



Biography

Chief Asticou

Father: Chief Bashabez

Born at: *Mawooshen* (boundaries along Narraguagas River to northeast and Moussam River to southwest)

Birth and Death Dates Unknown

Asticou was the *sakom* of the greater Mount Desert Island area at the time of the first Europeans' arrival. Asticou headed an area within *Mawooshen*, a political confederacy of neighboring Wabanaki communities throughout Maine. Chief Asticou appears in French and English records from the beginning of the 17th century. A French record from 1613 referenced him as the *sakom* who welcomed the French to his summer village on the southeastern shore of Somes Sound.

“Chief Asticou’s invitation led to the 1613 founding of the short-lived French settlement and Jesuit mission post *Saint Sauveur* at Fernald Point, opposite his seasonal village near the entrance of Somes Sound. Its destruction by an English privateer from Virginia represents the first armed Anglo-French skirmish in the Gulf of Maine, followed by 150 years of competition among French, English, and also Dutch colonial adventurers and entrepreneurs in search of profits and glory, as well as fishermen pursuing their hardscrabble livelihood. These newcomers brought with them not only trade goods, but also killer diseases, including smallpox, cholera, and influenza. These scourges, added to the lethal combination of firewater and firearms, almost wiped Maine’s indigenous coastal peoples from the face of the earth. Within a few decades, up to 90 percent of the Wabanaki perished in this American Indian holocaust. We do not know if Chief Asticou survived the onslaught.” – *Asticou’s Island Domain: Wabanaki Peoples at Mount Desert Island 1500-2000 Vol. 1* by Harald E. L. Prins and Bunny McBride (2007) p. ii.

“It is assumed that Chief Asticou was either killed in the Beaver Wars (Mohawk Wars) in the mid-17th century or killed by the diseases that plagued Native American communities throughout Maine and the Maritimes. Small pox, influenza and yellow fever killed 75 to 90 percent of Native Americans in Maine.” – Penobscot Cultural and Historic Preservation, www.penobscotculture.com/