

The Hoods in Essex County, northeast Massachusetts

Israel Kenney married into the Hood family. His in-laws, Nathaniel Hood, Jr.* of Topsfield, Essex County, Massachusetts and Abigail Potter of nearby Ipswich, were married on Nov. 13, 1735. Nathaniel had built the family residence near Hood's Pond, a house that was standing 200 years later. Four of their children died in infancy. Four daughters survived, and three of them figure in this story: Abigail (named after her mother), Sarah (named after an aunt of Nathaniel), and Suzannah (named after his sister and born on October 27, 1745). The girls had been born at two-year intervals: 1741, 1743 and 1745. Nathaniel, Jr. died in June of 1755, several years before his daughters were married in the house he built. Abigail Hood and Stephen Hovey declared their intention to marry on July 18, 1761; Sarah Hood married Alexander Tapley on December 9, 1762; and Susannah married Israel Kenney on June 9, 1763. Soon these three couples would emigrate to Nova Scotia. The Barlows, Mrs. Barlow being the widow of Israel's brother, made the same move.

(Also in Essex County were the Kimballs, descendants of Richard Kemball.* One was Asa Kimball. We shall see that he took part in the unusual events of his day.)

The Settlement of Maugerville in Sunbury County, later New Brunswick

At the end of the French and Indian War, a very costly conflict, Great Britain sought to avoid further trouble with the Indians. It recognized native territorial rights and forbade the acquisition of native land by private citizens. To enforce the policy a line was drawn along the heights of the Appalachian Mountains beyond which settlement was prohibited. This policy was a cause of discontent among the Americans but at the same time gave rise to a land boom to the north and east in Nova Scotia.

British Army officers remaining on active duty wanted land and so did several disbanded officers who lived in Essex County, Massachusetts. Both groups made application in Halifax for grants of land in Sunbury County¹, which for practical purposes at the time made up most of western Nova Scotia (later New Brunswick). The British officers also were carefully going through proper channels in London before attempting settlement. In 1762 the Board of Trade recommended to the Privy Council that 60 officers be given 1000 acres each along the Saint John River with three years allowed for settlement.

Meanwhile, the disbanded army officers and men from New England acted immediately. After receiving approval for settlement from the government in Halifax they sent out an exploring party from Newburyport on May 16, 1762, and it arrived at the Saint John River in three days. Exploring in a whaleboat, they noted severe destruction of trees by a windstorm. The party found a better location 90 miles up the river at Saint Ann's (now Fredericton) and prepared to survey the land. A large company of Indians armed and in war paint informed them they were trespassing, so they went downstream about twelve miles and surveyed on the river's east shore. Upon returning home, they gave grants to 64 men, and lots were chosen. Settlers soon arrived, the great majority being Congregationalists from Essex County. They called the place Maugerville (ma'-jor-ville) after an early merchant whom they thought would exert influence in their behalf in London. Needless to say, the government in Halifax let them stay but warned them the group of officers had prior claim for the same land. Three years later there were 261 inhabitants, a gristmill, a sawmill and two sloops. In twenty years it was still very poor and rough but nevertheless was the population center for the upper Saint John River.

* See Appendix

¹ Tim Frick, *New Brunswick; a Short History*, Summerville, N.B., E5S 1B7, p 53