

Plymouth Archaeological Rediscovery Project (PARP)
An Investigation into Weston's Colony at Wessagussett
Weymouth, MA
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The story of the 1622 plantation at Wessagusset begins with Master Thomas Weston. Weston was a wealthy London merchant and ironmonger and one of the original backers of the Plymouth colonists' plantation in the New World. Weston personally traveled to Leiden, Holland to convince the Plymouth colonists not to negotiate with the Dutch or the Virginia Company for the right to settle in their New World lands (Davis 1908:63). Weston informed them that he and a number of other merchants would be the Adventurers who would personally finance their colony. He also informed them that Sir Ferdinando Gorges had obtained a patent for land in the northern part of Virginia that they had named "New England," and that they could be establishing a colony at any time (Davis 1908:66). Unfortunately, after the conditions were drawn up, agreed upon in Holland and sent back to England, the Adventurers, with Weston being specifically named, changed some of the particulars, and the colonists, having already sold everything to finance the venture, had to agree to the altered terms (Davis 1908: 66). Weston became the chief agent and organizer of the venture which led some of the settlers, such as John Robinson, Samuel Fuller, William Bradford, Isaac Allerton, and Edward Winslow to fear laying their fate in the hands of one man alone (Davis 1908:66, 71).

The London merchant Adventurers agreed to finance the voyage in order to see personal gain through the shipping of lumber, sassafras, and fur back to them from the Plymouth Colony. When the Mayflower returned to England empty in April/May of 1621, Weston wrote a letter to the first governor of Plymouth John Carver, who had died in the spring of 1621. The letter was delivered aboard the Fortune which arrived in November of the same year (Davis 1908: 122). In the letter, Weston stated that the Adventurers were very upset to find the Mayflower empty on her return. He further went on to say that if the colonists had not been "...discoursing, arguing, and consulting, [they] would have done much more" and that the lading of the ship frees both him and the colonists from their financial burden. Weston then assured the colonists that no matter what happened, even if all the other Adventurers left the company, he would not abandon them (Davis 1908:122).

The Settlement of Wessagusset

In the Spring of 1622, the ship Sparrow arrived in Plymouth with several settlers sent by Weston to establish a colony under a separate patent from Plymouth's (Davis 1908:128). Another two ships, the Charity and the Swan, arrived in June/July of 1622, carrying sixty men sent by Weston and a letter stating that he had sold his share in the Plymouth Colony Adventure and was establishing his own colony away from Plymouth and advising Plymouth to break with the other Adventurers (Davis 1908:132). Regarding the settlers that he had sent, Weston relates that "I mente to have settled the people I before and now send, with or near you, as well for their as your more securitie and defence, as help on all occasions. But I find the adventurers so jealous and suspicious, that I have altered my resolution, and given order to my brother and those with him, to

doe as they and him selfe shall find fitte.” (Davis 1908: 133).

Edward Pichering and William Greene, two other Adventurers, also wrote a letter to the colonists at Plymouth that arrived at the same time as Weston's. Pickering and Greene stated that the merchants had bought out Weston and that “His brother Andrew, whom he doth send as principall in one of these ships, is a heady yong man, and violente, and set against you ther, and the company hear; plotting with Mr. Weston their owne ends, which tend to your and our undooing in respecte of our estates ther, and prevention of our good ends.” (Davis 1908:133). In answer to these accusations, Weston sent another letter stating: “Now I will not deny but ther are many of our people rude fellows, as these men terme them; yet I presume they will be governed by such as I set over them. And I hope not only to be able to reclaime them from that profanenes that may scandalise the vioage, but by degrees to draw them to God” (Davis 1908: 134). It is unknown how many of Weston’s 67 colonists were referred to in the above descriptions. In the end, Plymouth came to realize that rather than being their supposed principal agent and backer “Mr. Weston pursued his owne ends” (Davis 1908: 135).

Following Weston's abandonment of the Plymouth colony, Robert Cushman, one of the Separatists who was still in England, wrote to the colony and advised that there “are no men for us, wherfore I pray you entertaine them not, neither exchainge man for man with them, excepte it be some of your worst.” (Davis 1908:136). Cushman was under the impression that Weston would settle further to the south in order to exploit the fur trade there: “It is like he will plant to the southward of the Cape, for William Trevore hath lavishly tould but what he knew or imagined of Capewack, Mohiggen, and the Narigansets.” (Davis 1908:136). Unfortunately, and prophetically, Cushman stated that “I fear these people will hardly deale so well with the savages as they should. I pray you ' therefore signifie to Squanto, that they are a distincte body from us, and we have nothing to doe with them, neither must be blamed for their falls, much less can warrente their fidelitie.” (Davis 1908: 136). On the rear of Cushman's letter, John Pierce, another Adevnturer, wrote that regarding Weston's settlers “I thinke them so base in condition (for the most parte) as in all apearance not fitt for an honest mans company.” (Davis 1908: 136). As Weston had abandoned the company these letters and impressions of his settlers may not be unbiased ones.

The colonists at Plymouth, feeling that these new 67 colonists were in much the same situation that they themselves had been in when they arrived (sick, unknowledgable of the land and how to make a living, and without a means to travel further), took them in and housed them until their ship returned from Virginia (Davis 1908: 137). Bradford described them as “lusty” men at one point and later recounts that “...they were an unruly company, and had no good govermente over them, and by disorder would soone fall into wants if Mr. Weston came not the sooner amongst them..” (Davis 1908: 137). When they had first arrived, Weston's colonists were informed of the troubles that the settlers at Plymouth had encountered during their first winter in New England. Weston's men “boasted of their strength, (being all able lustie men,) and what they would doe & bring to pass, in comparison of ye people hear, who had many women & children and weak ons amongst them ; and said at their first arivall, when they saw the wants hear, that they would take an other course and not to fall into such a condition, as this simple people were come too.” (Deane 1856: 132). The colony therefore decided to have nothing to do with them once they left, after having supplied them with provisions, as they had none when they arrived. By August of 1622

Weston's settlers had left Plymouth for Massachusetts Bay and had established their Plantation in an area first seen by Phineas Pratt when he arrived aboard the Sparrow.

In September, shortly after harvest, the settlers at Wessagusset had, by Bradford's record, made havoc of their provisions and now were worried about what would happen in the winter. The settlers knew that they would be arriving in New England late in the year and had brought trade goods which they had hoped to exchange with the Natives for corn. They contacted Plymouth and desired to go on a trading mission with them to acquire stocks for the winter. To that end, they accompanied Governor Bradford in an attempt to round Cape Cod. When that was found to be impossible, lacking a guide because Tisquantum (Squanto) died on the trip, they sailed into Manamoyack Bay (Chatham Harbor) and traded for 26 or 28 hogsheads of corn and beans from the Natives (Davis 1908: 141).

The corn and beans acquired from this trading mission was not enough for the colony and in February of 1623, a message from John Sanders was carried by a Native from Wessagusset to Plymouth. The letter stated that they had fallen on hard times and that the local Natives would not trade any more corn to them. Sanders wanted advice on whether it would be justifiable to take the corn from them by force in order to satisfy his men until he returned from a trading mission to the north. Plymouth's response was that "The Govr and rest deswaded him by all means from it, for it might so exasperate the Indeans as might endanger their saftie, and all of us might smart for it; for they had already heard how they had so wronged the Indeans by stealing their corne, etc. as they were much incensed against them. Yea, so base were some of their owncompany, as they wente and tould the Indeans that their Govr was purposed to come and take their corne by force. The which with other things made them enter into a conspiracie against the English" (Davis 1908: 141).

Following are three contemporaneous accounts of the happenings at Wessagusset leading to Miles Standish's attack to end the supposed Native conspiracy against the colonists.

Phineas Pratt: Account of the Events Leading up to the Abandonment of Wessagusset

Phineas Pratt, who arrived in the spring of 1622 on the Sparrow, provides the only eyewitness account of the situation at Wessagusset during the winter of 1622/ 23. Pratt was a joiner, a furniture maker, by trade who fled to Plymouth from Wessagusset in March of 1623 to bring news of their deteriorating condition and of an impending attack by the local Natives on both settlements. After the dissolution of Weston's plantation, Pratt settled in Plymouth, eventually leaving and settling in Charlestown in Massachusetts Bay sometime before 1648. Pratt petitioned the General Court of Massachusetts for financial support in 1662, when he was approximately 69 years old, and presented a narrative entitled "A declaration of the affairs of the English people that first inhabited New England" (reproduced in Appendix A). Pratt's report is the only description of the events of the winter of 1622/23, but many of his facts are corroborated and even echoed in other contemporary documents of the period such as Edward Winslow's Good News from New England which contains Plymouth Colony's version of the events of that winter. It is obvious in reading Pratt's narrative that he has attempted to inflate his role in the colony. As far as is known, Pratt was not one of the colony's leaders, but was likely one of several artisans brought over to the colony. In his narrative, Pratt appears to play a central, heroic, and pivotal role in the workings

and salvation of the colony. By 1662 there were no other Wessagusset survivors in New England, so perhaps Pratt felt justified in possibly inflating his role to support his request for financial support, as there was no one else around to dispute it.

Pratt begins with a brief history of the Separatist settlers who left England, arrived in Holland, and eventually left and settled at Plymouth. As a testament to the belief in astrology of his time, he correlates their decision to leave with a “blazing star” that appeared over Germany in 1618. He gives a brief description of their removal from England and initial settlement in the New World. He provides a commentary on the works, probably of such authors and explorers such as Captain George Weymouth, Captain John Smith and Samuel Pring, when he states that “...some indiscreet men, hoping to encourage their friends to come to them, wrote letters concerning the great plenty of fish, fowl, and deer, not considering that the wild savages were many times hungry, yet have better skill to catch such things than English men have. The Adventurers, willing to save their monies, sent them weakly provisioned of vicyuals, as many more after them did the like, and that was the great cause of famine.” Essentially Pratt stated that due to the propaganda that was floating about England regarding the plentiful resources in the New World, the Pilgrims were ill prepared to hunt and fish. He also stated that even the Natives, who had better skill at catching fish and hunting than the colonists, were often hungry. It appears that Pratt was bitter, possibly about being hoodwinked himself into believing that because of the abundance of game and fish and the ease which it could be caught, a man could live off the land and not worry about starving once he got there.

He then gets into the history of the Wessagusset settlement. He begins by relating how Thomas Weston, merchant in London and treasurer of the Pilgrim’s venture, sent a ship to establish a colony at Massachusetts Bay. Unfortunately, they lacked a pilot to guide them to the bay, and so put in at Damerill’s Cove in Maine first, to obtain a pilot. Mr. Rogers, master of the Sparrow, the ship on which Pratt arrived, stated that no one wanted to be the pilot because an Indian named Rumhigan ventured to pilot a ship to Plymouth, resulting in a loss of the ship and everyone’s lives. Mr. Gibbs, the Master’s mate on the Sparrow, volunteered to pilot the ship to Massachusetts Bay. These 10 men, probably six colonists and four ships crew, decided to settle on the south side of the bay because there were the fewest Natives living there. As they were considering where to settle, they saw a large number of Natives and decided it was time to travel to Plymouth to join the remainder of the company who had arrived on the Fortune in November. Upon arriving they found out that many of the Pilgrims who had arrived in 1620 had died from a sickness. They also informed Pratt that they were so afraid of the Natives, that they sat the sick men of the company with their backs against trees and guns in their hands in order to fool the Natives regarding their strength. One or two of the Plymouth men then went with Pratt to a fishing area off Maine to procure supplies. About 8 or 9 weeks later, two of the Weston’s ships arrived and the smallest, the Swan, was to remain for their use. After all the ships had arrived, Weston’s colony consisted of approximately 60 men.

