

Remarkable characters : [Peter Williamson].

Publication/Creation

[between 1820 and 1821?]

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Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

January 4th. 1755, arrived at his father-in-law's house in Chester county, when scarce one of the family would believe their eyes, thinking he had fallen a prey to the merciless cruelty of the Indians.

Shortly after his arrival at home, his wife having been dead two months before, he enlisted into Col. Shirley's regiment, which was intended for the frontiers, to destroy the French posts: in this desultory kind of warfare, he continued till Oswego was captured by the French in August 1756, when the French, and Indians in their interest, committed the most heart-rending barbarities and excesses.

Williamson was one of the persons taken prisoners at Oswego; and was in November 1756, brought from America to Plymouth under a flag of truce; where in about four months subsequent to his arrival, he was discharged as incapable of further service, occasioned by a wound in his left hand.

He then published a Narrative of his Sufferings, in a tract entitled "French and Indian Cruelty displayed in the Life and Adventures of Peter Williamson." Neither the strange vicissitudes of his own fortune, chequered with uncommon calamities, nor the good intention of his Narrative, could protect him from the resentment of some merchants of Aberdeen, near the place of his nativity, where he went in quest of his relations; because in the introduction to his Narrative, he had noticed the manner in which he had been illegally hurried away on board ship, and sold for a slave. For that publication he was imprisoned, and 350 copies of his book (the only means he had of obtaining his sustenance, were

taken from him, and his enlargement only granted him on his signing a paper, disclaiming two or three pages of his book. However, as he soon after found a few of his relatives, he got the attestations of some, and affidavits of others, proving he was the person taken away as mentioned in the Narrative.

The precise period when Williamson paid the debt of nature, I have not been able to ascertain. He exhibited himself, in London in 1760 and 1761.