

## Indians Camping at Somesville

*Adelma Somes Joy*

It may be that Indians were here when Abraham Somes came up the Sound and settled at what is now called "Somesville." The Indians of the Penobscot Tribe, since I can remember, were always camping around the fresh water ponds, I suppose for the purpose of trapping mink and muskrats. I think they must have done quite a business at it for they always seemed in good circumstances. They made beautiful baskets and did beautiful bead work. I remember, it must have been about 1847, of several camps in my grandfather's pasture. They were on the edge of the pond (then called Lilly Pond) now called Somes Pond. I can remember so well of going with my mother and several other women to their camps made of boughs; one Mary Ann the fortune teller, Mrs. Glassene in another, and there were some others that they did not seem well enough acquainted to visit. The Glassene boy went to school with us.



Passamaquoddy Lewis Mitchell, ca. 1885,  
noted for paddling his canoe all the way  
around MDI in just twelve hours.

*Courtesy of Donald Soctomah and the Abbe  
Museum*

These Indian ladies always, when they came out to the houses, wore red plaid shawls and shiny beaver hats and they never removed them when they sat at table to eat. They visited us as any of our neighbors would and we called on them. The Someses were always kind to them, allowing them to camp on their land and never charging them for it. One party of Indians camped on the Oak Hill Road by the Pond and I remember of riding over one winter day in a sleigh with my father, my sister and my brother, a little fellow with a new red velvet cloak on. . . . They always were well dressed. They came in as any neighbor would. They finally moved to Old Town. Mrs. Glassene used to come down and visit. I can remember of hearing her tell my father that she built a house in Old Town, a wooden house, and lived in it and she thought that was what made Newell, her boy, have consumption and die. "Living in house, Mr. Somes," and she kept saying it over and over. . . .

*From "Reminiscences of Somesville," ca. 1920-30, Collection  
of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society*