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Tuscarora trails: Indian migrations, war, and constructions of colonial frontiers

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APPROVAL SHEET

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Stephen Delbert Feeley

Approved by the Committee, January 2007

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ABBREVIATIONS


BPRO  British Public Record Office, Kew, England


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<th>Collection</th>
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<td><strong>Oneida and Tuscarora Losses</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Penn Papers, Indian Affairs</strong></td>
<td>William Penn Papers, Indian Affairs, in <em>RSUS</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pickering Papers</strong></td>
<td>Timothy Pickering Papers, 1745-1829, “Letters and Papers of Pickering’s missions to the Indians, 1792-1797,” vol. 62,</td>
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Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston MA, microfilm

PMHB  Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography


S.C. Commons House Journals, Green Transcripts

Journals of the Commons House Assembly of South Carolina, 1706-1721, William S. Green Transcripts, SCDAH in RSUS

Sainsbury SC Transcripts

Records in the British Public Records Office relating to South Carolina, 1663-1782, transcribed by W.N. Sainsbury, microfilm at Swem Library, The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA

SCDAH  South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina


VMHB  Virginia Magazine of History and Biography

WMO  William and Mary Quarterly (3rd series, unless otherwise noted)

Wraxall, Abridgement  Peter Wraxall, An Abridgement of the Indian Affairs Contained in Four Folio Volumes, Transacted in the Colony of New York, from the Year 1678 to the Year 1751, ed. Charles Howard McIlwain (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1915)
ABSTRACT

Over a century before the Cherokees' infamous "Trail of Tears," uprooted refugees already made up a majority among Indians in many regions of the American backcountry. Using the Tuscarora Indians as a case study, I take a new look at the role of refugee Indian groups in the construction of colonial frontiers and examine the ways that Indians thrown together from varying regional and cultural backgrounds wrestled with questions of collective identity. Although the Tuscaroras had once been eastern North Carolina's most influential Indian nation, after devastating military defeat, in the words of one contemporary, they "scattered as the wind scatters smoke." Some remained in North Carolina where they resided uneasily on the periphery of a plantation society and saw their lives restructured as "tributaries" of that colony. A few moved to South Carolina where they found employment as mercenaries, working to buy back enslaved kin.

Nearly two thousand trekked to Pennsylvania and New York where they settled with the Iroquois, a powerful five-nation confederacy that adopted the newcomers as their "sixth nation." The result of such dispersals was an eighteenth-century backcountry tied together by new bonds of trade, war, diplomacy, and kinship: Indian travelers, often members of displaced nations, constantly visited each other on worn valley paths hidden behind Appalachian ridge lines. At the same time, massive refugee movements that crossed colonial boundaries forced previously insular colonial governments to square off in either cooperation or competition in implementing frontier policies.

This study is the first detailed examination of the Tuscaroras and a provocative case study in the interrelations between migration, culture, and politics.
Tuscarora Trails:
Indian Migrations, War, and Constructions of Colonial Frontiers
INTRODUCTION

In mid-winter of 1767, a sudden blizzard struck the Pennsylvania frontier, forcing a group of Indians to abandon their camp along the Susquehanna River and beg for refuge at the Moravian mission station of Friedenshütten. The Indians' distress may be partially explained by the unexpected strength of the wintry blast, the unsuitability of their temporary shelters, or their lack of supplies, but the Moravian diarist who recorded the incident suspected that the main reason was that the natives were entirely unused to the heavy, several-foot deep snowfalls of the Pennsylvania hill country. The seventy-five Indians—among them women and children—were Tuscaroras, originally from the more temperate coastal plains of North Carolina. Several months earlier they had begun a grueling journey north to rejoin many of their kin already living among the Iroquois in New York and northern Pennsylvania.¹

How does this image of a band of rag-tag Tuscarora Indians shivering on a Pennsylvania hillside fit into our broader understanding of colonial history? Bernard Bailyn once invited historians to imagine ourselves aboard a satellite looking down from space. From that perspective, the view of the colonial period was a sea crisscrossed by the wakes of ships traveling in every direction, carrying unprecedented populations of Europeans and Africans.\textsuperscript{2} Another historian, introducing a work on the Great Puritan Migration of the 1630s, wrote that "geographic mobility is a major factor—some would say the major factor—in the deep changes that have affected people in the Western World over the last three or four centuries."\textsuperscript{3} Such statements held equally true for non-Europeans, especially when we consider that perhaps three times as many enslaved Africans came to British America as Europeans.\textsuperscript{4} Anyway we look at it, the colonial period was a world in motion.\textsuperscript{5}


