

CHAPTER VIII  
THE PENACOOK PEACE

36. *The Peace of 1634.* As we have seen, in spite of objections from the member tribes, the Penacook Federation, following the lead of Passaconaway, decided to make overtures to the Puritans for peace. The final terms were disastrous enough to the Federation, although this is hardly surprising, since the Federation was never an actually strong combination, having been, as we have seen, organized out of weakness. After the loss of the capital of the Eastern District, peace terms were proposed to include opening the lands of the Eastern District to Puritan settlement, by special arrangement with the respective tribal councils for each town so occupied, in the lands of the Saugus, Masadchu, and Okamakammessets, who had maintained the highest ideals of liberty, while the other two tribes involved were too weakened by war. The peace terms also recognized existing Puritan settlements on the north shore of Massachusetts Bay.

The Pilgrims were not involved in that war, so the situation remained unchanged in the Plymouth colony; the land was under joint rule, governed by the Federation except where the Pilgrims settled towns by agreement. The peace terms sought to extend to the Puritans a similar arrangement. The trouble was that the Puritans already considered themselves owners of the land, and regarded the red men as trespassers in their own country. This the Penacook peoples could not be expected to understand, because they, even more than other red peoples of North America, could not grasp the idea of ownership of land. For that matter the Penacooks could not really understand the ownership of anything, though they knew that the white people had such strange institutions.

Yet they had to try to understand the white man's idea of property, in order to be able to agree on peace. And, since the war had originally started over the efforts of Gorges and Mason to oust the Piscataquas and Abenakis from lands north of the Merrimac, Passaconaway attempted to find a way of disposing of those lands to fit the white men's ideas. In the first place, he completely ignored Gorges and Mason, with their land titles imported from overseas, but he induced

the Federal Council to deal only with the refugee Puritan settlements in Mason's alleged preserve. Passaconaway inquired as to whether white ideas of property covered anything corresponding to permission to occupy, and found out that the whites know of such things as leases; so, by authority from the Federal Council (after considerable objection from the Piscataquas, whose territory the place was) he had a regular deed made out as part of the peace treaty, leasing to these unrecognized Puritan outposts a region extending from the Piscataqua west to the Merrimac, and from the Merrimac thirty miles north. This lease provided for a specified rental in furs for each town to be established in that region. This rent was paid regularly, except for war periods, up to 1755; but, as land titles in that region are still based on Passaconaway's deed, now preserved at Exeter, rather than on Mason's title claim, this leaves the Penacook Federation, or whoever is their successor, the real owners of a territory including Rockingham County in New Hampshire, and some surrounding territory, including the cities of Haverhill and Manchester, and half of Lowell and Lawrence. The Piscataquas agreed to accept a home farther north, in the Agiochook mountains, but were never reconciled to it. There is a legend that the Piscataquas leaving the neighborhood of Strawberry Bank on this occasion, stopped on a nearby hill from which they could look back on the whites' town, and then wished a curse on the land they were standing on, that none of its occupants should ever derive any good from it until it reverted to the tribes.

The peace terms ignored Gorges' lands, as well as Mason's claims to New Hampshire. This encouraged the refugee colonies as against the feudal ones. Thus by Penacook influence, New Hampshire was made a Puritan colony, with a makeshift government on the Puritan model—that is, on the model taken from the Pilgrims, and originally adapted from Wampanoag instructions—this government acting as a rival in authority to the feudal lord with title from England; and the regime established by the Penacooks became much stronger than the proprietary one decreed by England. Although no peace terms were made with the people east of the Piscataqua, it was understood that there would be no hostilities if they established a rival government similar to that of New Hampshire, and set aside under Gorges' authority in favor of one erected by the townspeople. Several abortive efforts at this took place, but the proprietors were not ousted in either colony, although Mason, in New Hampshire, had less. Mason, however, tried to claim the Massachusetts Bay region on this occasion, and sent a subordinate to take possession; a castle was established in the region now called Quincy, and so much noise of revelry issued from it that the Puritans found that a convenient way to get rid of them without bringing a title lawsuit to

England, was to arrest them for disturbance of the peace. Thus ended the last serious attempt to establish complete feudalism in New England.