Initially the Natives were friendly. Then when famine pervaded the area, the Natives began to harass the English. Chief among the Native harassers was Pecksuot, a pniese who had learned English. Pratt relates that Pecksuot continually told him that he loved Pratt and all Englishmen and that he hated the French. Pecksuot related that there had been a French ship in the bay that had been damaged by a storm. The French had saved all their goods and buried them in the

ground. The Natives captured the French and forced them to tell them where they had hidden the goods, subsequently taking away their clothes, feeding them the scraps they would usually feed to their dogs, and making them their servants. Another time a French ship came into the bay and Pecksuot persuaded the sachem to attack them and take their goods. Pecksuot said that he conceived a plan where they would paddle to the ship in their canoes, carrying furs to trade with no bows or arrows, clubs or hatchets, but only knives. They planned to sell their beaver cheap and then stab the Frenchmen. The plan worked and only one man survived, Master Finch who, though wounded, leapt into the hold and would not come out. The Natives cut the anchor line, and the ship drifted to shore and lay upon her side and "slept." Finch then came out of the hold and was killed. The sachem then divided the goods and set the ship on fire. One of the English asked how long ago they saw the first ship and it was related that the first time they saw a ship they thought it was a floating island, broken off from the mainland, wrapped in roots with trees on it. The Natives canoed out to it but were repelled by guns being fired at them.

After the famine began, Pecksuot asked the English "Why do your men and dogs die?" Pratt told him that they weren't starving and then proceeded to fool Pecksuot into thinking he had a chestful of corn. Soon after the Natives moved some of their houses to "a great swamp near to the pale of our plantation" to show their intent to make war.

Pratt saw a weary and sore footed Native messenger arrive one day and turned to Mr. Salisbury the surgeon, and said that surely the sachem had employed him for some intent to make war on them. Pratt, apparently not fearing the Natives and their intents, put a bag of gunpowder in his pocket and went to see the man. He went in to the house and tried to talk to the man who was lying on a mat. The woman who was in the house grabbed hold of the bag and asked why it was so big. Pratt hit her on the arm as hard as he could and said it was good for the Natives to eat. She replied that the powder was very bad and that the sachem of Wessagussets, Aberdikes, would bring many warriors and kill all the English at Wessagusset and Patuxet (Plymouth). The man on the mat got mad at the woman and Pratt left. He asked one of the English who spoke the Native language to go and ask the woman, out of the man's earshot, why he was angry and she was afraid. He reported to Pratt that she feared that the man would tell Aberdikes (Obtakiest) and that he and all the Indians would be mad at her. Some time later Pecksuot met with Pratt, expressed his love for the English and Pratt, to which Pratt replied that he loved Pecksuot and the Natives as much as they loved him. Pecksuot then showed him a knife with the face of a woman carved on the handle and said that he had another at home with the face of a man and that they should marry, clearly threatening the English.

The sachem, presumably Aberdikes, and a large number of armed warriors, arrived at the Native community and went into one of the houses. After about 15 minutes the Natives went to the palisade of the English community and Pratt had the young man who could best speak the Native language to ask Pecksuot why they had come so armed. Pecksuot answered that the sachem was angry with them, to which Pratt replied that the English were angry with him. The sachem replied that when the English first came, they and the Natives exchanged gifts, that they had traded and were friends, but now things were obviously different, so what was it that the Natives had done to the English. Pratt responded that the sachem should first say what the English did to wrong the Natives. The sachem replied that some of the English stole the Native corn and that the Natives had complained about it many times and still the corn was stolen and now the sachem wanted to

see what was to be done about it. The English answered that it was only one man who had done it and that he had been whipped as a punishment, that he was now bound, and that they would turn him over to the Natives to do as they wish. The sachem answered that that was not how they dealt with crimes rather "All sachems do justice by their own men. If not, we say they are all agreed and then we fight, and now I say you all steal my corn." While this discussion was occurring, some of the warriors pointed to the men on the fort and said "Machit Pesconk," meaning "evil guns."

Following this meeting, the English increased their watch and observed the Natives creeping on the snow and hiding behind bushes and trees to see if the settlers were keeping watch. Pratt said the final act that led him to conclude that there was no other course of action than to go to Plymouth for help, was one night, after the food had run out, he walked around the Plantation and finally arrived at the Court of Guard where he found that three men had died of hunger.

As an aside, during this time, Pecksuot told Pratt that if Pratt would give him guns then the Natives would give them corn. Pratt told Pecksuot that they didn't need the corn because eventually more English would come and bring food for them.

During this same time various settlers reported abuses by the Natives including a report that they killed one of the English hogs (which may have been set free to forage in the woods and mudflats), threatened another man with a knife, and threw dirt in another's face. Two of the colonists who were living with or were associating with the Natives, arrived at the fort and reported that the sachem was close to finishing the last canoe of their fleet which they were going to use to attack the ship and that the Native's greatest concern was how, because of the snow, to get their forces to Plymouth to attack them there. From Pratt's account, he appears to have been the leader of the colony (there is no mention of Mr. Saunders/ Sanders who was the official leader), for he says that when he heard of the plot he would have sent someone to Plymouth to warn them, but no one was willing to go. He then decided that he would go to Plymouth himself. Pecksuot, after hearing of Pratt's plan to go to Plymouth from one of the younger English settlers who was hoping to get on the Native's good side, confronted Pratt saying "Me hear you go to Patuxet; you will lose yourself; the bears and the wolves will eat you; but because I love you I will send my boy Nahamit with you; & I will give you victuals to eat by the way & to be merry with your friends when you come there." Pratt denied the story asking for its source, but Pecksuot said he knew it was the truth and would not reveal his source. Five armed Native warriors soon arrive at the fort. When asked why they came armed they responded that when the English visit them they come armed so they are doing the same. The Natives kept watch on Pratt for seven or eight days and nights before he managed to leave for Plymouth with great manetatio from his fellow colonists who said: "The savages will pursue after you & kill you & we shall never see you again."

Pratt underwent considerable hardships on his journey (see Appendix A for his harrowing story) reporting that he felt like a deer pursued by wolves, but resolved to continue on knowing that if he failed all the colonists would die. Eventually Pratt ran into John Hamden, a visitor with the colonists at Plymouth. Pratt sat down on a tree, saluted Hamden and asked for some parched corn (which presumably the English carried with them regularly). Hamden told Pratt he knew why he had come. The next day Hugh Stacey encountered two Natives who were wondering if a man had

arrived from Wessagusset, because he was their friend. Stacey told them that he had arrived and unfortunately the narrative is incomplete and jumbled at this point.

Pratt reported that two or three days after he arrived, the English at Plymouth sent 10 or 11 men to Wessagusset, but being "faint" he couldn't go himself. Pratt then gave a synopsis of the fight reporting that the Plymouth men first warned the men on the ship, then killed Witauwamet and Pecksuot, that when Aberdikes (Obtakiest) heard about what had happened, attacked the English but was shot in the arm and retreated, Hobbamcock (whom he says lived with the English because he was fleeing from his sachem) chased the retreating warriors, two of the English were killed in their houses (whether he means the English's houses or the Native's is unclear), and the English took Witawaumet's head to Plymouth.

All told Pratt reports that nine of the English died of famine and one died on the ship later while the ship was in Maine after abandoning Wessagusset. Pratt, feeling stronger, had gone along on this voyage in search of food and fish. During this time he encountered two of the Natives from Wessagusset who recognized him. They told him "When we killed your men, they cried and made ill-favored faces" and Pratt replied "When we killed your men, we did not torment them to make ourselves merry." This encounter is believed to have taken place in present day Dorchester. Pratt reports that eventually Robert Gorges tried to resettle Wessagusset but the supply ship was late, they almost starved in the winter, and thus they abandoned the site. The third attempt to settle Massachusetts Bay was by Captain Wolleston & Mr. Rosell who chose not to settle at Wessagusset but established the settlement at Mount Wollaston in present day Quincy.

Bradford, Winslow and Morton Accounts

Other contemporary or near-contemporary accounts of Plymouth's preemptive strike on the Natives at Wessagusset are presented by Edward Winslow in his *Good News from New England*, William Bradford in his work *Of Plimoth Plantation*, and Thomas Morton in *New English Canaan*. Winslow and Bradford's accounts add to Pratt's narrative by relating which Native communities, as related by Massasoit, were in league against the English. According to Winslow the people of Nauset (Eastham), Paomet (Truro), Succonet (Falmouth), Mattachiest (Barnstable), Manomet (Bourne), Agawam (Wareham), and the Isle of Capawack (Martha's Vineyard), were joined with the Natives and that it was Massasoit himself who advised attacking the Massachuseuk first before they could strike. Winslow also related that some of the colonists were doing chores for the Natives in return for food while others dug up the Native storage pits and stole corn from them (for which they were put in stocks and whipped). By February, when all the colony's stores were consumed and the Natives would not give them any more corn, some advised taking it by force, a proposition to which "some more honestly minded" advised writing to Plymouth for advice.

Edward Winslow: Good News from New England (Winslow 1841)

Winslow's and Bradford's books give second-hand accounts of the subsequent attack by Myles Standish, Hobbamock and the other Plymouth colonists on the Natives at Wessagusset. Winslow's account is the more detailed and will form the basis of the text that follows. Bradford's account appears to have relied on Winslow's and does not add additional details to his account.

The saga of Wessagusset built to a climax for the colonists at Plymouth in early March of 1622, beginning when news reached Plymouth that the sachem Massasoit was sick and near death. Edward Winslow and Hobbamock went to visit him, and subsequently Winslow treated and

possibly cured the sachem of his sickness. On their return journey to Plymouth, Hobbamock related to Winslow that Massasoit had spoken to him in private and told him to warn the Plymouth colonists of a plot spearheaded by the Massachuseuk to attack both Plymouth and Wessagussett. Massasoit advised a preemptive strike against the Natives at Wessagussett who were planning the attack. Massasoit's argument was that while Plymouth had a policy of attacking only after being attacked, in this case, such a policy would prove too late for the men at Wessagussett. Plymouth had heard about the pressure that Weston's men had been applying to the Natives at Wessagussett and also of the extremes men had gone, and were willing to go to acquire food for the winter. Plymouth had advised the settlers at Wessagussett to be "enforced to live on ground nuts, clams, mussels, and such other things as naturally the Country afforded, and which did and would maintain strength, and were easy to be gotten, all which things they had in great abundance, yea, Oysters also which we wanted, and therefore necessity could not be said to constrain them thereunto" (Winslow 1841).

Plymouth said that they would not assist in any unlawful actions such as taking food from the Natives by force and advised that it would be foolhardy, in their sick and weak condition, to consider that they would be successful in such a venture. Finally, that even if they did succeed, they would be held accountable to the Council of New England and should expect the gallows for any such action. Plymouth's arguments swayed Weston's men and they fended for themselves while awaiting the return of the colony's leader, John Sanders, from trading with fishermen in Maine.

Meanwhile in Plymouth, the 23 of March was the colony's court day and the Governor and colony leaders put the issue of the conspiracy before the colony and sought their agreement to attack the Native leaders there. When it was agreed that this appeared to be the only course of action, it was decided that Captain Standish should take as many men as he thought necessary, and remove the leaders of the conspiracy from the situation by laying a trap for them as they had laid for others. The Natives would be lured together into one place and dispatched as one body in one action. Special note was made to return Witauwamet's head to Plymouth to serve as a warning to anyone else who may have thought of conspiring against the English.