\textsuperscript{5} For a useful survey of the major secondary sources on migration during the colonial period, see Ned Landsman, "Migration and Settlement," in \textit{A Companion to Colonial America}, ed. Daniel Vickers (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2003), 76-98.
But what about Native Americans? At the same time as Europeans and enslaved Africans were establishing outposts along the Atlantic rim, the North American backcountry was a veritable sea of displaced and migrating Indians, one whose currents and courses are little understood. Archeology reveals that Indian groups had shifted location time to time over history, but during the colonial period these movements accelerated from a glacial crawl into frenetic torrents. Over a century before the Cherokees' infamous "Trail of Tears," uprooted refugees made up a majority among Indians in many regions of the American backcountry—some fleeing encroachment, war, or disease; some consolidating for strength; a few actually moving closer to Europeans to take better advantage of trade routes and the economic firepower they represented. Yamasees fled south to Florida; Delawares crossed into the Ohio Valley; Shawnees followed but not before a long detour through the Southeast; Abenakis departed north to New France. During their travels, Tuscaroras fixed their mark upon the place-names of sites such as Tuscarora Mountain, Path

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Valley, at least three Tuscarora Creeks, and numerous hills and ridges in present-day North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York.\(^7\)

For a long time, most historical portrayals of such migrations and movements fell into two camps, both flawed. One, borrowing heavily from the early rhetoric of European invaders, portrayed Indians as constantly on the move, with few ties or claims to any one location, almost like animals effortlessly roaming the landscape. Another, more sympathetic, portrayal depicted Indians stolidly rooted to and defending “traditional homelands,” until defeated. By this story line, movement becomes synonymous with defeat, and once defeated a particular Indian group would retreat into the sunset and out of scholarly view.\(^8\)

Thankfully, some of the best recent scholarship on Indians has brought new sophistication to understanding disrupted and uprooted Indian groups. The opening chapter of Richard White’s *The Middle Ground* entitled, “Refugees: A World Made of Fragments” describes how the Indians of the Great Lakes region “were becoming cocreators of a world in the making. The world that had existed before . . . was no

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more. It had shattered" like glass. The rest of the book is about how these Indians
“pieced together a new world from shattered pieces.” Other historians have picked
up the same thread, outlining a process sometimes called “ethnogenesis.” Fragments
of Indian groups shattered by smallpox, land theft, and warfare joined together to
create new peoples and new cultures that differed from the mere sum of their parts.
In other words, the real melting pots of colonial American were not Boston, New
York, or Philadelphia—they were Oquaga, Log town, and countless other
communities where disrupted Indians came together and formed new cultures.

This project builds upon and, in some ways, challenges such models.

Examining the Tuscarora Indians offers a new look at the role of refugee Indian
groups in the construction of colonial frontiers and reveals the ways that Indians
thrown together from varying regional and cultural backgrounds wrestled with
questions of collective identity. As Tuscaroras were uprooted, they did assimilate
aspects of other Indian cultures. Nonetheless, they never forgot or abandoned old

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9 Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great
Lakes Region, 1650-1815, Cambridge Studies in North American Indian History

10 See, for example, James H. Merrell, The Indians' New World: Catawbas and Their
Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal (New York: Norton,
1989); Patricia Kay Galloway, Choctaw Genesis, 1500-1700, Indians of the Southeast
(Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995); J. Leitch Wright, Creeks & Seminoles:
The Destruction and Regeneration of the Muscogulge People, Indians of the
Southeast (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986); Michael N. McConnell, A
Country Between: The Upper Ohio Valley and Its Peoples, 1724-1774 (Lincoln:
University of Nebraska Press, 1992).

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identities. Their old sense of self never shattered. Therefore, the story of the Tuscaroras is both one of cultural creation, and one of cultural preservation.

