

Plimoth Plantation's Wampanoag Homesite

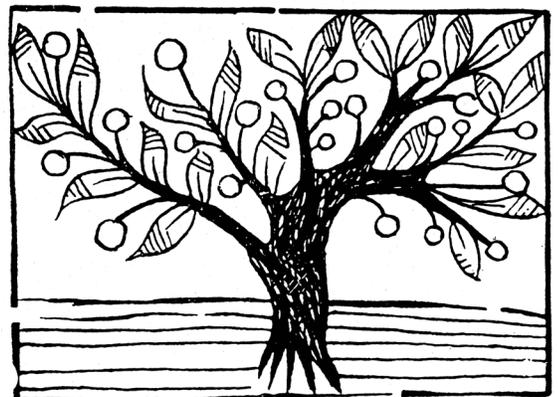
The Wampanoag Homesite represents the single family area of a man named Hobbamock. He was sent by the sachem Ousamequin of Pokanoket, better known by his title Massasoit, to Plymouth Colony to act as emissary between the Wampanoag and the English. Hobbamock lived on Watson's Hill adjacent to the English for approximately twenty years in this capacity. Most people are far more familiar with Squanto's name, although he had died by 1622.

Massasoit requested Hobbamock to come to Plymouth as a result of forming a political alliance with them, primarily for protection against the Narragansett people of what is now Rhode Island. While the Wampanoag suffered greatly reduced numbers in the 1616 plague, the Narragansett did not as the sickness stopped on this side of Narragansett Bay. Because of this, the Narragansett were attempting to subjugate the Wampanoag, and were knocking on Massasoit's door, as Pokanoket is on the western edge of Wampanoag territory where it bounds with the Narragansett. Making alliances was a very common way Native people built relationships, and in this particular instance of history, Massasoit opted to ally with the English, as they had weapons that could create the balance of power.

Representing Hobbamock gives the Wampanoag Homesite a programmatic focus because its proximity to the Pilgrim Village is similar to that of Hobbamock's actual home and Plymouth. The Homesite, while not actually Hobbamock's, had been a summer planting and fishing site for Wampanoag families for thousands of years. Native interpreters, primarily from the Wampanoag people, offer a Native perspective on history and relate events or circumstances of modern times that have roots in the 17th-century colonial history. Additionally, Native staff have the opportunity to learn 17th-century Wampanoag skills, arts and technology which they use to recreate all artifacts, houses, boats, etc., that comprise the outdoor exhibit.

What would this history have looked like if the 1616-1618 plague had never occurred?

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