Standish chose eight men, as few as possible because he felt that all of them would return with guilty consciences. Just before he left, Phineas Pratt arrived at the colony and related the present state of the Wessagusset Plantation. He told of how the Natives would take food from the English's pots and threaten them with knives, and how the English had hanged one of their own who was convicted of stealing corn, to satisfy the Natives. He said that most of the colony had forsaken the town, were broken into three companies, and now camped at the places where they were getting their food (presumably the beach or places where groundnuts and foraging food could be found), but unfortunately, they had traded their clothes to the Natives for food, and were too cold to gather food. Pratt related that he left the colony because he feared what would happen at the colony, because he was hungry and because he sought a safe place to remain until the situation was somehow settled.

A Native that had followed Pratt was taken prisoner upon his return from Manomet (Bourne), and was "was locked in a chain to a staple in the Court of guard, and there kept. Thus was our Fort hanselled, this being the first day as I take it, that ever any watch was there kept." (Winslow

1841). This indicates that the Court of Guard in Plymouth's case was a specific location within the fort, as opposed to a separate structure as was the case at the Popham Colony.

Standish and his company arrived at Wessagusset and found the ship at anchor but deserted. They then located the Master and crew on the shore gathering ground nuts and learned that the Wessagusset colonists felt that they had nothing to fear from the Natives, and did not even carry their arms with them. Standish learned that those who were left in charge by Sanders were at the fort and the company proceeded there. The Plymouth company soon sprang their trap and killed Witauwamet, Pecksuot and one other Native within one of the English houses. They then went looking for any other Native leader and encountered a force of Natives coming towards them. Winslow related that there was a small advantage of ground due to a hill near them (possibly a small hill?) and both the Plymouth company and the Natives sought to take it. They squared off with the Natives, eventually routing them, and the Natives fled into a swamp where they hurled insults at the Plymouth men. Following this, the colony was abandoned with some of the men going to Maine to seek food among the fishermen and some back to Plymouth to await passage away from New England.

The Plymouth company returned to Plymouth where Witauwamet's head was shown to the Native who had been held prisoner there. The man confessed all the details of the plot and said that five leaders were involved: Witauwamet and Pecksuot were the two principles, and three Powahs, one of which they had wounded. The man was released with a message for the Massachuseuk sachem Obtakiest that this attack was a warning that they should not plot against the English and that any English living with them should be allowed to leave. A Native woman later arrived with a message from Obtakiest that the English who had been living with them had been killed before he received the message.

Thomas Morton: New English Canaan (Adams 1883)

Thomas Morton's version of the events leading up to, and including, the preemptive attack by the Plymouth colonists at Wessagusset, has several unique features. The Morton version can best be explained by the fact that Morton, writing in 1635, was still smarting from his expulsion from New England by the Plymouth colonists. As a result, he appears to have attempted to slander or malign their position, possibly with the hope of affecting the view of their situation in England. Morton essentially took the facts and gave them a decidedly unfavorable spin so that whenever possible Plymouth comes out looking like the villains in New England. One must take his version like any European version of seventeenth century events, with a grain of salt, and perhaps with an extra grain in Morton's case.

Morton recounts the experiences of the Weston colonists in five acts (Chapters II to V in Book 2; Adams 1883). The first is "Of the entertainement of Mr. Weston's people sent to settle a plantation there", where he reveals that when Weston sent his colonists they were welcomed "in shew [show] at least" by the Plymouth colonists. "Good cheer went forward and strong liquor walked" while behind the scenes the Plymouth colonists worried that their presence and proximity would hinder their trade in beaver from the Natives. This compounded with the fact that the new settlers were not Separatists like many of the people at Plymouths, caused the Plymouth colonists to decide to send Weston's men to Massachusetts Bay to settle. According to Morton, Plymouth waited until supplies ran low and then hastened to Wessaguscus (Wessagusset), and "in a weake

case, and there left them fasting.” So according to Morton, Plymouth welcomed Weston's until supplies ran low and then the low supplies compounded with their fear of having their beaver trade usurped and the fact that they were not Separatists, caused Plymouth to kick these men out and encourage them to settle far away from Plymouth.

Morton begins by describing how the Plymouth colonists had removed a bearskin monument erected by the Native over the grave of Chickataubut's mother “...taking away the herse Cloath, which was two greate Beares skinnes sowed together at full length, and propped up over the grave of Chuatawbacks mother”. This occurred at Pasonagesit, Morton's Mare-Mount (modern day Quincy). Chickataubut was enraged by this defacement and sought revenge on the Plymouth colonists. Morton goes on to recount the sachem's dream in which he saw his mother who bemoaned the defacement of her monument. The Natives then went to await the boat from Plymouth and to attack it when it landed. Morton states that Captain Standish perceived the plot and chased the Natives and then fought. The leader of the Natives was shot in the elbow and the Natives fled.

Morton recounted the situation at Wessagusset in some detail, at least portions that appear to have concerned him particularly for whatever reason. In Chapter IV Of the parliament held at Wessaguscus and the Acts, Morton describes the debate that ensued after one of the settlers stole corn for a Native storage pit. He begins by describing the settlers as being many of them lazy persons who did not try to help themselves to the benefits of the land around them, to which result, some fell sick and died. As the famine at Wessagusset grew worse, some of the settlers ranged out into the surrounding area in search of food. One able-bodied man found a Native storage pit and supposedly took only a capful. The Natives saw the English shoe prints at the scene of the crime and complained to the Plantation. This resulted in the calling of a parliament headed by Edward Johnson as the special judge, to discuss the appropriate course of action to satisfy the Natives. It was decided that a string of beads or a pretty knife would not satisfy them and the only way to appease them was to follow English law and hang the offender for theft. Some debated that since this man was young and able-bodied, perhaps he should be spared and a sick man be dressed in his clothes and sacrificed instead. It was debated, and eventually the true thief was deemed to be the one who should pay for his crime. The man was tricked into being tied up, for fear that because of his temper he would attack them, and was hung.

Morton was fairly brief in his description of the attack on the Natives and its consequences. In Chapter V, entitled “Of a Massacre made upon the Salvages at Wessaguscus”, Morton recounts what he had heard about the attack. He starts off by stating that three of Wessagusset settlers went to live with Chicataubut (or possibly with Obtakiest who was the sachem who was involved with the settlers) and that they were treated well. They planned to stay with the Natives until Weston arrived with supplies. Unfortunately for them, men from Plymouth came, pretended to feast the Natives, and then killed them with their own knives.

The sachem heard of the attack from one of the Natives who escaped, and subsequently killed the English who were living with him in their sleep. Morton feels that all that the Plymouth settlers did was done to ruin Weston and his settlement attempts. He states that if they really did do it for the good of Weston and his men, why didn't they hold the Natives hostage until the English had been released. Morton reports that afterwards the Natives called the English “cut throats,”

although the word he uses, “Wotawquenange, “actually means “coat men.”

In the end, nine of Weston's colonists died either of starvation, disease, or were killed by the Natives. The remaining colonists were given the option of returning to Plymouth or being outfitted by Standish as best as he could and be allowed to leave the area. The majority of Weston's men decided to accept what provisions Standish had to offer and to travel to the east to the fishing banks off present-day Maine (Deane 1856: 132). Here they planned to either wait for Weston to come over or to work among the fishermen and then get passage back to England (Deane 1856: 132). The Wessagusset colonists then traded with Standish what they had for corn and were escorted out of the bay by Standish. Bradford reported that Standish returned with not the “...worth of a penny of any thing that was theirs.” (Deane 1856: 132).

By March many of the group at Wessagusset had died and it was rumored that the Massachusetts were the nucleus of a conspiracy to destroy both Wessagusset and neighboring Plymouth. The rumor was corroborated by Phinehas Pratt, a member of the Wessagusset group, who had learned from a squaw that the impending attack would occur as soon as the snow melted and the Indians had constructed enough canoes to attack the Wessagusset ship that lay in the harbor. An armed force of eight men under the command of Miles Standish, sailed from Plymouth to Wessagusset on April 4th to avert the impending attack. After reaching his destination Standish gathered Weston’s men some of whom he found searching for nuts in the woods while others he found digging clams from the shore. After putting the men in a stockade of the palisaded village for safekeeping, Standish went in search of the Native insurgents. While Standish was away seven of Weston’s men were massacred. Standish retaliated taking the lives of several Indians including Chiefs Witawamat and Pecksuot. Weston’s settlement was then abandoned. Of the surviving members of the settlement three stayed in the area and were eventually killed by the Natives, some of the remaining men stayed in Plymouth, and the rest sailed on the Swan with their leader, Sanders, to the coast of Maine. By this time Weston was on his way from London to his trading post settlement. After arriving in Maine he sailed south, but never revived the ill-fated Wessagusset.

The Aftermath

Following the breakup of Weston's colony some of the surviving members went to present-day Maine. Two years later, Christopher Levett, who had a fortified fishing and trading house in Casco Bay, reported that “...one Mr. Weston sent about 50 persons to plant, with little prouision; when they came there, they neither applied themselues to planting of corne nor taking of fish, more then for their present use, but went about to build Castles in the Aire, and making of Forts, neglecting the plentifull time of fishing. When Winter came their forts would not keepe out hunger, and they having no provision beforehand, and wanting both powder and shot to kill Deare and Fowle, many were starved to death, and the rest hardly escaped. There are foure of his men which escaped, now at my plantation, who have related unto me the whole businesse” (Baxter 1893: 126). Subsequently, John Winter came to Maine in the 1630s looking for guides. He was directed to Mr. Levett's house where he hired Thomas Alger and Edmond Baker and Nicholas Rouse all from Devon, England (Baxter and Trelawny 1884: 251). These three men appear to have been three of the original colonists from Wessagusset who went to Maine to work for fishermen and decided to remain.

Morton's Chapter IV describes the arrival of Thomas Weston and the surprise and confusion that he had regarding the dissolution of his plantation. Morton stated that the Plymouth planters explained to Weston that the trouble was all the result of the Natives "insolency" and that because of the danger the English should live together in Plymouth. The corollary in Morton's mind was that only those at Plymouth should trade beaver or other items. Morton uses his interpretation of the Plymouth colonists fear and disapproval of the Natives as a springboard for discussing his view of the Natives in the Massachusetts Bay area. He describes them as friendly and more Christian than many English "The more Salvages the better quarter, the more Christians the worser quarter." Morton then goes on to describe what he sees as a plot by the settlers at Plymouth, in collusion with some other English in the New England area, to seize Weston's ship and take the goods he brought.

At about this same time in London Sir Fernando Gorges had received a patent incorporating 40 persons into the Council for New England, a private colonization and trading company. The council received its power from King James and was granted the waters between the Nahant headland and Point Allerton as well as over 200,000 acres of land in Essex and Middlesex counties. In 1623 at a meeting of the Council with King James the coast of New England from the Bay of Fundy to Narragansett was divided among 20 of the patentees. Following the meeting Robert Gorges, Sir Fernando's son, left for New England planning to place the seat of this new government in Plymouth and further advance the state of religion in the colony. Robert planned to land in Massachusetts Bay in close proximity to Plymouth. Included in the enterprise were Rev. William Morrell, William Blackstone, Samuel Maverick, as well as a number of traders and yeomen.