These questions extend beyond the Indians themselves. Although the Tuscaroras are the main focus of this study, the events they experienced did not occur in a vacuum. Instead, decisions made by colonists helped shape the Tuscaroras' course on every step of their journey. The early eighteenth century saw British colonies for the first time coming together into a nearly unbroken line of settlement. Before, colonial governments had fashioned frontier policies largely in isolation from one another. But as old gaps between colonies disappeared, governments discovered that they would need to coordinate and cooperate to heretofore-unprecedented levels. Contradictions in policies from one government to another could no longer be easily allowed to persist.

The Tuscaroras played a special role in this process. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Tuscaroras were the most influential Indian nation in eastern North Carolina, one of the last regions on the eastern seaboard to experience sustained European settlement. For several decades, Tuscaroras took advantage of uncertain lines of colonial authority there. When large numbers of Tuscaroras rose up in the Tuscarora War in 1711, they faced retribution from three governments, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia, who to varying degrees cooperated or competed with one another. The Tuscaroras' ties to other Indian groups, most notably the Iroquois, prompted the attention of other colonies as far away as Pennsylvania and
New York. In the war’s aftermath, the expulsion and northward migration of many Tuscaroras accelerated these inter-colonial processes.

The Tuscaroras stand out, but they were not unique in their movements. By the eighteenth century, many of the Indians encountered by European settlers had themselves recently moved, and were every bit as much “settlers” in their own right. What might be called an early “refugee crises” altered the ways that officials from individual colonies interacted with each other and conceptualized their role in an increasingly interconnected backcountry. Colonial governments came to see new opportunities among disrupted Indian groups like the Tuscaroras, viewing them as easily movable pawns that could be controlled in the great game for empire—an assumption that proved false. The story of the Tuscaroras is one of “identity politics” in the truest sense of the term—that is, colonial and Indian leaders attempted to shape the culture and identity of the Tuscaroras for political purposes.

For these reasons, attention in this study is given not only to the choices of Tuscaroras, but also to understanding the actions of colonial leaders, traders, and missionaries who attempted to shape those choices. Most of the documents consulted in this study were created by and for colonists who found themselves intertwined with the Tuscaroras. These writers saw themselves as playing a crucial role in shaping Tuscarora history—and they were correct. Conversely, the choices of Tuscaroras influenced colonists.

Chapter One describes the arrival of European settlers and traders into the Tuscaroras’ world at the end of the seventeenth century. Rather than being a
politically cohesive confederacy, the Tuscaroras instead consisted of a loose alliance of about fifteen ethnically related towns. Living near the fall-lines of several rivers, Tuscaroras had acted as middlemen between coastal and interior tribes even before Europeans arrived, their language acting as a regional lingua franca in trade and diplomacy. After European contact, Tuscaroras had briefly thrived, securing a place in the trans-Atlantic deerskin and rum trades, and commanding respect from North Carolina’s weak government. But Chapter Two shows tensions mounted not only from the abuses of slavers, traders, and settlers, but as the colonial governments of North Carolina and Virginia tried to impose contradictory models of control upon the regions’ Indians. The result was chaos and mounting frustration.

In reaction, a coalition of Lower Town Tuscaroras and other nearby Indians launched a series of bloody attacks, known as the Tuscarora War (1711-1713). This assault, described in Chapter Three, rather than attempting to destroy colonial society, was meant to be a limited strike to force colonists to stop their abuses and enact a new era of orderly relations. Moreover, Tuscaroras hoped that divisions in North Carolina would prevent large-scale retaliation. The war, however, quickly escalated from a bloody but isolated conflict in the swamps of North Carolina into a conflagration that threatened to engulf the region. North Carolina’s government, already weak, nearly collapsed from the blow. Chapters Four and Five discuss how the governments of Virginia and South Carolina leapt into the vacuum. Each attempted to use the disorder of the war to try to reconstruct their frontiers: South Carolina through the violence and economics of the slave trade, Virginia through the extension of tributary
relations with the region’s Indians, especially the large numbers of Tuscaroras who tried to remain neutral. Despite initial success, the Tuscaroras who had rose up met defeat in 1713.