The Penacook Federation also agreed on a boundary with the Iroquois, consisting mostly of the Quinnitucket River. Very little of the west shore of that river, or of the hills behind it, were ever in actual Iroquois possession; but this boundary has given the Iroquois an excuse for claiming that their territory extended east to the Quinnitucket.

It was also agreed to allow interchange of goods between the Puritans and the Penacook tribes, and either people could visit the communities of the other for that purpose. The Penacook peoples' inability to understand either exchange or property, and finding no value in money, placed difficulties in the way of trade relations; but, on the other hand, traders seem to have been regarded in a way as part of the international and neutral courier system, and that helped. The final compromise reached was the use, as a medium of exchange, of seawant or wampum peag (the beads used to make wampum belts), and the Puritan settlements, and, later on, other neighboring colonies, fixed the value of wampum peag in terms of money. This has given rise to the false conception that wampum was "Indian money."

37. *Elsewhere in America.* By this time, the Virginia colony had established itself firmly in the south, and similarly the French colony in the north as Quebec and in the Quoddy peninsula (which the French called Acadie). An English expedition had captured Quebec, but it was returned by treaty between England and France. The Dutch colonies on the Paumonok Islands and in the Shatemuck River valley were also growing fast, and established friendly relations with the Iroquois Federation, then the greatest power on the continent.

The importation of slaves in Virginia had already been increasing considerably, and that region was already beginning to speak with that African accent which characterizes the whole section of America where slavery once predominated. Besides, there were "indentured servants," people who were sold for a term of years to pay ship fare to America from England; these were really temporary slaves. Over them all ruled an aristocracy, a direct offshoot of the aristocracy that was trampling on England. The Church of England was ruling with as high a hand in Virginia as back in England, and dissenters were persecuted equally in both places. The indenture variety of slavery was also used by England as a way to get rid of criminals by selling them into servitude in Virginia, thus helping to people Virginia with criminals exiled from Britain. We have seen that they tried similarly to ship criminals to the Penacook coast, but the Pilgrim colony resisted, and although both slavery and indentured servitude

were introduced into the northern colonies, they never took strong foothold there.

England's habit of granting charters to persons and companies, covering land claimed by England but in tribal possession, continued. Thus the Quoddy peninsula already partly settled by the French as Acadie, and mostly still Micmac, was chartered out as a Scotch colony, and called Nova Scotia, although actual settlement under the charter was impossible. Likewise, a Catholic, Lord Baltimore, obtained in 1632 a charter for territory north of the Potomac River as a refuge for Catholics from England or Virginia. This region was to be controlled by proprietorship in the Calvert family (Lord Baltimore's); it was named Maryland after the English Queen and a settlement was brought over to Chesapeake Bay in 1634.

There was another charter granted, for the Mohican coast between the Connecticut and Hudson River, to Lord Say and Lord Brooke, but these charter holders did not try colonizing while there was war with the Penacooks. This charter also covered the territory occupied by Dutch settlements. So little was known in Europe about the lands that they "discovered" (though they had never been lost) that many times charters conflicted, not merely with settlements of other nations, but with each other. Actually, these charters merely amounted to permission to acquire and colonize in the name of England, but later they became bases for conflicting land titles.

38. *Invasion of the Quinnitucket.* During the last stages of the war between Penacooks and Puritans, an attempt was made to get in the rear of the Penacooks by fortifying a point in the west bank of the Quinnitucket. This was done in 1633, when a Puritan expedition built on Mohican territory a fortification which they named Windsor, at the highest point on the river reachable by navigation. This was largely augmented and manned by Pilgrim volunteers who settled in the neighborhood, and, as it conducted no active warfare against the Penacook Federation, the Pequots, across the river were inclined to treat Windsor as part of the Pilgrim colony and therefore neutral, but suspicion remained because the intention had obviously been warlike. The Windsor garrison, out off from everything but red tribes, concluded an alliance with the Mohicans. This fort was operated in total defiance of the Say and Brooke charter, and, in fact, of all outside authority; and it is noticeable that the Penacook Federation did not make war against settlements which defied English authority. But the Pequots, on the opposite bank of the Quinnitucket, remained suspicious, and insisted on their rights of examining supply ships going up the Quinnitucket. In one case, the ship's owner, who considered the Pequots

