Nathaniel Ward and "Newberry men...desire.." to build before the next Court at "Patucket [Haverhill] & Coijchwick [Andover]", and Robert Saltonstall petitioned "...that the 1000 acres granted former to his father Sr Richard Saltonstall, might be confirmed at Quochituake..." for himself.

**1642** Narragansett sachem Miantonomo made an unsuccessful attempt to rally all of New England's Indians to resist English incursions

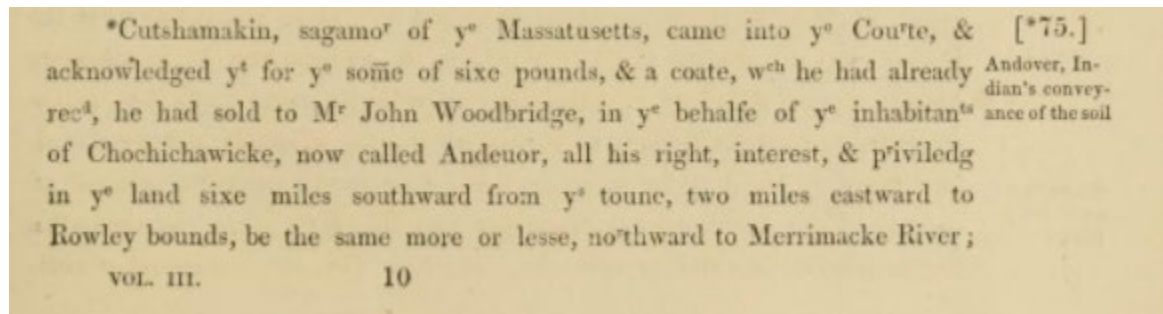
**1643** Essex County created including the village of Cochichewick

**1643** Record of deed to Richard Barker of Quichichock (Andover) from William Hughes of New Meadows (Topsfield)

**1644** Magistrates and ministers met at Rowley to discuss forming churches at Pentucket (Haverhill) and Cochichewick (Andover). Governor Winthrop noted in his journal "the fore mentioned plantations, being then but newly erected, where not capable to entertain them that were like to be gathered together..."

**1645** John Woodbridge appointed to minister the First Church of Christ at Cochichewick

**1646** The name Andover appears for the first time in the General Court Records which is the Commonwealth's method of establishing incorporation – the first time the present day name of a town appears in the Colony Records.



**1660** Forty houselots are set out in Andover. The selectman order that dwelling on land lots outside of the compact village (laid out along present day Court Street, North Andover) is prohibited and will incur fines of 20 shillings a month. Despite the high amount, many families ignore the order

**1675/6** 12 Garrison houses are erected in the area in response to King Phillips War

**1676** Andover was attacked, prisoners taken, Joseph Abbot was killed and Town Clerk Edmund Faulkner's house is burnt, along with the town records.

\* Joseph, s. George and Hannah (Chandler), "killed by ye Indians," Apr. 8, 1676.

**1698** Andover is attacked again, more casualties this time. It is said that the raid was carried out by Native Americans who travelled from Maine, in response to the treachery of Pasco Chubb at the siege of Fort Pemaquid in 1689. Dudley Bradstreet and his family are captured, but quickly released. Said to be a repayment of a kindness shown by Bradstreet family in the past, but this mercy clears the debt. The town records were again lost.

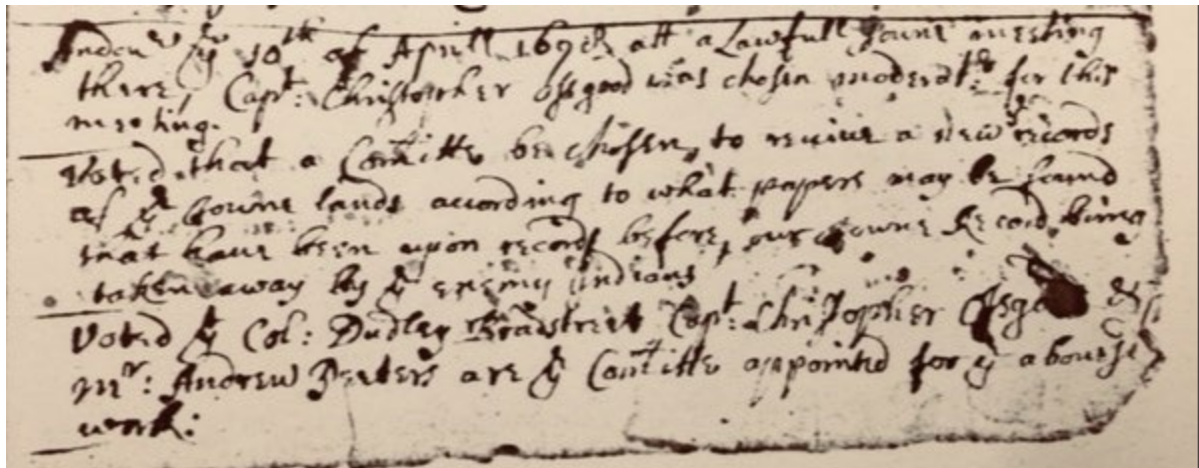
\* Penelope, d. Timothy and Rebecca (Aslett), "killed by Indians," Feb. 22, 1697-8.

Hannah, w. Capt. Pascol, "killed by Indians", Feb. 22, 1697-8.

\* Pascol, Capt., "killed by the Indians", Feb. 22, 1697-8.

\* *Extracts from Town Vital Records*

Town Records of 10 April 1698 :



“Voted that a Committee be chosen to receive anew the records of the town lands, according to what papers may be found that have been upon record before; our town records being taken away by the enemy Indians”

**1704** Andover built one last garrison house in response to the attack on Deerfield

**2018** North Andover Selectman agree to review the idea to co-celebrate Columbus Day as Indigenous People’s Day on September 25<sup>th</sup>.

From the files of the North Andover Historical Society. Sources and further information may be found at

<https://cliffordwrigleyresearch.com/>

### Recommend further reading:

*Indian New England 1524 – 1674: A Compendium of Eyewitness Accounts of Native American Life*, edited by Ronald Dale Kerr (1999)

‘The Great Dying: New England’s Coastal Plague, 1616-1619’ by Mark Laskey (2014)

<https://www.cvltnation.com/the-great-dying-new-englands-coastal-plague-1616-1619/>

*The Indian Land Titles of Essex County MA* by Sidney Perley (1912)

*Indian New England Before the Mayflower* by Howard Russell (1980)

‘Cultural Bias in the New England Puritans’ Perception of Indians’, *The William & Mary Quarterly* (Vol 38 No. 1) by William Simmons (1981)

‘Coastal Algonkian Culture 1500 – 1680’, MFA publication *New England Begins: The Seventeenth Century* by Robert Trent (1982)

*New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians 1620 – 1675*, Alden T. Vaughan (1965)

Also

Stories published in the *Andover Townsman* newspaper in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century by Charlotte Helen Abbott <http://magenweb.org/Essex/Andover/papersindex.html>

- No. 2 10/25/1895 Our Red Brothers
- No. 3 11/1/1895 A Pagan's Word
- No. 33 6/26/1896 Along the Merrimac
- No. 169 8/8/1919 Indian Roger