Chapter Six describes the choices confronted by Tuscaroras in the aftermath. The survivors scattered in a ordeal echoing Richard White’s shattered glass, or in the evocative words of a contemporary, as the “wind scatters smoke.” Some remained in North Carolina, where they were restricted to a shrinking reservation and saw their lives restructured as “tributaries” of that colony. Their leader, “King” Tom Blount, nevertheless managed to carve out a degree of autonomy for his people and new authority for himself. A few Tuscaroras moved to South Carolina, where they found employment as mercenaries, hoping to buy back enslaved kin. Others, uncomfortable with Blount’s seizure of control, briefly considered creating separate communities in Virginia.

Between fifteen hundred and two thousand Tuscaroras fled the region altogether, trekking to Pennsylvania and New York where they settled among the Iroquois, a powerful five-nation confederacy. Following the lead of current scholarship, it might be expected that this would have been a moment ripe for another instance of ethnogenesis, whereby Tuscarora survivors would come together with other groups, leaving their culture to dissolve as a distinct entity. Indeed, predicting that the Tuscaroras’ identity as a cohesive body would soon be erased, an Iroquois
sachem told an English negotiator that the Tuscaroras, defeated in war, "are no longer a Nation with a name, being once dispersed."\(^{11}\)

Despite dispersal, the Tuscaroras did not disappear; they remained a nation. Indeed, rather than departing the historical stage, they are best known for what happened next. Before 1722, the Iroquois, centered in modern-day New York, had consisted of a confederacy of five distinct, and yet allied nations—the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas. Together the Iroquois held a unique political and military position among Europeans and Indians in eastern North American during the seventeenth and eighteenth century. After the flight of the Tuscaroras to the region, the Iroquois took the unprecedented step of expanding their confederacy, and granted the Tuscaroras status as a "sixth nation."

Chapter Seven examines the context of this transformation. Although the Tuscaroras shared distant cultural ties with the other five Iroquois nations, these bonds alone do not explain the Tuscaroras' adoption. Indeed, until 1710, relations between the Tuscaroras and Iroquois were characterized less by amity than by bloodshed, as Iroquois warriors targeted Tuscarora communities in "mourning war" raids. Instead, the recognition of the Tuscaroras as the sixth Iroquois nation owed in large part to the political circumstance of the 1710s. The crisis created by the Tuscarora War and, more importantly, the subsequent flight of angry refugees forced Virginia, New York, and Iroquois leaders into a debate over the proper nature of relations between Indian groups and colonies along the frontier. It was in the context

\(^{11}\text{NYCD, 5: 376.}\)
of these arguments that Tuscaroras first acquired the status of the Sixth Nation at a large multi-party treaty at Albany in 1722.

This was a singular transformation. An Indian group that was all but destroyed in North Carolina at the beginning of the eighteenth century reemerged hundreds of miles away in New York as a separate yet integrated part of the Iroquois Confederacy—the most influential Indian polity of the period. Their status was unique. The Tuscaroras were only one of fifteen or more groups who moved into the shadow of the Iroquois in the eighteenth century. Although this motley crew entered into a dizzying array of political and cultural arrangements with the Iroquois, only the Tuscaroras achieved lasting status as a sixth nation.

Chapter Eight examines what it meant to be Tuscarora living in Iroquoia in the eighteenth century. Not only does the chapter consider the status of the Tuscaroras as a “nation” within the cultural and political structures of the Six Nations and in diplomacy with colonial governments, it also describes integration by communities and individuals at the local level. Whether in towns along the Ambassadors’ Path between the Oneidas and Onondagas or along the upper reaches of the Susquehanna River, Tuscaroras lived in communities that were closely integrated and intermixed with other refugees and migrants, other Iroquois, and especially Oneidas. As has often been the case for migrants, the Tuscaroras carefully straddled the line between acculturation among new neighbors and the maintenance of a separate identity that preserved their own language, leaders, and customs.
Even while many Tuscaroras acclimated to new northern homes, others remained in North Carolina. The persistence of a broad Tuscarora identity partially owed to contacts that continued between the two bands of Tuscaroras that demonstrated and in turn strengthened their common bonds. Chapter Nine describes two separate types of exchanges. The first consisted of war parties that traveled south to strike traditional Catawba enemies in the Carolinas, often stopping en route among Tuscaroras in North Carolina. The second consisted of sporadic bands of migrants who subsequently chose to depart North Carolina to rejoin their northern kin—a native example of the "chain migrations" more often used to described European population flows. Unable to prevent such travels, colonial officials did their best to harness these movements and migrations to create dependencies and reshape the cultural geography of the frontier. For Tuscaroras, both types of exchanges contributed to the continuity of a distinct culture, but both could also generate tension as Tuscaroras, long separated, could assess differences among the others and wonder were the "real" Tuscaroras.

