

# Notes from a Wampanoag Child

## Autumn 1620

This fall the women have been harvesting the squash, beans and corn we had planted in Spring. After the Harvest we save corn for next year by burying it in woven bags on the hill that watches the bay. My younger brother asked father to explain why every year we move Inland to our winter homes. He explained that it is more sheltered in the forests and valleys, and that there is more wood to burn.

Lately I have begun to show some skill at providing. I made my own trap to catch a rabbit, which my mother made into a delicious **sobaheg**. Soon after that, my father gave me my first real **ahomp** and brought me with him on the hunt. We kill deer, turkey and squirrel. We bless the spirit of the animals and gave them thanks. Because of the strength and accuracy I displayed with the **ahomp**, I was asked to join in on the other hunts. On one hunt we gave chase all the way back to the place of the cleared land, and there we saw it - the hill that watches the bay was disturbed! Our corn for next year had been dug up and was gone!

The thievery caused much disturbance among our people. Our **Sachem** arranged a scouting party to go back, and around the 13th moon they returned to the bay and discovered the culprits: white men, covered head-to-toe in cloth, paddling a **mishoon** back to what looked like a great bird on the water! Some older men have seen this before and say that it is a huge **mishoon** called a ship. Whether these strange people are friend or foe, we know not. I wonder what our **Sachem** and his counselors will decide to do.

*Diary entry of 12-year-old Pometacomet, a fictional member of the Pokanoket tribe of the Wampanoag nation.*

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## Wampanoag Words

**Sobaheg** - Meat stew

**Sachem** - chief

**Ahomp** - bow

**Mishoon** - canoe