The site of the Wessagusset Plantation was reoccupied in the middle of September 1623 under the leadership of Robert Gorges. Like Weston's men, Gorges' men hoped to prosper through trading, but unlike Weston's colony, Gorges arrived aboard the ships Ketherine and the Prophet Daniel with 120 settlers consisting of men and their families. The colonists fared no better than Weston, with the exception of having trouble with the local Natives, and the Plantation was abandoned the following year with some settlers returning to England with Gorges, some going to Virginia, one moving to Plymouth and eventually back to England, and "his (Gorges) servants and certain other undertakers and tenants" whom Gorges "left his plantation in charge of."

Prior to returning to England, Gorges in a show of power summoned the Governor of Plymouth to Wessagusset and then departed for Maine in search of Weston. After returning from Maine, Gorges sent a warrant for Weston's arrest to Plymouth where Weston had been staying after his arrival from Maine. Weston was in serious trouble with the English crown as he had obtained the right to sell ordinance and military goods to the colonists in New England in 1622, but sold them to the French instead. Weston escaped England disguised as a blacksmith and arrived in Maine. Upon hearing of the situation at his plantation at Wessagusset, he and a companion set out in a small boat to go to Plymouth. The boat was subsequently wrecked near the mouth of the Merrimac River and Weston was stripped by the Natives, yet eventually reached Plymouth. The Swan had been left with the settlers at Wessagusset and upon the abandonment of the plantation they sailed to Maine to trade. Weston eventually got possession of this vessel and was trading along the coast. Gorges heard about this, issued a warrant for Weston to answer the charges regarding the gun sales to the French and the disorderliness of his settlers at Wessagusset. Gorges

caught up with him at Plymouth Harbor and threatened to send Weston back to England, but Bradford intervened and Weston was released on his own recognizance.

By this point it was November and Gorges went to reestablish the settlement at Wessagusset. Gorges then felt that it would be to his best advantage to have the Swan at Wessagusset and so sent a warrant for the arrest and seizure of Weston and the ship. Bradford did not like the course of action and refused to serve the warrant, advising Weston that it may be best for him to leave. Weston decided against this, having a mutinous crew who had not yet been paid anything for the whole voyage and an empty ship. Another warrant came and eventually Weston and the Swan went to Wessagusset. The colony passed the winter there and in the spring went up the coast for trade with Weston as the pilot. It was a poor voyage and Gorges decided to abandon the plantation and return to England. Gorges released and compensated Weston, restored his ship and left. Weston returned briefly to Plymouth and went south to Virginia. He eventually returned to England and died during the Plague outbreak in 1645.

Gorges died and his brother John conveyed part of his New World holding to John Oldham and wrote to William Blackstone and William Jefferies, who were recorded as living in Boston Bay, to put that conveyance into effect (Hazard 1792: 391). Wessagusset was recorded as being also called "Jefferies and Burslem's plantation" after two of the settlers who Gorges left behind. Aside from people left from both Weston's and Gorges' settlement a small group of people are said to have arrived in Wessagusset in 1624 from Weymouth, England (Weymouth Historical Society 1923). After the assault on Merrymount and Thomas Morton in 1628, the settlers at Plymouth assessed the Jefferies and Burslem plantation a rate for the expedition against Morton (Deane 1856). The tax lists of Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630 and the settlement of boundary disputes between Wessagusset and both Hingham and Mount Wollaston suggest a continuing, growing settlement in Wessagusset (Nash 1905). By 1632 the Wessagusset settlement appeared to have achieved some degree of prosperity as suggested by Winthrop's account of his overnight stay there while traveling from Plymouth to Boston. In 1635 another group of approximately 100 people (21 families) arrived from Weymouth, England with John Hull, bringing the population to 350. In the same year Thomas Applegate was licensed to run a ferry between Wessagusset and Mount Wollaston.

In 1635 the settlement's name was changed to Weymouth. While the town was incorporated in 1635, town records began in 1641 and for nearly 100 years there were no church records. In 1636 the General court ceded Grape and Round islands to the town. The first land divisions occurred in 1636 with every "complete" person receiving six acres and those "under 12" receiving three acres (Weymouth Historical Society 1923). It is unclear what the difference was between one who was "complete" and one who was "under 12" – it may mean the latter arrived after 1624. By 1640 there were about 150 families and the settlement stretched over an area of about three miles. In 1642 the town received the Native American title to Weymouth in a conveyance signed by resident chiefs Wampetuc, Nateaunt, and Nahawton (Davis 1908). Soon after the conveyance the town drew up a list of possessions. Cook's History of Norfolk County states that according to the earliest town records dating to 1642 "of the 123 landowners . . . only seventeen are recognized as members of the Hull company which came over in 1635. John Bursley, William Jeffries and a man named Ludden are recognized as members of the Gorges Company and had no doubt maintained their residence there from the year 1623" (Cook 1918).

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of a parcel is determined through its environmental characteristics, development through time and past/recent disturbance to the landscape. While the focus of the field investigation of the Project Area is to locate burials, features, and/or structures associated with the settlement and early history of Wessagussett, the field survey may also locate features associated with the prehistoric and Contact periods.

The Project Area contains many of the environmental features that attracted prehistoric groups. Favorable features, which include well-drained soils, areas of low-to-no slope, proximity to the Weymouth Back and Weymouth Fore rivers and the Boston Harbor, suggest that the Project Area holds high potential for prehistoric sites. Sites within this general location are expected to include small, specialized activity areas (find spots or large scatters) reflecting campsites used during foraging or fishing activities and areas used for tool manufacture. Larger campsites may also occur given that European explorers frequented coastal areas for trade with Native groups. Given the wide range of time periods represented in the MHC's site inventory, the number of Native American trails that crossed Weymouth, and the use of the coast by European explorers and traders, it's possible that sites could date from the Early Archaic through the Contact periods. With regard to Wessagussett structures one might expect to find defensive works fortification associated with Weston's settlement, houses associated with Weston's and later Wessagussett settlements. The Project Area also has potential for unrecorded structures and/or features associated with later eighteenth and early nineteenth century development of the property.

If any human remains are revealed as a result of the field investigation, excavation will cease, the area will be protected from further impact, and the State Archaeologist will be contacted immediately. According to the Massachusetts Unmarked Burial Law and regulations governing archaeological investigations under permit, no authorization is provided to archaeologists to excavated human remains without a Special Permit (950 CMR 70.20).

Houses

There has been considerable research and conjecture with regard to Plymouth Plantation's architecture (Baker 1996). While structures at Wessagussett were likely similar to those at Plymouth, there could also be differences due to the background of those who settled at both places. Houses of the period have been described as "rude structures built of logs, and thatched with the coarse grass found at the head of the beaches above the salt water, which was carefully preserved for the purpose by the town" (Beard nd). The spaces between the logs were filled with a sort of pitch or cement made of slime, sand and grass from the beach. They houses were generally one story with a large room used as for the kitchen, general living, and dining room. The chimney had a large open fire place. If there was a second story it was attached to the chimney for strength. Seaweed was used to pack along the base of the house to keep out the cold and wind of winter (Weymouth Historical Society 1923). Conjectured renditions of houses from Plymouth plantation include ones of post-hole construction rather than ones with stone foundations whose windows are sill-less, with wattle and daub panel between vertical studding.

Comparison of Plymouth and Wessagusset Defenses

Medieval fortification was based on the principle of the wall and the keep, also known as the motte and bailey fortification. In the case of European and English defensive fortifications, a thick stone wall surrounded the town and provided a defense against attack. In the English colonies, a need for a quickly erected defense, an abundance of timber, and a less serious threat of all out attack by cannon fire, saw the replacement of the thick stone wall with tall timber palisades. While the materials were different, the principle remained the same- provide a safe place of refuge for a larger village population, keep the attackers outside, and provide a defensible fortification. The palisade would often surround an appreciable portion of a town with houses, gardens, a freshwater supply and livestock pens located within the walls. During the medieval period this was termed the bailey. Also within the palisade a secondary defensive fall-back location, the motte, was located. The motte became the blockhouse or fort of the seventeenth century fortification. Originally the motte was a tower or keep within which the village lord kept residence. It had its own outer defensive curtain, a wall with defensive towers, and its own provisions. If the town walls were breached, defenders could fall-back to the motte and hold out there. The motte was usually located on a higher piece of land than the bailey, providing a height advantage over potential attackers.

Machiavelli, in his 1520 treatise called *The Art of War*, described how fortification should occur in the age of cannons " of places strong by nature, that for this they must in these times either be surrounded by fens, or perched on a rock, for those that stand upon hills that be not much difficult to go up, be now-a-days considering the artillery and the caves most weak." The remedy for the latter is " to build in the plain, and to make the ditch that compasseth the city so deep that the enemy may not dig lower than the same where he shall not find water, which only is enemy to the caves." (Royal Military Academy 1893:95). In the case of Virginia, this seemed to be the key to fortification "The bold heights whose steep slopes gave security against the catapult, the beffroi, and the trebuchet, could give no such security against the cannon shot; and the new dangers of the mine made it necessary to come down from the hills, and to seek safety, not by rising above the ground, but by sinking into it." (Royal Military Academy 1893:95).

Ditches and ramparts would also be located adjacent to the external side of the wall " ditches are the first and the strongest defences of fortified places" (Royal Military Academy 1893:95). The throwing up of earth onto the exterior of the palisade allowed for a stronger wall that could be erected quickly and without as much seating for the palisade pales. The simplest, and most ancient form, of ditches were simple excavations without any revetment on the outer side. Later, the outer side was made steep and often set with masonry (Heck 1852:144). This was done so that invading attackers would fall into it and not be able to dig their way out back into the field. Ditches could be dry or filled with water. If they were dry, it was recommended that they be thickly set with caltrops, which were spiked tripod-shaped anti-personnel devices approximately three inches long. Caltrops would always land with one spike pointing up with the idea being that this would be stepped on by men or horses. A single example was recovered from the Jamestown excavations in Virginia.

Gates into settlements were considered one of the weakest points of any defense. They had to be wide enough to facilitate the entry of wagons and carts, but small enough to be securely closed

and defended, essentially presenting a solid wall to attackers. In the history of the Peloponnesian War, the Plataeans drove a spike of a spear into the bar of the gate so that the fleeing Thebans could not open it (Dale 1902: 92). At Wessagusset, it was recorded that the settlers spiked three of the four entrances into the town. It is likely that they drove spikes into the wooden cross bar that fastened the gate shut, making it impossible to open them.

In New England, seventeenth century fortifications such as those at Plymouth and at the Popham Colony, followed the motte and bailey principle of fortification. In Plymouth, an initial gun platform was erected on what they termed "the mount". This was subsequently replaced with the fort/ meetinghouse which had its own defensive works around it. At the Popham Colony, the administrative center of the colony (the lord's house), the president's house was located atop a high rocky outcrop within which defenders could retreat. On this outcrop were erected a palisade wall and cannon emplacements which could defend the town below.

In Virginia, possibly due to the fact that settlement was located on the relatively flat areas to the east of the "fall line" of the Virginia coastal plain, settlements did not have the advantage of high ground on which to situate forts/ mottes. This led to a different defensive structure than in New England. In Virginia palisaded towns, like Jamestown, were settlements surrounded by a palisade within which no one location was more heavily defended than another. The essentially lacked the motte, or to look at it in a wider sense, the palisaded community center became the fall-back/ hold-out location of the larger community. Unpalisaded habitation spread out beyond the initial fort in locations like Jamestown and Martin's Hundred with the palisaded initial settlement at the fort being the place where settlers could flee to seek refuge in time of attack.