trespassers in their own country, replied by opening fire on the Pequot inspectors, who had to shoot in self-defense, though they tried to avoid such a contingency even though a state of war existed. After the peace of 1634, the Pequots, dissatisfied with the terms, and especially objecting to the excessive freedom the treaty gave to traders, withdrew from the Penacook Federation, and sent envoys to Boston to negotiate a new treaty. And this delegation brought along several canoefuls of wampum peag, under the assumption that whites needed presents of large quantities of beads before they could be talked to—the Pequot interpretation of the Puritan effort to use wampum as money. Perhaps the Pequots did not misunderstand so badly, after all. However, a peace was finally patched up between Puritans and the Pequots, and Puritans also mediated to prevent a war of secession arising with the Penacook Federation.

The Pequots' attempt to cast loose from the Federation at this time was undoubtedly a manifestation of a strong desire to ward off the domination of the white invader and his institutions, which were so obviously repugnant to the Ganowanians. But it was bound to be disastrous to make a breach in the newly-formed union of the red peoples of this part of America.

39. *Extension of the Bay Colony.* The peace terms opened to the Puritans a considerably wider territory than they had been able to settle in before. Existing settlements also had the chance to grow more freely.

In the fall of 1635, the first attempt was made to colonize in the heart of Okamakamisset territory. Permission was obtained from the Tribal Council to use a tract six miles square; though the Puritan leaders who did the negotiating were highly shocked to find that one of the sagamores they had to deal with was a woman. But, once permission was had, they made the first inland settlement of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, on the Wameset River; and both town and river were named, in honor of the recent peace in the land, Concord. The aid it got from the Okamakamissets resulted in this town growing in spite of all initial difficulties, and it later became a centre for the fight for freedom in the land of Penacook. The Okamakamissets also allowed an English settlement to be made adjoining their capital; this was named Marlborough. The Okamakamisset motto, "no slave upon our land," was also spread among the settlements in this district, and they soon induced the General Court (legislative assembly) to make a resolution to that effect, which it did with enough qualifications to nullify it; but would not permit the abolition of slavery, as the slave-trade had become too profitable in England. The fact remains that the Massachusetts Bay Colony was the first to declare in principle against enslavement.

The Red tribes thus proceeded with their work of democratizing the Puritan colony. The tribal influence could now be more direct, once peace was made. The church-membership form of representative government—the Pilgrim adaptation of the idea of democracy—had been adopted by the Puritans during the war; but with it went the institutions of money, property, and persecution of religious dissenters, as brought over from Europe, and which all whites then considered as essential to organized communities, just as much as such institutions were beyond the understanding of the red men. After peace was signed, religious persecution came to the fore, largely because there had been little chance for it during the war, and because the fighting machinery made against the red tribes had to have some enemy to fight against.

The Penacook tribes were so far from avoiding the white settlers, or realizing how the whites were to overrun the country, that even the Nipmuck tribe, far to the west on the Quinnitucket River, allowed a small group of Puritans to settle on that river, near their town of Agawam; the Puritan town started in 1636, was named Springfield. This town, in turn, colonized further up the river, but on the west bank, among the tribes disarmed by the Iroquois, and thus formed the towns of Holyoke and Northampton. The latter town was close to the Nonotuck crossing, where the Penacook Federation was first formed.

Another activity the Puritans started as soon as peace was signed was to plan for schools. This idea of training being given in mass was copied from England, where such mass training was considered necessary, and where it was undoubtedly requisite to some extent to keep fixed class lines going, and to keep individuality from developing. Accordingly, an agitation developed to start a "Cambridge University" in Massachusetts, and in 1636 the General Court voted to establish "a schoale or colledg." The next year, the location was set at Newtown, in Okamakamisset territory, the terminus of the main courier-road, thus appropriately representing the junction between red and white communications. Since one John Harvard offered a larger contribution than the colony, the college was called Harvard College (money talked, as regards the name); but Newtown was called Cambridge. The college was established in 1639 (not 1636, as the college claims); at a time when, as we shall see, the most militant advocates of liberty in the colony were leaving America. We have already seen that such an institution must, by its very nature, oppose individual liberty; and yet there, as elsewhere in Massachusetts, a trace of Okamakamisset influence has been felt beneath the surface. Traditions of liberty, as usual, were reflected in the usual sub-surface manner, not in the administration; but there still remained the tradition of:

" With freedom to think, and with patience to bear,  
And for right ever bravely to live."