The Tuscaroras in the eighteenth century underwent a long odyssey. Defeated in war, dispersed, reincarnated as part of the Iroquois, all the while maintaining a particular identity via distant travels and migrations—none of these changes would have been easy to predict in the late 1600s. Indeed, the first few Englishmen to arrive in their North Carolina homeland had hardly looked like agents of change at all. They merely looked afraid.
CHAPTER I

RESTLESS NEIGHBORS:

CONTACT BETWEEN TUSCARORAS AND EUROPEANS, 1670-1711

Until late in the seventeenth century, the Tuscaroras lived virtually isolated from direct European contact. The sparse encounters that did occur had been tense and curt—sharp staccatos that punctuated longer silences. The first Englishman to seek contact with the Tuscaroras was Ralph Lane, who in 1586 paddled with an expedition several days upriver from the ill-fated Roanoke Colony. His efforts were rewarded with an ambush of arrows from the brush that caused an unseemly retreat. In 1650, after the establishment of Virginia, the would-be trader and land-speculator Edward Bland bungled his way south towards the Tuscaroras. But after becoming increasingly paranoid that almost every Indian he met was conspiring to cut him off, he too led his party in a panicked scramble back to safety. Two decades later, a young German scientist, John Lederer, left behind his haughty Virginian traveling companions and, accompanied only by a Susquehannock guide, walked a long loop visiting Indian communities through southwestern Virginia and North Carolina. Despite his adventurous spirit, he dared to stay at Katearas, a Tuscarora town, only

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one night. In the morning, fearing "some sudden mischief towards me," he fled, content to abandon his gun and escape with his life.¹

Apprehension and mistrust had marked encounters between the Europeans and Tuscaroras, but towards the end of the century barriers began to erode. Thirty years after Lederer staggered back to Virginia telling tales so unbelievable that he was subsequently laughed out of the colony, John Lawson, an adventure-seeking, well-heeled young Englishman versed in cartography and the natural sciences, ventured into nearly the same territory.² Unlike Lederer’s misguided meanderings, the route Lawson took is reasonably clear. Accompanied by a small band of Indian guides and English traveling companions, Lawson set out by canoe from Charleston into the Carolina interior. Then, on foot, the group turned north on a series of paths across the piedmont. They forded the Wateree, Peedee, and Haw Rivers above their falls and waded numerous small creeks that cut east toward the coastal sounds. As Lawson’s party passed through the piedmont landscape of rolling hills interspersed with


meadows and hardwood forests, far from entering an uninhabited countryside, they
grew among a dazzling array of peoples. They met Catawbas, Enoes, Saponies,
Cheraws, Santees, Waxsaws, Occaneechees, and others—all loosely categorized by
modern ethnographers as “Siouan groups” but varied in their local practices and
languages. Nearly every evening they reached a town or village where they traded,
ate, shared news, and spent the night.

After several hundred miles Lawson turned east, following the Neuse River
downstream from the piedmont into the coastal plains. The land became more level,
sandy, and only slightly rolling; rapid rivers turned sluggish and brown; swamps
became more common; hardwoods gave way to open pine mixed with scrub oak.
“Good Range for Cattel,” noted Lawson who always had an eye towards speculation,
but only “indifferent for swine.” More notable were the people. “The Country here,”
he recorded as his party crossed northeast, passing Contentnea Creek and emerging

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3 For descriptions of the Siouan peoples, particularly the Catawbas, see James H.
Merrell, The Indians’ New World: Catawbas and their Neighbors From European
Contact Through the Era of Removal (New York: W. W. Norton and Company,
1989), in particular pages 1-7 for Lawson’s journey. Much of this chapter is informed
by that work’s examination of the Catawbas, the Tuscaroras’ neighbors and
competitors to the south. Merrell also uses Lawson as one of his principle sources—a
tactic that is somewhat problematic considering that Lawson’s own contacts were
primarily with the Tuscaroras. Although there were similarities between the early
contact experiences of the Catawbas and the Tuscaroras, the Catawbas ultimately
were able to accommodate themselves to the expanding English presence. Many of
the Tuscaroras, on the other hand, rose up in war and were ultimately driven from the
Carolinas. See also John Reed Swanton, The Indians of the Southeastern United
Smithsonian Institution, 1946).

