









## Names and Signatures

As C. Keith Wilbur explains, New England Indians used no family names like Smith or Jones. They used only personal names. Boys might receive the name of a deceased Indian or receive the name of an object or heavenly occurrence, e.g., "Little Thunderer." Girls received names from the earth, the waters, or plants, like "Woman of the Green Valley."

The Abenaki did not have a written language. When they needed to sign an agreement with Europeans, they could make a mark by drawing a symbol that stood for who they were. People understood a person's mark to be his signature.

Signum		<i>Kirebenuit</i>
Signum		<i>Warraeensitt</i>
Signum		<i>Bomaseen</i>
Signum		<i>Wadacanaquin</i>
Signum		<i>Aeneas</i>
Signum		<i>Iteansis</i>
Signum		<i>Jackoid</i>
Signum		<i>Joseph</i>

Marks from a 1713 treaty noted in Samuel Penhallow, *The History of the Wars of New-England with the Eastern Indians, or a Narrative of Their Continued Perfidy and Cruelty* (Cincinnati: J. Harpel, 1859).



Marks on a map from the 1790s.




Signature of a sagamore on a deed to John Wheelwright, 1638. (Used with permission of the Exeter Historical Society.)

## Make Your Own Mark!

Now it is time to make your own mark!

- Write your name in the blanks below.
- Think about your name, where you live, and things you are good at or interested in. Use your imagination and create your mark in the rectangle below.
- Once you have completed your mark, you can use it to make a nametag for when the staff from the Museum of New Hampshire History visits your class.
  - First, cut along the dotted lines.
  - Now, punch a hole where you see the black circle at the top of the nametag.
  - Run yarn or string through the hole so you can wear the nametag around your neck.



First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**My Mark**