

War was coming and everyone could feel it. Fear was in the air as Pilgrims and Wampanoag tribe counted their weapons. This was New England in 1675.

The Wampanoag leader was "King Philip." The Pilgrims called him "Philip" because it was easier to pronounce than his Wampanoag name, Metacomet.

Philip's father, Massasoit, had been friendly to the Pilgrims. He had taught them to grow corn and pumpkins. He showed them how to shoot and roast turkeys and how to keep warm in the freezing winter.

But Philip's father was dead now, and Philip opposed the Pilgrims. He had watched them try to change his people. Pilgrims told Indians to worship in English churches. They taught Indians that the best language was English.

English settlers bought land from Indians, paying with axes, kettles, and rainwear. But the Indians had never heard of buying land. They thought *buying* meant sharing the land. So when the English told them to leave, the Indians said, "But this has always been our land." The English forced them off, saying, "You sold it to us."

King Philip saw all this and thought, My father was their friend, but I am not. *They do not belong here.*

Philip traveled from tribe to tribe, forming an army to fight the English settlers. Friendly Indians told the settlers, and the English prepared to defend themselves.

The Indians attacked swiftly and silently. They sprang from the forest and killed farmers plowing their fields. They trampled growing corn and pumpkins. They set fire to homes;

and as families ran out, they were killed, one by one.

English soldiers attacked the same way. They invaded Indian villages at night and killed men, women, children, and animals and burned Indian wigwams and food.

On both sides one village after another disappeared.

For more than a year the fighting went on. King Philip traveled at night to tell the tribes to keep fighting. But he was not trained for warfare and made many mistakes.

One mistake was to let three thousand Indians use a fort in a swamp. It was November. Cold, snowy weather came and parts of the swamp froze. A thousand English soldiers crept over the ice and surrounded the fort. They broke through the three wooden fences. Inside the fort guns blazed and fires burned. There was no escape. Two thousand Indians were shot or burned to death.

The war was not over, for King Philip had not been in the fort. But the Great Swamp Fight had weakened the Indians, and they began to be afraid. Philip went among them telling them not to give up. "We will drive the English into the sea yet!"

Over the years of fighting though, the English soldiers were learning the ways of the Indians. They followed the Indians through the forests. They did not attack, but they kept the Indians always moving. The Indians had no time to collect food or fight back.

Little by little the Indians were killed or captured. In August 1676 King Philip retreated for the last time. He went to his home, called Mount Hope. He took many Indians with him, but some were not his friends.

One Indian told the English soldiers where Philip was. At night soldiers surrounded the house. When Philip tried to escape, he was killed by an Indian who had joined the English troops.

At last the Indians were defeated. Indian women and children were given as servants to white families, while Indian men were sold as slaves.

Many years later, people looked back and

saw that the English had hurt the Indians. They had tried to make tribes forget their own ways. They had taken the Indians' land.

If only they could have tried to understand one another better. And if only they could have learned more about each other's ways, English and Indians might have reached an understanding. Instead, many Pilgrims and soldiers died. And King Philip lost his power and his people—and his life.

CHECK YOUR READING

1. **King Philip's father, Chief Massasoit, had been**
 - A ignored by the Pilgrims
 - B greatly liked by the Pilgrims
 - C tricked by the Pilgrims
2. **To the Indians, buying land was**
 - A unheard of
 - B a way of sharing it
 - C Both A and B
3. **King Philip visited all the tribes to get them to**
 - A help the Pilgrims plant corn
 - B attack the Pilgrims
 - C go on a bear hunt
4. **The Indians were defending their right to**
 - A live on the land
 - B go to English schools
 - C attend English churches
5. **Soldiers were able to surround the Indians staying in a fort in the swamp because**
 - A the Indians were all sick
 - B someone betrayed the Indians
 - C the water around the fort froze
6. **The Great Swamp Fight cost the lives of**
 - A 2000 Indians
 - B 10,000 Indians
 - C 300 Indians
7. **One way the English defeated the Indians was by**
 - A lying in ambush for them
 - B keeping them moving
 - C using cannons
8. **King Philip was killed by**
 - A one of his own men
 - B a Pilgrim
 - C a turncoat Indian
9. **After the English defeated the Indians, the Indians were**
 - A sold as slaves
 - B shipped to England as servants
 - C Both A and B
10. **At its end, the story indicates that King Philip's War**
 - A was a just war
 - B might have been avoided by talking
 - C was incited by Massasoit