4 Lawson, New Voyage, 65.
onto the Pamlico River, "is very thick of Indian Towns and Plantations."5 They had entered the heartland of the Tuscaroras. About fifteen villages, not to mention sprawling neighborhoods of scattered farms, clustered along the major waterways of the coastal plain and the piedmont’s eastern edge. A population of approximately four thousand made its Iroquoian-speaking people one of the largest Indian groups in the Carolinas, indeed, of the whole eastern seaboard.6

Unlike his predecessors who were apprehensive about hazarding into a heart of darkness, Lawson did not feel endangered. If anything, his pace among the Tuscaroras slowed, mimicking the sluggish waterways he marched along. For several days his party leisurely ambled through the region’s hunting camps and towns. At one man’s invitation they “resolved to tarry for his Company” for two nights. Food was

5 Lawson, New Voyage, 66.

scarce—the season was late winter and hunting was poor—yet one Tuscarora host offered to share the last of his corn; another proffered beaver tail, a delicacy. During their stay they witnessed a healing ceremony and a funeral; they partook of the feast that followed. Setting out east again, some of his party accepted an invitation to go out of the way to another town. Finally, after reaching the coast and finishing his journey through the Carolina backcountry, Lawson felt comfortable enough among the Tuscaroras to settle at the edge of their territory. He constructed “a House about Half a mile from an Indian town at the fork of Neus-River, where I dwelt by myself, excepting a young Indian Fellow, and a Bull-Dog, that I had along with me.” He became North Carolina’s Surveyor General, a post whose travels over the next several years would bring him into further contact with the region’s Indians.

The contrasts between Lawson’s experiences and Lederer’s, Bland’s, or Lane’s reflect a shift that had been underway for several decades. Those few early explorers had been frightening outsiders, whose entry elicited fear and apprehension for everyone involved. However, from about the 1670s onwards, trade and settlement exploded, making contacts between the two peoples more common. The paths Lawson followed had been made by Indians, but were increasingly familiar to traders going north from Charleston or south from Virginia. For part of his journey he had traveled with John Stewart, homeward-bound to Virginia after months among the Indians selling seven horseloads of goods. Settlers also lived nearby. Lawson’s cabin

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8 Merrell, Indians’ New World, 32.
on the Neuse joined those of a growing number of settlers within one or two day's reach of the Tuscaroras. Among the Tuscaroras, Lawson was entertained and treated politely, but he did not elicit exceptional attention. People like him—other Europeans trading trinkets, flirting with women, accepting food, and sharing sleeping quarters—had become common. Lawson's Tuscarora host regularly traded with the English and had probably quartered numerous traders. In return, the host probably hoped to be received similarly when he next ventured among the Europeans.

Lawson not only benefited from this increasing familiarity, he furthered it by recording and publishing his observations and experiences in a work entitled *A New Voyage to Carolina*. It contained both his journal and an extensive account of the Indians of North Carolina. Part scientific catalogue, it also acted as a virtual how-to guide for life among the Indians. He recognized that traders and settlers (both of whom he hoped to attract to the region with the work) would need to take the Tuscaroras and other Indians into account in nearly every aspect of their endeavors.

At the same time, the Tuscaroras were also observing Europeans, becoming familiar with their ways and adapting to their presence. By almost any standard, the Tuscaroras remained the most powerful and influential group in the region. But in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries they found themselves facing new challenges: an intruding culture, a competing political presence, and sudden inclusion into Atlantic markets. The issue was no longer rare confrontations between

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unfamiliar peoples. It was how the two would cope when they became thoroughly intertwined.\textsuperscript{10}