Virginia archaeologists have also looked towards the English invasion of Ireland in the early seventeenth century, called the Plantation period (1600-1641), as a source of information on parallels to Virginian fortifications. Noel Hume, discussing parallels for the Martin's Hundred settlement in Virginia (c. 1622), succinctly boils down the argument for an Irish to Virginia connection "Lessons learned in Ireland during the Elizabethan years were learned and digested by British settlement planners in London...were packaged in London in colonizing kits...It made no difference where they got off; what they did, and what had to do it with, remained the same." (Noel Hume 1992:237). Two different but similar types of seventeenth century English fortifications have been identified in Ireland: the larger walled towns (triangular in shape like the Jamestown Virginia fort) and the personal fortified enclosure that generally contained the home of the settlement's leader (Noel Hume 1992:237). This fortified "bawn" as it was termed in Ireland (a term originally referring to an animal enclosure), was often located at the head of a settlement with a broad main street extending away from it. On either side of which were situated the meersteads (houselots) of the settlers, a layout very similar to Plymouth's Plantation, except that the bawn was replaced by the fort/ meetinghouse.

The alternative to fortifying an entire town is the fortification of an individual house, essentially creating a blockhouse where the community can seek refuge during an attack. In Virginia, the fortified house was usually the home of the colony leader. It is believed that the concept of the

fortified house came from the English experience in the English invasion of Ireland (1600-1640). In Ireland, local tribes would create fortified community bawns where kin were driven into and protected (Hodges 1993:209). The defensive vocabulary of community bawns flows into fortified houses and was transplanted to the New World as one of the defensive alternatives available to colonists (Hodges 1993: 210). The speed of warfare in the New World, forced planters to adopt the same attitudes towards defense that the Native Americans and Gaelic had adopted: Throw up military works when you need them tear the down when you don't to save labor (Hodges 1993: 213). Especially in Virginia where seventeenth century settlement was focused on the flat plain east of the Fall Line, the visual message sent by a fortified house's high profile on the cleared landscape, may have also provided a visual deterrent to attacking forces and a sense of security for the inhabitants.

Fortified houses existed in New England as well. Samuel Maverick reported in 1660 that there existed in Revere a building dating back to 1625 which he had fortified with a “a pallizado and flankers and gunnes, both belowe and above in them” (PMHS 1885: 236). In 1628, one house was described as being in what would become Charleston, Ma., an “English palisadoed and thatched house” (Young 1846: 374). Reverend John Lathrop recorded that in 1634 all of the houses in Scituate were small, plain, “pallizadoe” houses (NEHGR 1856: 42). Plymouth Colony also had fortified houses, as evidenced in a 1647 court case where John Crocker's house was entered by someone “putting aside some loose pallizadoes” (Candee 1969: 38-39).

The bawns in Ireland and the defensive works in the New World most often showed a preference for ditch set stockades over technically complicated post and rail works to defend against guerrilla warfare raids. The use of split rails solved three problems 1) how to build with green wood, 2) how to defend oneself rapidly, 3) how to flexibly fence with minimum effort (Hodges 1993: 211). While it is known that fortified houses were present in New England, the actual form is not known. In Virginia, the split-rail palisade surrounding the house had a maximum single side length of 240 feet, which was the distance that a seventeenth century firearm could accurately fire, with at least two corners ending in U-shaped, circular or curvilinear bastions which provide the maximum defense by muskets (Hodges 1993: 209-210). It appears from the descriptions of the fortifications at Wessagusset that a full fort with palisade was present versus a fortified house. Both the New England and the Virginia fortification systems likely had several elements in common. In keeping with the basics of fortification systems Heck (1852) states that “fortifications of the middle ages consisted usually of a ditch surrounding the whole place, of a closed circumscribing wall, and a place of retreat, in which the garrison could defend themselves even when the wall was in possession of the enemy” (Heck 1852: 144) This appears to have been a guiding principle to the establishment of fortifications in New England. In both New England and Virginia, walls would have had internal and external pmoeriums, strips of cleared ground adjacent to the wall. An external pmoerium gave defenders a clear view of the area around the fortification and dissuaded attackers, especially attackers such as Native Americans who practiced more of a guerrilla warfare versus open field fighting, from probing for weaknesses in the wall. The internal pmoerium gave defenders a clear area adjacent to the wall to mobilize and move men and equipment anywhere along the defensive perimeter.

The defenses erected by Weston's colonists at Wessagusset may have been created as a result of three factors: 1) the defenses seen at Plymouth by Weston's men; 2) defensive plans determined before the ship left England that seventeenth century fortification principles; 3) tactics used at the Popham Colony in Maine in 1607. It is not known if Weston's colony had a military advisor either in England or accompanying the colonists at Wessagusset. It is known that Edward Johnson, who Thomas Morton recounts as having served as the judge over the man accused of stealing corn from the Natives, was described in the 1630s as Captain Edward Johnson when he lived in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. If that Edward Johnson was the same as the Edward Johnson at Wessagusset, he may have been the military leader of the group and thus, like Myles Standish of the Plymouth Colony, may have been in charge of determining where and of what type the defensive works would be. It is likely that the works were erected soon after the colonists landed and they were not hastily constructed defenses thrown up in February or March as a result of pressure from the Natives. They were described by Winslow as well made and the scant evidence available shows that some thought must have gone into them.

Plymouth Colony Defenses

The settlers at Wessagusset spent an appreciable amount of time in Plymouth before going to Wessagusset. As a result, they may have helped erect the defenses, specifically the fort, during their stay. They at least would have seen how and why Plymouth erected their fortifications as they did and would have carried this information with them to Wessagusset. Plymouth's fortifications consisted of three main elements: an initial gun platform, a palisade, a formal fort. Fortification of the colony was likely directed by Captain Myles Standish, the colony's military leader, and it appears to have been an integral part of the colony from the start. Construction of the gun platform began soon after the arrival of the Mayflower in Plymouth Harbor in 1620. The platform was later replaced by the fort/ meetinghouse in 1622. Both the meetinghouse and the palisade were constructed after word arrived from Virginia of the uprisings of the local Natives there against the English colonists in March 1622. It is likely that the fort and palisade were planned elements of the overall plantation design but due to the deaths during the first winter and the amiable relations with the majority of the local Natives, construction was forestalled until a real or perceived threat became an overwhelming concern.

Gun Platform

The defenses of Plymouth were begun on December 28, 1620 when Edward Winslow reported that "as many as could went to work on the hill where we purposed to build our platform for our ordnance, and which doth command all the plain and the bay, and from whence we may see far into the sea, and might be easier impaled, having two rows of houses and a fair street." (Heath 1963:42). It appears that the colonists had a plan for the colony, possibly based on a template for colonies in Northern Ireland. It is not known when the platform was completed and the ordnance was actually in place, because on January 17, 1621, Winslow related that after they had heard the "noise of a great many more [savages] behind the hill [over against our plantation], This caused us to plant our great ordnance in places most convenient" (Heath 1963:42). It is likely that the ordnance was still on the Mayflower at this point because on February 21, 1621 Winslow reported that ". . . the master came on shore with many of his sailors, and brought with him one of

the great pieces, called a minion [a cannon with 33 inch bore, firing 2 lb shot], and helped us to draw it up the hill, with another piece that lay on shore, and mounted them, and a saller [a misprint for saker, a cannon with 4 inch bore, firing a six pound shot], and two bases [small cannons with 13 inch bore, firing 2lb shot]" (Heath 1963: 50).

Palisade

In March of 1622, after a challenge by the Narragansetts, the colonists decided that they should enclose the town within a palisade. This was likely part of their original plan for the town but it is interesting to note that they had inhabited their town for over a year at this point without a fear of attack or possibly a need to build a palisade. By this point there were as many as 53 men (26 of the original Mayflower passengers, six young men, and 26 men who arrived in November 1621 aboard the *Fortune*) who could have worked on building the palisade. In 1642, there is a description in the Plymouth Colony records of a palisade that was built in Plymouth. It was described as being "made of sharpened pales 102 feet long, buried 22 feet in the ground, and backed two against a third, and set against a post and a Raile" (Candee 1969: 38). In light of the fact that we have no other descriptions of the first palisade, this one can serve as a working model for a strong possibility of how the town was originally impaled.

Bradford relates the following "But this (the Narragansett challenge) made them the more carefully to look to themselves, so as they agreed to enclose their dwellings with a good strong pale, and make flankers in convenient places with gates to shut, which were every night locked, and a watch kept; and when need required, there was also warding in the daytime. And the company was by the Captain's and the Governor's advice divided into four squadrons, and everyone had their quarter appointed them unto which they were to repair upon any sudden alarm. And if there should be any cry of fire, a company was appointed for a guard, with muskets, whilst others quenched the same, to prevent Indian treachery. This was accomplished very cheerfully, and the town impaled round by the beginning of March, in which every family had a pretty garden plot secured" (Morrison 1952: 97).

While Winslow states "In the mean time, knowing our own weakness, notwithstanding our high words and lofty looks towards them, and still lying open to all casualty, having as yet (under God) no other defence than our arms, we thought it most needful to impale our town; which with all expedition we accomplished in the month of February, and some few days, taking in the top of the hill under which our town is seated; making four bulwarks or jetties without the ordinary circuit of the pale, from whence we could defend the whole town; in three whereof are gates, and the fourth in time to be." (Winslow 1841: 284).

The palisade appears to have been completed by March of the same year. Winslow relates that by early March "By this time our town is impaled; enclosing a garden for every family." (Winslow 1841: 286) and that "[We] came to this conclusion; that as hitherto, upon all occasions between them and us, we had ever manifested undaunted courage and resolution, so it would not now stand with our safety to mew up ourselves in our new-enclosed town . . ." (Winslow 1841: 286).

Fort

Following news from Virginia of the attacks by the Natives upon the English settlements thereon March 22, 1622, the Plymouth colonist decided it was time to build their fort to complement the palisade Bradford states “This summer they built a fort with good timber, both strong and comely, which was of good defense, made with a flat roof and battlements, on which their ordnance were mounted, and where they kept constant watch, especially in time of danger. It served them also for a meeting house and was fitted accordingly for that use. It was a great work for them in this weakness and time of wants, but the danger of the time required it; and both the continual rumors of the fears from the Indians here, especially the Narragansetts, and also the hearing of that great massacre in Virginia, made all hands willing to dispatch the same” (Morrison 1952:111).

Edward Winslow places the construction of the fort in June 1622, which correlates well with Bradford's more general “this summer.” Phineas Pratt and the six others who were with him arrived on May 31, 1622, placing him in the town 1) a few months after the palisade was built and 2) right at the start of construction of the fort/meetinghouse. Pratt and the other remained in the town with the 60 other “lusty” men sent by Weston (who arrived in late July or early August), until the end of summer when they moved to Wessagusset. These 67 men may have helped construct the fort/ meetinghouse in Plymouth, as they were extra manual labor being fed out of the colony's stores. Winslow states “In the time of these straits, indeed before my going to Munhiggen [Monhegan], the Indians began again to cast forth many insulting speeches, glorying in our weakness, and giving out how easy it would be ere long to cut us off. Now also Massassowat {Massasoit} seemed to frown on us, and neither came or sent to us as formerly. These things occasioned further thoughts of fortification. And whereas we have a hill called the Mount, enclosed within our pale, under which our town is seated, we resolved to erect a fort thereon; from whence a few might easily secure the town from any assault the Indians can make, whilst the rest might be employed as occasion served. This work was begun with great eagerness, and with the approbation of all men, hoping that this being once finished, and a continual guard there kept, it would utterly discourage the savages from having any hopes or thoughts of rising against us. And though it took the greatest part of our strength from dressing our corn, yet, life being continued, we hoped God would raise some means in stead thereof for our further preservation” (Winslow 1841:295)

In August of 1622, the ship Discovery made port at Plymouth with John Pory, the just retired Secretary to the Governor and Council of Virginia aboard. Pory states that in August “Now concerning the quality of the people . . . their industry as well appeareth by their building, as by a substantial palisado about their [town] of 2700 foot in compass, stronger than I have seen any in Virginia, and lastly by a blockhouse which they have erected in the highest place of the town to mount their ordnance upon, from whence they may command all the harbour” (James 1997:11). Pory's description of the fort as a blockhouse, indicates that the structure may not have had a roof upon it, as he goes on to say that it was built to mount their ordnance upon, not within, as would be the case if it was roofed. On the other hand, the fort was not complete when Pory saw it in August; perhaps they had not put the roof on yet.

