



MASSASOIT: LEADER OF THE WAMPANOAG TRIBE

by Gareth Jones

Did You Know?
Massasoit is often recognized as the Native American shown on the Massachusetts State flag.

Massasoit was the sachem (intertribal chief) of the Wampanoag Tribe, who inhabited parts of the coastal regions of present-day Massachusetts and Rhode Island. In 1621, Massasoit made contact with the Pilgrims living there and set out to ensure peace between the two races. He and his fellow Native Americans shared techniques of planting, fishing, and cooking that were essential to the settlers' survival in the wilderness.

The two groups agreed to a treaty which said that none of Massasoit's men would harm the Pilgrims - and if they did, he would send them to the Pilgrims for punishment. The agreement also said that if anyone caused unjust war against Massasoit, the Pilgrims would come to his aid. They also agreed that when trading, the Native Americans would not bring their bows and arrows, and the Pilgrims would not bring their guns. Massasoit maintained this great peace between the Plymouth colonists and his people, the Wampanoag, for his whole life.