A public school was also established in Boston at that time, with similar results. But educational efforts in Massachusetts also, partly as a result of tribal influence, took more individual forms. A town library was established in Boston in 1636—actually the first public library on record. Also, Boston copied the Penacook institution of a post office, which was actually a terminus for the Iroquois-Penacook courier system, and connected the whole with transatlantic vessels, so that, in 1636, Boston had organized a postal system, as part of a Ganowanian organization, long before there was anything of the sort back in England.

The mixture of institutions of property and Penacook democratic traditions was going on rapidly now, and a new type of property system radically different from the European feudal system, was beginning to take definite shape. Isolated spots where survivals of Penacook communal occupation passed over into white settlements appeared, beginning with Boston Common, which we have already mentioned, and with the similar great common of Watertown, which was as large as the town itself, and which was a part of the neutrality of Watertown as a courier-port. (Watertown still preserves a dim tradition of that neutrality in its motto "In pace condita.") Soon "commons," central parks, began to spring up in all towns in New England, and this has remained a characteristic institution, which, while assimilated legally to the English common cow-pastures, has been in practice a form of public ground, retaining to some extent traces of its origins in Penacook communal occupation of land.

40. *Apostle Eliot.* If the Penacook peoples propagandized heavily in the white settlements, the reverse was equally true. No sooner was peace signed between Puritans and Penacooks than the Puritans sent a missionary John Eliot, to convert the Penacook tribes to the Puritan religion. The missionary did not encounter the usual difficulty of intolerance, because the Penacook peoples believed in the freest expression of opinion; but that very fact made the denunciatory style ineffective, and considerable modification was necessary. The "Apostle Eliot" as the Puritans called him, learned the Masadchu dialect, proceeded to reduce it to the English alphabet, and compiled a grammar of the language. The Penacook tribes, immediately recognizing the superiority of alphabet to wampum writing, learned the new alphabet very rapidly, until the proportion of literacy was higher among the Penacook nations than among Pilgrims or Puritans.

Eliot had his converts, especially among the tribes that received white colonies among them; but most of these converts never acquired the fanaticism that possessed the Puritan refugees who had come over on a religious crusade. Eliot considered it a victory that the Okamakammessets let the white settlers build a church in the capital town of Okamakammeset itself, for the uses of the inhabitants of the adjoining Puritan town of Marlborough; but we shall see that this permission had strategic reasons which Eliot never even considered.

However, it was true that the "praying Indians," as Eliot converts came to be called, had a tendency to be traitors to their own people. They were later segregated gradually into separate communities of their own, imbued with English property ideas, as well with English "fire-water" brought in by traders. These communities, which were drawn close around Boston, became more and more dependent on the English, and the "praying Indians" soon became spies for the English, useless to the Penacook Federation, and despised by the English whom they served. Thus practically the whole Masadchu tribe became separated from the Federation. There were, of course, many better spirits among them, who kept alive the old tribal spirit of freedom in those communities; yet these formed but a small number, who usually left Christian communities and went back to their tribes. On the whole, the efforts of John Eliot contributed considerably to the downfall of the Penacook Federation.

41. Narragansett Bay Settlements. We have already seen that one result of peace of 1634 was that the authorities in Massachusetts, relieved from fighting the Penacooks, were able to turn their attention to the religious persecution of dissenters in their community, a function considered in Europe to be an essential part of organized government. The Penacook tribes could not quite comprehend such actions, and naturally viewed this activity with great disapproval. It was therefore to be expected that, in the Penacook campaign to bring the whites around to institutions in harmony with the traditions of America, the best prospects were precisely those dissenters. Accordingly from the beginning of the peace, the Penacook nations tried to cultivate friendship with those within the Puritan ranks who were threatened with persecutions on account of their opinions. In particular Massasoit, one of the Wampanoag sagamores, who had directed the instruction of the Pilgrims in American ways and ideas, made friends with a dissenting Salem preacher, Roger Williams, who was a Puritan minister but differed with the orthodox view on infant baptism. It was with Williams, then, that Massasoit discussed various questions of social organization, especially the religious tolerance issue, for which the red chief rightly judged Williams to be ready. During 1635 and 1636, Roger Williams