The colonists apparently were fairly single-minded in their construction of the fort, putting other needs such as planting and trade, second to the endeavor. In October 1622, Winslow states “ By reason whereof (our own wants being like to be now greater than formerly, partly because we were forced to neglect our corn and spend much time in fortification, but especially because such havoc was made of that little we had, through the unjust and dishonest carriage of those people before mentioned [Weston's colonists], at our first entertainment of them,)...” (Winslow 1841:300). In total it took 10 months to finish the fort. Winslow, in March 1623, stated that “Now was our fort made fit for service, and some ordnance mounted; and though it may seem long work, it being ten months since it begun . . . amongst us divers seeing the work prove tedious, would have dissuaded from proceeding, flattering themselves with peace and security, and accounting it rather a work of superfluity and vainglory, than simple necessity” (Winslow 1841:335).

In September 1623, Emmanuel Altham, Captain of the Little James and one of the Merchant Adventurers who had financed the settlement at Plymouth, visited and reported: “It is well situated upon a high hill close unto the seaside, and very commodious for shipping to come unto them. In this plantation is about twenty houses, for or five of which are very fair and pleasant, and the rest (as time will serve) shall be made better. And this town is in such manner that it makes a great street between the houses, and at the upper end of the town there is a strong fort, both by nature and art, with six pieces of reasonable good artillery mounted thereon; in which fort is continual watch, so that no Indian can come near thereabouts but he is presently seen. This town is paleed about with pale of eight foot long, or thereabouts, and in the pale are three great gates” (James 1997: 24). Altham also states that the ordinance was mounted thereon, not therein, another indication that the fort had an unroofed gundeck.

Captain John Smith, who almost was the Plymouth colony's military leader, never visited the Plantation, but that did not stop him from describing it (most likely through the intelligence from someone else). Smith states in 1624 that “At New-Plimoth there is about 180 persons, some cattle and goats, but many swine and poultry, 32 dwelling houses, whereof 7 were burnt the last winter, and the value of five hundred pounds in other goods. The town is impaled about half a mile in compass. In the town upon a high mount they have a fort well built with wood, loam and stone, where is planted their ordnance; also a fair watchtower, partly framed, for the sentinel...” (Barbour 1986: 472). Smith is the only description that states that the fort was of wood, loam and stone (possibly referring to earthworks around the fort itself as well as the fort) and mentions a watchtower.

The final description of the fortifications and layout of Plymouth comes from the visiting Dutchman Isaac de Rasiere, chief Trading Agent for the Dutch West India Company and Secretary to the Director-General of New Netherlands who visited in 1627 and wrote a letter to Samuel Blommaert in 1628. De Rasiere states “New Plymouth lies on the slope of a hill stretching east towards the sea-coast, with a broad street about a cannon shot of 800 feet long, leading down the hill; with a [street] crossing in the middle, northwards to the rivulet and southwards to the land. The houses are constructed of clapboards, with gardens also enclosed behind and at the sides with clapboards, so that their houses and courtyards are arranged in very good order, with a stockade

against sudden attack; and at the ends of the streets there are three wooden gates. In the center, on the cross street, stands the Governor's house, before which is a square stockade upon which four patereros are mounted, so as to enfilade the streets. Upon the hill they have a large square house with a flat roof, built of thick sawn planks stayed with oak beams, upon the top of which they have six cannon, which shoot iron balls of four and five pounds, and command the surrounding country. The lower part they use for their church, where they preach on Sundays and the usual holidays..." (James 1997: 75-76). It should be remembered that this description was originally written in Dutch and translated to English and it is unknown what may have been lost in translation.

From these descriptions, a chronology and inventory of the construction and extent of the fortifications at Plymouth can be drawn up:

November 1620 Mayflower Lands
December 28, 1620 Platform for ordinance begun
February 21, 1621 Ordinance unloaded from Mayflower and set up
February-March 1622 Palisade constructed
May 31, 1622 Phineas Pratt and six others arrive
June 1622 Fort begun
late July/ early August 1622 60 of Weston's lusty men arrive
August 1622 John Pory visits colony
March 1623 Fort finished
September 1623 Emmanuel Altham visits colony
1624 John Smith writes of Plymouth
1627 De Rasiere visits colony
1634 Fort torn down and replaced

Plymouth defenses facts:

Plymouth had a palisade 2700 feet in compass (about ½ mile in compass)
palisade stronger than Pory had seen in Virginia
pale are 8 feet long or thereabouts
palisade around 32 houses
lay on the slope of a hill
had a broad street 800' long
another street crossing in the middle
at the ends of the streets are three wooden gates
four bulwarks or jetties outside of pale, in three whereof are gates, and the fourth in time to be.
at the cross street was a square stockade upon which four patereros
at the top of the hill they have large square house with a flat roof, built of thick sawn planks stayed with oak beams, upon the top of which they have six cannon
on a high mount they have a fort well built with wood, loam and stone, where is planted their ordnance -a fair watchtower, partly framed, for the sentinel
fort also called a blockhouse

Seventeenth century fortification tactics

It is not known exactly what the layout of the plantation at Wessagusset was, but we do have a few tantalizing clues. We know from Phineas Pratt's narrative that the plantation had a palisade, a fort and a court of guard (which may have been located within or near the fort. We also know that the entire Plantation was located near a swamp "Then they (the natives), having intent to make war, removed some of their houses to the edge of a great swamp near to the pale (palisade) of our plantation", so the palisade was near the "great swamp". Knowing that Pratt and the settlers had arrived a Plymouth when they had just completed their palisade and were in the process of building their fort, it should be safe to assume that they would have observed Plymouth's defenses and the situating of the town and may have attempted to emulate it. The hypothesis that the settlers at Wessagusset tried to copy Plymouth defensive strategies at least gives us a basis for speculating on possible locations for the settlement.

Based on Pratt's narrative and Plymouth's defenses, the fort and palisade should be located in a location with the following characteristics:

- a relatively high location, the higher the better to give the high ground advantage like Plymouth had,
- located adjacent to a swamp, possibly to use the swamp as a natural earthwork making attack on the plantation more difficult at least from one side,
- possibly a location with a good view of the harbor, to look out for approaching ships (friendly or not),
- a location near reliable fresh water (possibly associated with the swamp).

As Wessagusset's fort and palisade appear to have been complete when Plymouth arrived to rescue the settlers, it was likely smaller than Plymouth's. Since no one remarked that it was in a ruinous or poor state, it was likely fairly well constructed. Winslow states that the settlers feared that the Natives would attack, and that the English at Wessagusset were ready to take food from the Natives by force, and to that end the spiked up every entrance to their town (being well impaled) (Winslow 1841). This means that 1) the town was "well-impaled" and that 2) they had more than one entrance into their town (like Plymouth). This may indicate that the design of the colony could have learned from the lessons of the Popham Colony and what they saw at Plymouth. It is likely that someone among the colonists arrived with a town plan and designs for fortifications to be erected. It is unknown if fortifications were erected before the local Massachuseuk Natives became fed up with the colonists, but the fact that Winslow described the colony as "well-impaled" suggests that they were not surrounded by hastily thrown up defensive works and it implies that the defenses were erected prior to the period of famine that ensued during the winter.

Reflections on Weston's Settlement

One of the consistent arguments presented in any discussion of the Wessagusset Plantation is that the colony and the colonists came to New England unprepared. The colonists are consistently portrayed as lazy, shiftless individuals who were not easily controlled. Contrary to the traditional interpretation of Weston's venture as being doomed to failure for lack of good people and planning, the historical record makes it clear that the colony was founded by at least three, and more likely

four classes of individuals and that they arrived with a plan. Their plan allowed them to quickly build a well-made fort, palisade, and housing. Unfortunately a lack of food led to disputes with the local Natives and acts of desperation by the settlers culminating in a preemptive strike on the local Native leaders by the colonists at Plymouth in order to save the Wessagusset colonists and the plantation at Plymouth from a perceived, and very likely a real threat.

While the official list of all the individuals in Weston's settlement is not known considerable research conducted by Rev. William Hyde identified about 30 names. Rev. Hyde was only able to determine that there were several gentlemen and servants, one of whom was a Negro (Fearing 1941). It is known that Weston's brother-in-law, Richard Greene, was the first leader of the colony. He died in November of 1622 and John Saunders (Sanders) became the next leader. Other named individuals in the colony included Dr. Salisbury, the surgeon, Edward Johnson (who later wrote Johnson's Wonder Working Providence), and Phineas Pratt (whose narrative forms the core of much of what we know regarding the actual facts of the plantation). Other individuals may have been artisans, laborers, and soldiers

William Bradford, governor of the Plymouth Colony, was one of the primary source chroniclers of the affairs at Wessagusset and one of the few who had first hand information on the character of Weston's settlers. Bradford described them as "about 60 lusty men...unruly company, and had no good govermente over them" (Deane 1856:124). By this point, Bradford had already received letters from some of the Merchant Adventurers, their friend and fellow Separatist Robert Cushman (then still in England), and even Thomas Weston, all of whom stated to a greater or lesser degree that Weston's colonists were of the ruder sort. The Adventurers and Cushman's letters were most scathing regarding Weston's settlers, with Adventurer Pierce saying he considered them "...so base in condition (for the most parte) as in all apearance not fitt for an honest mans company" (Davis 1908: 136). Weston himself wrote "...ther are many of our people rude fellows, as these men terme them" (Davis 1908: 134). But Bradford, an individual who had an extended interaction with these settlers while they were at Plymouth following their arrival, merely stated that they were lusty and unruly. In the 1600s the term "lusty" had a variety of meanings including: of persons Gailey dressed (1610); joyful, merry, lively (1621); full of healthy vigour, strong (mid 1600s); full of desire, desirous (1657); and insolent, arrogant, self confident (1674) (Onions 1968). On numerous occasions Bradford describes various individuals involved in Plymouth's history as "lusty" including John Howland when he fell overboard on the voyage over ("lustie yonge man"), a sailor that taunted the settlers during their passage from England ("...proud & very profane yonge man, one of ye sea-men, of a lustie, able body, which made him the more hauty..."), and one of the Natives that attacked them at First Encounter on Cape Cod ("... a lustie man, and no less valiante, stood behind a tree within halfe a musket shot...") (Deane 1856: 74-75, 76).

Overall, Weston appears to have sponsored a well thought out colony whose failure, in hindsight, may have been attributed to an unexpected circumstance – the famine that put everyone's existence in jeopardy. Mourt's Relations, a first hand account of the first year of the plantation at Plymouth had been published in London in 1622 by George Morton, and may have been available to men like Weston and the others who planned the venture. In it, the author or authors (it is believed that

it was written either by Edward Winslow alone or as a collaborative effort between Winslow and William Bradford), present a fairly positive view of New England's bounty, the Native peoples disposition and the region's weather and temperament. Weston may have thought that unlike the colony at Popham this venture would succeed due to the natural bounty of the land, trade with the established colony at Plymouth, local Natives and fishermen to the north (present-day Maine).

