

Isaac started for Haverhill as soon as he regained his strength and arrived safely at his father's dwelling house. His father had never expected to see him again having heard nothing from him since his capture two years before. Joseph was ill upon arriving at the Saco Fort and was confined to his bed for a long time. His father obtaining intelligence from Isaac, went to Saco and as soon as circumstances would permit, conveyed his sick son safely to his home in Haverhill, Mass.

By this experience in the northern wilderness, Isaac gained such an intimate acquaintance with the country and with the habits of the Indians that he was employed by those famous Indian fighters, Colonel Hilton and Captain Chesley, in their scouting expeditions into the region of Ossipee and Winnepesaukee Lakes in the first decade of the seventeenth hundreds.

During King William's War (1688-96) and Queen Anne's War thirteen members of Isaac Bradley's family were killed in Indian raids. During his career as an Indian fighter Bradley killed fifteen Indians. That was one for each member of his family killed by them and in addition, one for each year of his captivity. It would appear that his account against the red man was settled in full. He was alive in 1749 when he unavailingly addressed a petition for aid to the Provincial Council. He was voted "Leave to Withdraw."

Jonathan, Samuel and Timothy Bradley were his nephews. The spring of 1696 marked the end of the Indian village at the Weirs (Aqueductan). Subsequent expeditions to that area revealed only empty habitations and evidence of occasional visits for the purpose of fishing or making raids on the frontier to the south. This marked the beginning of their eventual disappearance from New Hampshire.

Events Leading to Settlement

by Solon Colby

The settlement of towns in the Lakes Region would have taken place many years earlier had it not been for the intermittent wars which exposed the frontiers to the horrors of Indian warfare. Although Meredith was granted in 1748 it was seventeen years before people came here to live.

King Philip's War was a struggle for survival between the English and the Indians with its outcome a major turning point in colonial history. With their Iroquois enemies on one side and the English on the other, the Indians had no choice but violence against the intruders who were taking over their lands. This war cost the Indians the lives of over four thousand men, women and children and marked the beginning of their eventual disappearance from New England.

Many of the survivors fled to New Hampshire and Western Maine seeking refuge with the Indians living in the Merrimac and Androscoggin Valleys. For several years thereafter the Indians of New Hampshire

were called Patsukets or the people who lived here by deception by passing themselves off as natives. These refugees retained their hatred for the English and took part in many of the raids upon the frontiers of Maine, Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire during King William's War.

During this war of ten years duration, the four towns in the province of New Hampshire and the adjoining settlements at York, Kittery and Berwick, lost in killed, wounded and captives, over four hundred of their number. This was followed by Queen Anne's War and Lovewell's War, both of which retarded the settlement of New Hampshire. Then came a lull in border warfare from 1725 until 1744 during which time the New Hampshire frontier was extended northward as far as Canterbury.

King George's War began in 1744 and in 1746 the New Hampshire Militia under Colonel Atkinson built a fort at the head of Little Bay on the west bank of the Winnepesaukee River. This was the only colonial fort ever built in the Lakes Region. The stone of which it was constructed was removed to build a dam across the nearby Winnepesaukee River. The remains of this fort were visible for many years and some early historians have erroneously supposed that it was built by the Indians.

Atkinson's regiment remained at this fort until they were paid off and disbanded in the fall of 1747. For nearly a year the soldiers from this fort took turns patrolling the woods from Ossipee Mountain to the Pemigewasset River. They explored minutely the entire Winnepesaukee Basin and upon their return to civilization, their stories connected with their explorations turned the attention of the emigrants and speculators to the fine lands and valuable forests in this section of the province.

At the end of the war in 1748 petitioners from Exeter, Hampton, Nottingham and Stratham were granted a tract of land north of the Winnepesaukee River to the extent and quantity of six miles square. This was at first called Palmerstown after Samuel Palmer, one of the grantees. It was later named Salem, then New Salem and was finally incorporated as Meredith.

The proprietors had hardly finished surveying this tract of land when the "Seven Years War" broke out and halted any attempt at settlement until after the Treaty of Paris in 1763.