

Westfield is situated in the South side of King's County and is divided into two districts by the Saint John River; Number 1 and Number 2. Number 1 is divided into sections and they are known as Westfield Beach; Lingley - named for owners of land there; Sagwa - an Indian name meaning daughter-of-a-chief; and Nerepis another Indian name meaning valley-between-hills.

Westfield is a small farming country. It is also noted for its lumber and large game.

Nerepis is surrounded by a chain of mountains - many of which are noted for their beauty.

Bald Mountain - the highest peak, is to the North of Westfield. It is said to be the highest mountain in New Brunswick. Another mountain of note is Eagle Rock. Early settlers named it that on account of large number of eagles nesting there. Another point of interest is West Mountain from which can be seen the Valley of Nerepis; Woodman's Point; many farms in Westfield Number 2 on the East side of the Saint John River and thirteen lakes. The Nerepis River which has its headwaters in Queen's County, flows through the Nerepis Valley and joins the Saint John River at Lingley.

Who the first settlers of Nerepis were is not known. The first on record was Colonel Henry Nase who received from the Crown a grant of 6,000 acres at Ford. Not satisfied with this on account of its being too far inland, he sold it and bought six lots of 50 acres each between Nerepis and Westfield. He settled on

a part of this calling it "Beau Bear Point". His son, Captain Philip Nase settled in Nerepis. A famous pine tree which it is said, he planted; is still standing and known as "Captain's Pine".

In May, 1783; Major John Coffin - an Englishman who distinguished himself in the Revolutionary War, arrived in New Brunswick from South Carolina bringing with him his wife (who was a daughter of the Governor of South Carolina) and two sons - John and Henry. He also had as servants two black men - William Watson and Samuel Smith and one white woman.

He received a Grant of 5,000 acres at the mouth of the Nerepis - part of an estate known as "Glazier Manor". On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1783 Colonel Nase began a house for Major Coffin at "Beau Bear Point". It was finished on September 4<sup>th</sup> and on September 26<sup>th</sup> Coffin took possession calling it "Alwington Manor" - the family name of all Coffin Estates. He was so pleased with his house that he gave Colonel Nase a horse on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1783. In 1785 Major Coffin received a Grant of 1,000 acres at Welsford. After living some time at Alwington Manor where two sons and two daughters were born, he was called back to England on duty. He sold Alwington to William Belyea who then named it Woodman's Point.

Major Coffin later returned to New Brunswick bringing fourteen boys. William Blagdon Sr. who is well remembered in Nerepis, being one of them. Mrs. Coffin did not come back from England. General Coffin as he was known at this time, built a log house on land later owned by Thomas Lingley Sr. Johnston Lingley's house is now on the same foundation. This part of the country was at that

was at that time, a forest. The only house known to have been built then was occupied by a man named "Monday". His and his wife's graves are at the side of the road about 200 yards above Sagwa Station.

General Coffin cleared land and built many buildings near Sagwa. A house and three other buildings were later moved off a hill by Thomas Lingley Sr.; seventeen yoke of oxen being used for this purpose. Thomas Lingley Jr. is still using the same buildings. General Coffin was a man well liked. He owned much property and enjoyed helping the poor. His chief worry was that the wood on his lands would not last his lifetime. He was fond of hunting and spent much time with his canoe and gun having as guide an Indian called "Joe". He did much for the Country and through him, Glebe Land was secured for the Church. He died in his log house on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1838 aged about ninety years. His grave is in the West corner of the cemetery at Woodman's Point. A stone is at his grave; also - an oak tree which William Blagdon Sr. planted to his memory. Nelson Coffin is buried near his father.

Captain John Coffin, the General's eldest son, lived for some years in the house now owned by R. M. Burden at Lonerwater Farm.

Captain Coffin's wife - a Saint John woman, had for her footman one William Watson - a son of the General's servant. He was well liked and respected dying about 1916 at an advanced age.

The first post (mail) was carried from Saint John to Fredericton on horse back October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1788. Later this

was taken by stage coach.

February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1861 is still known as "Cold Friday"; twenty eight below zero with a heavy wind. It was the coldest day remembered in New Brunswick.

In 1866 a railroad between Saint John and Fredericton was started being finished in 1869.

On the first Monday in October, 1869, a heavy wind struck Westfield and is remembered as the "Saxby Gale". It uprooted trees and tore down buildings.

The first train went from Westfield to Fredericton the first Tuesday in October, 1869. It had an engine - the "yo-ho" and six passenger cars. One other engine called "John Parks" was in Westfield at the time but had become damaged the day before by running into a barn which the "gale" had blown across the track near the place now called Sagwa. This train was brought to Westfield in a schooner from the United States.

The first English Church (St. Peter's) on record was at Woodman's Point in 1796. Later one was built at Westfield but this was burned and in 1900 a new one was erected. The first resident clergyman was "Parson Milner" - a man well liked.

In 1888 a high freshet did much damage to the N.B. Railroad which, at this time, was taken over by the C.P.R. It also carried away the Nerepis Bridge which connected Lingley and Woodman's Point.

This bridge which was three quarters of a mile long, was replaced. A bridge, highway and railroad combined was built at this place in 1916-1919; said railroad being owned by the C.N.R.

During the World War of 1914-1918, Westfield sent a number of her men to the front. Those who enlisted being: Fred McKenzie, Talmadge Porter, Wellesley Porter, Harold Parker, Ronald Machum, Aubrey Caulfield, George Greer, Byron Greer, Roy Lunnin, George Flanagan, Fred Wallace, and Arthur Wheaton. The ones who gave their life for their Country are Fred McKenzie, Roy Lunnin, George Flanagan, Talmadge Porter, and Ronald Machum.

In 1903 a forest fire swept through Nerepis and Westfield destroying thousands of dollars worth of lumber. There was another large fire in 1907. In 1911 a forest fire burned the Presbyterian Church at Nerepis. In 1914 a Presbyterian Church was built at Lingley.

A fire started back of Westfield in 1921 and after being kept in control for some days, it came into the Village on August 6<sup>th</sup> and destroyed many buildings including the Methodist Church at Hillandale. This Church has been rebuilt. Many of the houses also have been replaced.

In the spring of 1923 a freshet, one foot lower than that of 1888, caused much damage to the C.P.R. railroad.

The first electric power and lights were brought

*to Westfield from Mushquash in 1922-1923.*

*A Community Hall is now being built by the people of Nerepis and at this time - 1924, is nearing completion.*

*Westfield has an Orange Lodge, Woman's Auxiliary, and Woman's Institute.*