The make up of the company sent by Weston appears consistent with other seventeenth century English colonial ventures. There were three known components: 1) gentlemen (like Edward Green the original leader of the colony) and Edward Johnson; 2) artisans (like Phineas Pratt, a joiner); and 3) the labor (the "lusty" men and rude fellows). These three groups represented the leaders, the gentlemen who naturally lead others; the profit, the artisans who were expected to transform New England's raw materials into profitable commodities to be sent back to England; and the labor, the unattached young men looking for adventure who would physically build the colony. Added to these three components would likely have been a fourth: the military. Nowhere is a military leader identified for Weston's colony, but it is known that a "court of guard" was established within the plantation and men kept watch and ward. It is also suspected that Edward Johnson may have been a military captain, possibly the Captain of Wessagusset in the same vein that Myles Standish and John Smith were the military leaders at Plymouth and Jamestown, respectively.

The Location of Wessagusset

While the goings on at Wessagusset in the seventeenth century have fallen under various interpretations due to the interests of the writer, the exact location of these happenings, while generally placed in the Old Spain section of North Weymouth remains unclear. Charles Francis Adams (1891) spent considerable effort trying to find the exact location of Wessagusset. Tradition had fixed the original settlement at the north side of Phillips Creek, a spot Adams considered less than ideal as there was not good anchorage and it did not face the harbor – an unlikely spot for a trading post. Yet that location appears to accord with Morrell's dismal description of the settlement. The location would also accord with the lessons learned from the Popham settlement where the harsh conditions at the mouth of Kennebunk River proved too severe for the colony. Later colonists to that area settled further up the river where they would be better sheltered from the weather and the tides. As Weston was a backer for that colony, he may have advised his colonists to find a location away from the open harbor and more towards a sheltered area in close proximity to the open harbor.

Determining the probable or possible location of Weston's 1622 plantation at Wessagusset depends on three sources: primary documentation, cartographic evidence, and local history, of these three the first should be considered the most important. Clues in the narrative of Phineas Pratt, an actual occupant of the plantation and chronicler of the events of the spring of 1623, provides good general information and describes important topographic features located around the plantation. Other chroniclers were Edward Winslow and William Bradford from the Plymouth Plantation. Neither Winslow nor Bradford were likely present at the attack on Wessagusset and both appear to have relied on descriptions of the events for their chronicles, with the former's being a more detailed account than the latter's.

When determining the most likely location for the settlement, four things were looked for: a reliable water source, a long or great swamp, a nearby hill, and an area with two opposing fairly equally defensible occupation areas (one for the Natives and one for Weston's men). Local historical tradition relates that the Wessagusset Plantation was located in the Weymouth Heights/Phillip's Creek area of North Weymouth. Phillip's Creek, located north of Pearl Street, was the known location of later seventeenth century occupation and at the end of the intersection of Pearl and Norton streets is a piece of land referred to at least by the 1640s as "Burying Island." The possible locations of the English and Native settlements, the hill where Standish, Hobbomock and the other men from the Plymouth expedition traded shots with the Massachusetts Natives, as well as the long swamp that was used by Pratt for his escape are shown in Figure 1.

After abandonment, the location of Weston's settlement was used by Gorge's followers. When that settlement broke up several of the party remained behind and the group slowly grew during the following decade. Cartographic evidence is limited to a map rendered in 1633 depicting the settlement at Wessagusset. Of particular note on the map is that the "Way to Plimouth" is located just to the south of the Phillips Creek location. Being located adjacent to a regional road would likely have been beneficial to a trading post. As the location did not appear to be an area conducive for settlement, those who came to the area between 1623 and 1632 moved towards the coast. A change in location would account for the glowing description of Wessagusset by Winthrop and others. One would assume that Winthrop's 1633 map would show where he had stayed during his journey. The map shows no houses near the location of Philips Creek, strongly suggesting that no one was living there at the time even though it was in close proximity to the road to Plymouth. As Winthrop traveled to Wessagusset by boat, the three houses to the north of King's Cove in the general area of Hunts Hill as well as a larger structure in close proximity to Weymouth Back River, both near the coast make sense.

In 1633 William Wood recorded that "This as yet is but a small village; yet it is very pleasant and healthful, very good ground, and is well timbered, and hath good store of hay ground . . . Here likewise is an alewife river" (Prince Society 1865). This description would accord with Winthrop's depiction of the large structure located by the Weymouth Back River that was known for its fish runs. It is therefore more likely that the 1633 Winthrop map shows where a contemporary settlement was as opposed to where settlement from a decade prior was located.



Figure 1. Possible location of Wessagussett In Weymouth, MA

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Appendix A.**Phineas Pratt's Narrative****A DECLARATION OF THE AFFAIRS OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE
THAT FIRST INHABITED NEW ENGLAND**

In the time of spiritual darkness, when the state [ecclesiasti...] Rome ruled and over ruled most of the nations of Europe, it [plea...] to give wisdom to many, kings and people, in breaking that spiritual [yo...]; yet, not withstanding, there arose great strife among such people that are known by the name of Protestants, in many cases concerning the worship of God; but the greatest & strongest number of men commonly prevailed against the smaller and lesser number. At this time the honored Estates of Holland gave more liberty in cases of religion that could be enjoyed in some other places. Upon which divers good Christians removed [the...] dwellings into the Low Countries.

Then one company that dwelt in the city of Leiden, being no well able outwardly to subsist, took counsel & agreed to remove into America, into some port northward of Virginia. The Dutch people offered them divers conditions to supply them with things necessary if they would live under the government of their state, but they refused it. This they did that all men might know the entire love they bore to their king & country; for in them there was never found any lack of lawful obedience. They sent to their friends in England to let them understand what they intended to do. Then divers [fr...] disbursed some monies for the furthering of so good a work.

It is [f...] to be understood that, in the year 1618, there appeared a blazing star over Germany that made the wise men of Europe astonished their [...]

Speedily after, near about that time, these people began to propose removal. They agreed that their strongest & ablest men should go [...] to provide for their wives & children. Then coming in England, they set forward in two ships, but their lesser ship sprung a leak & returned [...] England; the bigger ship arrived at Cape Cod, 1620, it being winter, then called New England but formerly called Canada. They sent forth their boat upon discovery. Their boat being returned to their ship, they removed into the bay of Plymouth & began their [planta...] by the river of Patuxet. Their ship being returned & safely arrived in England, those gentlemen & merchants, that had undertaken to supply them with things necessary, understanding that many of them were sick & some dead, made haste to send a ship with many things necessary; but some indiscreet men, hoping to encourage their friends to come to them, wrote letters concerning the great plenty of fish, fowl and deer, not considering that the wild savages were many times hungry, yet have a better skill to catch such things than English men have. The Adventurers, willing to save their monies, sent them weakly provided of victuals, as many more after them did the like; and that was the great cause of famine.

At the same time, Mr. Thomas Weston, a merchant of good credit in London, that was then their treasurer, that had disbursed much of his money for the good of New England, sent forth a ship for the settling a plantation in the Massachusetts Bay, but wanting (lacking) a pilot we arrived at Damerill's Cove. The men that belonged to the ship, there fishing, had newly set up a Maypole and were very merry. We made haste to prepare a boat fit for coasting. Then said Mr. Rogers, Master of our ship, 'here are many ships & at Monhegan, but no man that does undertake to be your pilot; for they say that an Indian called Rumhigin undertook to pilot a boat to Plymouth, but they all lost their lives.' Then said Mr. Gibbs, Master's Mate of our ship, 'I will venture my life with them.' At this time of our discovery, we first arrived at Smith's Islands, first so called by Captain Smith, at

the time of his discovery of New England, [...furtherwards] called Isles of Shoals; from then to Cape Ann [...] so called by Captain Mason; from thence to the Massachusetts Bay. There we continued 4 or 5 days.

Then we perceived, that on the south part of the Bay, were fewest of the Natives of the country dwelling there. We thought best to begin our plantation, but fearing a great company of savages, we being but 10 men, thought it best to see if our friends were living at Plymouth. Then sailing along the coast, not knowing the harbor, they shot off a piece of ordinance, and at our coming ashore, they entertained us with 3 volleys of shot. Their second ship was returned for England before we came to them. We asked them where the rest of our friends were that came in the first ship. They said that God had taken them away by death, & that before their second ship came, they were so distressed with sickness that they, fearing the savages should know it, had set up their sick men with their muskets upon their rests & their backs leaning against trees. At this time, one or two of them went with us in our vessel to the place of fishing to buy victuals. 8 or 9 weeks after this, two of our ships arrived at Plymouth - the lesser of our 3 ships continued in the country with us. Then we made haste to settle our plantation in the Massachusetts Bay - our number being near sixty men. At the same time, there was a great plague among the savages &, as themselves told us, half their people died thereof. The Natives called the place of our plantation Wessagusset. Near unto it is a town of later time called Weymouth.

The savages seemed to be good friends with us while they feared us, but when they saw famine prevail, they began to insult, as appears by the sequel; for one of their Pineses, or chief men, called Pecksuot, employed himself to learn to speak English, observing all things for his bloody ends. He told me he loved English men very well, but he loved me best of all. Then he said, 'you say French men do not love you, but I will tell you what we have done to them. There was a ship broken by a storm. They saved most of their goods & hid it in the ground. We made them tell us where it was. Then we made them our servants. They wept much. When we parted them, we gave them such meat as our dogs eat. One of them had a book he would often read in. We asked him what his book said. He answered, it says, there will a people, like Frenchmen, come into this country and drive you all away, & now we think you are they. We took away their clothes. They lived but a little while. One of them lived longer than the rest, for he had a good master & gave him a wife. He is now dead, but has a son alive. Another ship came into the bay with much goods to truck (trade), then I said to the Sachem, I will tell you how you shall have all for nothing. Bring all our canoes & all our beaver & a great many men, but no bows nor arrows, clubs nor hatchets, but knives under the skins that abut our lines. Throw up much beaver upon their deck; sell it very cheap & when I give the word, thrust your knives in the Frenchmen's bellies. Thus we killed them all. But Monsieur Finch, Master of their ship, being wounded, leaped into the hold. We bid him come up, but he would not. Then we cut their cable & the ship went ashore & lay upon her side & slept there. Finch came up & we killed him. Then our Sachem divided their goods & fired their ship & made a very great fire.' Some of our company asked him 'how long it was ago since they first see ships?' They said they could not tell, but they had heard men say the first ship that they see, seemed to be a floating island, as they supposed, broken off from the mainland, wrapped together with the roots of trees, with some trees upon it. They went to it with their canoes, but seeing men & hearing guns, they made haste to be gone.