gradually added to his preachings the highly heretical and unheard-of doctrine that religious beliefs are no concern to civil authorities, and that everyone should have the right to believe whatever he pleased. He showed Penacook influence also, by expounding that title to lands in America could properly be granted only by tribes, and not by charter from England. This last idea was interpreted by Massachusetts authorities as treason, in that it denied their right to Massachusetts. And, for all these reasons—mainly the heresy of beliefs in religious tolerance—Roger Williams was banished from Massachusetts in 1636. He immediately fled to Massasoit, who was ready to receive him, but with the suggestion that Williams was just the one to found a refuge for exiles like himself. On this matter Massasoit consulted the most powerful of the southern tribes of the Penacook Federation, the Narragansetts, and made arrangements for Williams to start refuge colonies on the Narragansett mainland. Permission was given Williams to settle at Woonasquatucket, about two miles east of the Red town of Watchemoket, with provision for future permission to acquire other similar sites on the Narragansett's mainland, under the strict condition that no persecution for religious beliefs of any kind be ever allowed in any of those settlements.

Thus we have, for the first time, a white man actually believing in tolerance of all beliefs, although it is doubtful if he understood the idea completely. Again, for the first time in the history of the white race, it was undertaken to found a community on that basis. The influence of the red men is obvious throughout all this; and it is doubtful if such a bold plan would ever have been conceived if not for the strong infiltration of Penacook principles.

Roger Williams finally reached the appointed site, and, with his religious fervor that fitted poorly with the purpose of the undertaking, he gave thanks to Providence for guiding him to a safe refuge; he then proceeded to name the place Providence, by which name it is still known; he also assigned the name Providence Plantations for the colony; ("Plantation" meaning in this instance a colony, not a farm, as that word indicated in the southern colonies). In this case, though, it was really the Penacook Federation that was playing the part of Providence to Williams. The Penacook tribes guided many religious refugees to Providence and the adjoining shores of Narragansett Bay, so that soon Williams had a flourishing colony.

A Boston woman, Anne Hutchinson, was in the meantime also exiled for similar reasons. Her offense apparently was too great freedom in discussing religious doctrine with a following she had gathered, and especially casting aspersions on the sincerity of Massachusetts clergy. Mrs. Hutchinson and her

following seemed to have had no more idea of tolerance than the clergy had; but, when she and another woman escaped to the Narragansetts and tried to obtain from them a place to settle, the tribe placed on them the same condition of complete religious freedom, and a ninety-yard wampum set was delivered to record the treaty, which the two women interpreted as a purchase of the land in question, as they thought wampum was "Indian money." The land they were given was the island of Aquidneck, which the Dutch called Roode Eylands (Red Island), and the settlement the two women thus started was named Newport. Refugees gathered here in the same manner as in Providence.

England decided to use the Dutch name for the island in question, but confused the name with the island of Rhodes in the Mediterranean, so Parliament resolved that Aquidneck should be called Rhodes. But a sort of compromise worked itself out between this name and the Dutch form, and the island, as well as Anne Hutchinson's colony of refugees, were called Rhode Island.

It is true that Maryland had already adopted the principle of equal tolerance of all recognized sects, but that in practice actually meant equal treatment of Catholics and Episcopalians, with other sects still being treated as heretics. But the two Narragansett Bay colonies, both organized under Penacook auspices, were the first white governments to recognise and make an issue of religious tolerance.

"When the Puritans were persecuting all who dared to disagree,  
And the wilderness of old New England sheltered many a refugee,  
Then, in order to provide a haven where they might in freedom stay,  
The red men to them gave up Red Island and the lands around the bay.  
"There were thoughts and creeds not tolerated, that would over oceans flow,  
Seeking lands where they by persecution never would molested be,  
And, when they were rejected from countries all the world o'er,  
They found admission and a refuge on the bright Red Island shore."

[Complete poem can be found in America's Search for Liberty in Song & Poem]