

**PIONEER TOWNS OF
AMERICA: THE STORY
OF PEMAQUID**

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Pioneer Towns of America: The Story of Pemaquid by James Otis

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JAMES OTIS

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AMERICA: THE STORY
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THE STORY OF
PEMAQUID

BY

JAMES OTIS

AUTHOR OF "THE STORY OF OLD FALMOUTH"

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NOTE.

IN this story, the second in the series of "Pioneer Towns of America," Pemaquid Plantation has been chosen as the central point, because, during the early settlement of Maine, it was the most important post on the coast east of Massachusetts.

To those brave men who strove to build homes in the vicinity of Pemaquid are we especially indebted for their bold battling against civilized as well as savage foes, their sturdy fight against the forces of nature, and their indomitable courage, so often and so sorely tried.

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THE STORY OF PEMAQUID.

THE FIRST WHITE MEN.

THE title "Pemaquid," at the head of this story of the pioneer towns of Maine, is not used to designate a single settlement, but, rather, that portion of the province situated east of Falmouth and west of the Penobscot River, a territory which has been the subject of more than one royal grant, each giving rise to several distinct claims, and above all of which stood deeds given to the settlers by the Indians.

Sagadahock, or Sheepscot, might as well have given name to the story, save for the fact that at the settlement then known as Pemaquid was built the first fortification; and, after the territory had been laid waste by the forays of

the Indians or the French, it was at Pemaquid that the first steps toward repairing the damage were taken.

It is possible that the first English-speaking people to visit the coast of Maine were led by Captain Bartholomew Gosnold, who, on board the shallop *Concord*, visited it in 1602; but did no more than come to anchor for a few hours, after which they returned to Cape Cod, where was begun by them a settlement. There are many wise men who do not believe Gosnold ever saw any portion of what is now known as Maine, therefore we must doubt the statement, even while making it.

It is positive, however, that on April 10, 1603, certain merchants of Bristol in England, and others, sent out two vessels for the purpose of trading with the Indians for cargoes of sassafras and furs.

In those days sassafras was highly esteemed as a medicine for the cure of the plague, scurvy, and other ills.

This little squadron was composed of the

ship *Speedwell*, fifty tons burden, commanded by Martin Pring and manned by thirty men and boys, and the bark *Discoverer*, twenty-six tons, commanded by William Browne, with a crew of thirteen men and one boy.

Pring was the leader of the expedition.

This expedition landed, after touching at different places along the coast, among the islands of Pemaquid Bay, leaving there a small party of settlers in order to make good the claim of the king of England to the country.

Later in the season, perhaps in October, Monsieur de Monts, a Frenchman, who had attempted to found a colony on the island of St. Croix, entered the Kennebec River, and claimed the territory in the name of his sovereign.

More than this is not known regarding the first white men who landed upon the shores of what has been successively known as the Pemaquid Patent, the Pemaquid Plantation, the Muscongus Grant, and the Sagadahock Territory.