But after this, when they saw famine prevail, Pecksuot said, 'Why do your men & your dogs die?' I said, 'I had corn for a time of need. Then I filled a chest, but not with corn & spread corn on [...

him] come opened the cover and when I was sure he had seen it, I put [dow...] as if I would not have him see it.' Then he said 'No Indian [so...] You have much corn & English men die for want.' Then they [h...] intent to make war, they removed some of their houses to [th...] a great swamp near to the pale (palisade) of our plantation. After this [yer...] a morning, I saw a man going into one of their houses, weary with traveling & galled on his feet. Then I said to Mr. Salisbury, our Chirurgeon, surely their Sachem has employed him for some intent to make war upon us. Then I took a bag with gunpowder and put it in my pocket, with the top of the bag hanging out, & went to the house where the man was laid upon a mat. The woman of the house took hold of the bag, saying, what is this so big? I said it is good for savages to eat, and struck her on the arm as hard as I could. Then she said, Matchet powder English men, much matchet. By and by Aberdikes bring much men, much sannups, & kill you & all English men at Wessagusset & Patuxet (Plymouth). The man that lay upon the mats, seeing this, was angry and in a great rage, and the woman seemed to be sore afraid. Then I went out of the house and said to a young man that could best understand their language, go ask the woman, but not in the man's hearing, why the man was angry, & she afraid? Our interpreter, coming to me, said 'these are the words of the woman - the man will [...] Aberdikes what I said & he & all Indians will be angry with me [...] This Pecksuot said, 'I love you.' I said 'I love you.' I said 'I love you as well as you love me.' Then he said, in broken English, 'Me hear you can make the likeness of men & of women, dogs & deer, in wood & stone. Can you make [...]?' I said, 'I can see a knife in your hand, with an ill-favored face upon the haft.' Then he gave it into my hand to see his workmanship & said, 'This knife cannot see, it cannot hear, it cannot speak, but by & by it can eat. I have another knife at home with a face upon the haft as like a man as this is like a woman. That knife cannot see, it cannot hear, it cannot speak, but It can eat. It has killed much, Frenchmen, & by & by this knife & that knife shall marry & you shall be there [...] knife at home he had kept for a monument, from the time they had killed Monsieur Finch;' but as the word went out of his mouth, I had a good will to thrust it in his belly. He said, 'I see you are much angry.' I said, 'Guns are longer than knives.'

Some time after this their Sachem came suddenly upon us with a great number of armed men; but their spies seeing us in readiness, he & some of his chief men turned into one of their houses a quarter of an hour. Then we met them outside the pale of our plantation & brought them it. Then said I to a young man that could best speak their language, 'Ask Pecksuot why they come thus armed.' He answered, 'Our Sachem is angry with you.' I said, 'Tell him if he be angry with us, we be angry with him.' Then said their Sachem, 'English men, when you came into the country, we gave you gifts and you gave us gifts; we bought and sold with you and we were friends; and now tell me if I or any of my men have done you wrong.' We answered, 'First tell us if we have done you any wrong.' He answered, 'Some of you steal our corn & I have sent you word times without number & yet our corn is stolen. I come to see what you will do.' We answered, 'It is one man which has done it. Your men have seen us whip him divers time, besides other manner of punishments, & now hear he is, bound. We give him unto you to do with him what you please.' He answered, 'That is not just dealing. If my men wrong my neighbor Sachem or his men, he sends me word & I beat or kill my men, according to the offense. If his men wrong me or my men, I send him word & he beats or kills his men according to the offense. All Sachems do justice by their own men. If not, we say they are all agreed & then we fight, & now I say you all steal my corn.'

At this time, some of them, seeing some of our men upon our fort, began to start, saying 'Machit Pesconk,' that is 'Naughty Guns.' Then looking round about then, went away in a great rage. at this

time we strengthened our watch until we had no food left. In these times, the savages oftentimes did creep upon the snow, starting behind bushes & trees to see whether we kept watch or not [...times] I having rounded on our plantation until I had no longer [...nth]; then in the night, going into our Court of Guard, I see one man dead before me & another at my right hand & another at my left for want of food. O, all the people in New England, that shall hear of these times of our weak beginning, consider what was the strength of the arm of flesh or the wit of man; therefore in the times of your greatest distress put your trust in God.

The offender being bound, we let him loose, because we had no food to give him, charging him to gather ground nuts, clams & mussels, as other men did, & steal no more. One or two days after this, the savages brought him, leading him by the arms, saying 'Here is the corn. Come see the place where he stole it.' Then we kept him bound some few days. After this, two of our company said, 'We have been at the Sachem's house and they have near finished their last canoe that they may encounter with our ship. Their greatest care is how to send their armies to Plymouth because of the snow.' Then we prepared to meet them there. One of our company said, 'They have killed one of our hogs.' Another said, 'One of them strikes at me with his knife;' & others say 'They threw dust in our faces.' Then said Pecksuot to me, 'Give me powder & guns & I will give you much corn.' I said 'By & by men bring ships & victuals.' But when we understood that their plot was to kill all English people in one day when the snow was gone, I would have sent a man to Plymouth, but none were willing to go. Then I said if Plymouth men know not of this treacherous plot, they & we are all dead men; therefore, if God willing, tomorrow I will go.

That night a young man, wanting wit, told Pecksuot early in the morning. Pecksuot came to me & said in English, 'Me hear you go to Patuxet; you will lose yourself; the bears and the wolves will eat you; but because I love you I will send my boy Nahamit with you; & I will give you victuals to eat by the way & to be merry with your friends when you come there.' I said, 'Who told you so great a lie, that I may kill him.' he said, 'It is no lie, you shall not know.' Then he went home to his house. Then came 5 men armed. We said, 'Why come you thus armed.' They said 'We are friends; you carry guns where we dwell & we carry bow & arrows where you dwell.' These attended me 7 or 8 days & nights. Then they supposing it was a lie, were careless of their watch near two hours in the morning. Then said I to our company, 'Now is the time to run to Plymouth. Is there any compass to be found.' They said, 'None but them that belong to the ship.' I said, 'They are too big. I have born no arms of defense this 7 or 8 days. Now if I take my arms they will mistrust me.' Then they said, 'The savages will pursue after you & kill you & we shall never see you again.' Thus with other words of great lamentation, we parted. Then I took a hoe & went to the long swamp nearby their houses & dug on the edge thereof as if I had been looking for ground nuts, but seeing no man, I went in & ran through it. Then looking round about me, I ran southward til 3 o'clock, but the snow being in many places, I was the more distressed because of my footsteps. The sun being clouded, I wandered, not knowing my way; but at the going down of the sun, it appeared red; then hearing a great howling of wolves, I came to a river; the water being deep & cold & many rocks, I passed through with much ado. Then was I in great distress - faint for want of food, weary with running, fearing to make a fire because of them that pursued me. Then I came to a deep dell or hole, there being much wood fallen into it. Then I said in my thoughts, this is God's providence that here I may make a fire. Then having made a fire, the stars began to appear and I saw Ursa Major & the [...] pole yet fearing [...] clouded. The day following I began to travel [...] but being unable, I went back to the fire the day [...] sun shone & about three o'clock I came to that part [...] Plymouth Bay

where there is a town of later time [...] Duxbury. Then passing by the water on my left hand [...] came to a brook & there was a path. Having but a short time to consider [...] fearing to go beyond the plantation, I kept running in the path; then passing through James river I said in my thoughts, now am I as a deer chased [...] the wolves. If I perish, what will be the [condit...] of distressed English men. Then finding a piece of a [...] I took it up & carried it in my hand. Then finding a [...] of a jerkin, I carried them under my arm. Then said I in my [...] God has given me these two tokens for my comfort; that now he will give me my life for a prayer. Then running down a hill [J...] an English man coming in the path before me. Then I said down on a tree & rising up to salute him said, 'Mr. Hamden, I am glad to see you alive.' he said, 'I am glad & full of wonder to see you alive: let us sit down, I see you are weary.' I said, 'Let [...] eat some parched corn.' ;Then he said, 'I know the [caus...]. Come. Massasoit has sent word to the Governor to let him [...] that Aberdikes & his confederates have contrived a plot hoping [...] all English people in one day here as men hard by making [canoe...] stay & we will go with you.

The next day a young [...] named Hugh Stacy went forth to fell at tree & saw two [...] rising from the ground. They said Aberdikes had sent [...] the Governor that he might send men to truck for much beaver, but they would not go, but said, 'Was not there an English [...] come from Wessagusset.' He answered, 'He came,' [...] They said he was their friend and said come and see who [...] But they turned another way. He said, 'You come to let us [...]'

Providence to us was great in those times as appears [...] after the time of the arrival of the first ship at [Pl...] forenamed Massasoit came to Plymouth & their made a [co...] peace, for an Indian called Tisquantum came to them & spoke English [...] They asked him, how he learned to speak English? He said that an Englishman called Captain Hunt came into the harbor pretending to trade for beaver & stole 24 men & their beaver & carried & sold them in Spain. & from thence with much ado, he went into England & from England with much ado, he got into his own country. This man told Massasoit what wonders he had seen in England & that if he could make the English his friends then [...] enemies that were too strong for him would be constrained to bow to him; but being prevented by some that came in the first ship that [...] recorded that which concerned them, I leave it.

Two or 3 days after my coming to Plymouth, 10 or 11 men went in a boat to our plantation, but I being faint was not able to go with them. They first gave warning to the Master of the ship & then contrived how to make sure of the lives of two of their chief men, Wattawamat, of whom they boasted no gun would kill, and Pecksuot, a subtle man. These being slain, they fell upon others where they could find them. Then Abordikes, hearing that some of his men were killed, came to try his manhood, but as they were starting behind bushes & trees, one of them was shot in the arm. At this time an Indian called Hobbamock, that formerly had fled for his life from his Sachem to Plymouth, proved himself a valiant man in fighting & pursuing after them. Two of our men were kill that they took in their houses at an advantage [...] this time [pl...] were instruments in the [...] nds] of God for [...] their own lives and ours. They took the head of [...] & set it on their fort at Plymouth at [...] 9 of our men were dead with famine and one died in the ship before they came to the place where at that time of year ships came to fish - it being in March. At this time, ships began to fish at the Isles of Shoals and I having recovered a little of my [...th] went to my company near about this time [...] the first plantation at Piscataqua the [...] thereof was Mr. David Tomsen at the time of my arrival at Piscataqua. Two of Abordike's men came there & seeing me said 'When we killed your men, they cried and made ill-favored faces.' I said, 'When we killed your men, we did

not torment them to make ourselves merry.' Then we went with our ship into the bay & took from them two shallops loading of corn & of their men prisoners there as a town of later time called Dorchester. The third and last time was in the bay of Agawam. At this time they took for their castle a thick swamp. At this time one of our ablest men was shot in the shoulder. Whether any of them were killed or wounded we could not tell. There is a town of later time, near unto that place, called Ipswich. Thus [...] plantation being deserted, Captain Robert Gore [cam...] the country with six gentlemen. Attending him & divers men to do his labor & other men with their families. They took possession of our plantation, but their ship's supply from England came too late. Thus was famine their final overthrow. Most of them that lived returned to England. The overseers of the third plantation in the bay was Captain Wolleston & Mr. Rosell. These seeing the ruin of the former plantation said, we will not pitch our tents here, lest we should do as they have done. Notwithstanding these gentlemen were wise men, they seemed to blame the overseers of the former companies, not considering that God plants & pulls up, builds & pulls down, & turns the wisdom of wise men into foolishness. These called the name of their place Mount Wolleston. They continued near a year as others had done before them; but famine was their final overthrow. Near unto that place is a town of later time called Braintree. Not long after the overthrow of the first plantation in the bay, Captain Louis came to their country. At the time of his being at Piscataqua a Sachem or Sagamore gave two of his men, one to Captain Louis & another to Mr. Tomsen, but on that was there said, 'How can you trust these savages. Call the name of one Watt Tyler & the other Jack Straw, after the names of the two greatest rebels that ever were in England.' Watt Tyler said, 'When he was a boy, Captain Dormer found him upon an island in great distress.'