



An American Tour: 68



New York's *Fort William Henry*

Fort William Henry was a British fort at the southern end of Lake George in the province of New York. It is best known as the site of notorious atrocities committed by Indians against the surrendered British and provincial troops following a successful French siege in 1757, an event which is the focus of James Fenimore Cooper's novel *The Last of the Mohicans*, first published in January 1826.

The fort's construction was ordered by Sir William Johnson in September 1755, during the French and Indian War, as a staging ground for attacks against the French fort at Crown Point called Fort St. Frédéric. It was part of a chain of British and French forts along the important inland waterway from New York City to Montreal, and occupied a key forward location on the frontier between New York and New France.

It was named both for Prince William, the Duke of Cumberland, the younger son of King George II, and Prince William Henry, Duke of Gloucester, a grandson of King George II and a younger brother of the future King George III.

Following the 1757 siege, the French destroyed the fort and withdrew. While other forts were built nearby in later years, the site of Fort William Henry lay abandoned, and formed part of the landscape for tourism in the 19th century.

In the 1950s, interest in the history of the site revived, and a replica of the fort was constructed, which now serves as a living museum and a popular tourist attraction in the village of Lake George. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_William_Henry]

