



Richard Nason in New England, Vol. 1: Descendants of John Nason

By Douglas W. Chase

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Descendants of John² Nason is the first volume in a planned series of books pertaining to Richard¹ Nason who settled at Kittery, Maine, sometime before 1639. From Richard¹ Nason, born in 1606, to Leola F.¹⁰ Nason, born in 1901, the book covers more than three centuries of Nason history. While John Nason had two known wives, and probably had a third spouse whose identity has not been learned, the marriages produced a small family. Only one son, Richard³ Nason, survived to carry on the Nason surname in this line. From this thin thread, the succeeding generations grew, and this text entails a comprehensive treatment of the descendants of John² Nason to the children of the tenth generation. Genealogical detail is provided for over 800 Nason individuals in 443 family groups, including household for married Nason daughters. The index facilitates locating individuals within the book. John's descendants have always maintained a strong presence in New England, particularly in Maine, but have spread across the United States. Their characteristics are similar to most early New Englanders - farmers, merchants, traders, seafarers, soldiers in time of need, public servants, church deacons, and adventurers with the courage to create new settlements out of the wilderness. The Nason clan, like so many other early New England families, played an integral role in the forging of a new nation. While there are many unanswered questions regarding Richard Nason and his early years in New England, the legacy of his son John is presented here with reasonable completeness. The material has been referenced to reliable sources whenever possible. When Did Richard Nason Arrive at Kittery? In August 1622, the Council of the Plymouth Company in England granted all of the lands between the Merrimac and Sagadahoc rivers in New England to Sir Ferdinando Gorges and Captain John Mason, who were members of the company. Settlement was made on the Piscataqua River west shore that year, and a large number of arrivals came over in 1623. The first settlement at Kittery may have been made by 1624, although there is dispute regarding the exact date. Gorges and Mason split their grants in 1634, with Mason keeping New Hampshire and Gorges having Maine. However, the ownerships at Kittery were in some dispute, and Mason continued to hold interests there until his death. Old Kittery And Her Families places Mason's death as 12 December 1635 in England, and it is likely anyone under the sponsorship of Mason came to New England no later than 1635. Gorges sent his

nephew, William Gorges, to New England in 1636 to serve as governor of his patent, and a large contingent of families from England and Scotland came with the nephew. It is probable that Richard Nason was among the settlers brought over by Gorges in 1636. The ongoing Great Migration Study, which is in the process of identifying all arrivals to New England between 1620 and 1640, has completed research to the end of 1635, and Richard Nason is not named in the study. Old Kittery And Her Families states he was at Pipe Stave Landing in 1639.

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