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Doors Opened

For decades the Tuscaroras had been feeling the indirect aftershocks of Europeans jostling with native groups just beyond their borderlands. These reverberations reached a new magnitude in 1676 with Bacon’s Rebellion. That war is best known as an internecine struggle among Virginia settlers that saw the sacking and burning of the capital at Jamestown at the hands of a boisterous band of ex-servants, middling farmers, slaves, and discontented planters, all headed by the ambitious Nathaniel Bacon. They erected their own revolutionary junta before being ultimately defeated by Governor William Berkeley with his own band of supporters reinforced by royal marines. Although the rebellion exposed long-brewing tensions over taxation and representation of new counties, sparking the conflict and giving it its terrible momentum was a bloody series of raids and counter-raids between settlers and neighboring Indians. The result was an orgy of bloodletting in which Bacon’s men, unable to track down enemy raiders, and impelled by fear, frustration, and deep-seated racism, indiscriminately struck at any Indians at hand. The conflict had begun

in the north against the Susquehannocks who lived near the Maryland border; soon much of the action shifted to Virginia's southside, the region closest to the Tuscaroras.\textsuperscript{11}

The Tuscaroras were not drawn into the war, but many of their closest Iroquoian neighbors immediately to the north were. At one point Bacon's men induced two dozen Nottoways and the Meherrins (cousins and often allies of the Tuscaroras) to join an attack upon the Occaneechees (a Siouan group northwest of the Tuscaroras that controlled much of the area's trade).\textsuperscript{12} "What we reckon most materiall," recounted one of Bacon's followers, "is that wee have left all nations of Indians, where wee have been engaged in a civill warr amongst themselves, soe that With great ease wee hope to mannage this advantage, to their utter ruine and destruction."\textsuperscript{13} Soon the Meherrins and Nottoways themselves joined the long list of tribes who felt the wrath of Bacon's men. In 1677 Ununtequero, "king of the Meherrin," Harehannah, "the Meherrin's 2\textsuperscript{nd} chief," and the "king of the Nottowayes" signed their marks to a treaty meant to restore peace to Indians whom the rebels had assailed.\textsuperscript{14} Also appearing on the treaty were the marks of the leaders of the


\textsuperscript{12} "Bacon's Rebellion," \textit{WMQ} 1\textsuperscript{st} series, 9, no. 1 (July 1900): 1.

\textsuperscript{13} "Bacon's Rebellion," \textit{WMQ} 1\textsuperscript{st} series, 9, no. 1 (July 1900): 4.

Pamunkeys, Appomattox, Weyanokes, Nansemonds, Nansiaticoes, Monacans, and Saponis—members of nearly every tribe that shared the swath of territory between Virginia and the northern reaches of the Tuscaroras.

Besides offering Tuscaroras a vicarious lesson in English military wrath, the long-term effect of the war was to eliminate many of the barriers that had previously shielded the Tuscaroras from nearly all direct contact with the English. Before the war, several Indian groups had wielded influence out of proportion with their disease-depleted numbers by jealously guarding roles as middlemen between Virginia and larger, more distant Indian groups like the Tuscaroras. The Occaneechees had held a stranglehold over southern trade from their nearly unassailable rocky island in the Roanoke River, but the war killed many and drove the rest to resettle far to the south along the Eno River out of range of future retaliations.\(^{15}\) The Weyanokes had cagily warned off interlopers by spreading rumors (by no means entirely false) that “the English would kill them, or detain them, and would not let them goe without a great heape of Roanoke [wampum] middle high.”\(^{16}\) The Meherrins also employed scare tactics to prevent direct contacts between the Tuscaroras and the English.\(^{17}\) Defeated in war, weakened in numbers, and subject to treaty agreements, after Bacon’s


\(^{17}\) Dawdy, "Meherrins’ Secret History," 396.
rebellion these groups were less of an imposing obstacle to traders seeking to pass through and seek customers among the Tuscaroras.

Another casualty of war was the network of border forts that Virginia’s Council had designated as official trade rendezvous since 1644. These had helped them in English expansion and had regulated contact with outside groups of Indians. Long unpopular for the government cronyism they sustained, their military ineffectiveness during the war made them a chief target of the rebels. Bacon’s ultimate defeat did little to resuscitate this gasping institution. The structures still remained, but increasingly places like Fort Henry became mere departure points, last stops for Englishmen at the heads of ever-larger pack trains loaded with trade goods headed south into Indian country.18 As gentlemen traders established their own plantation headquarters complete with storehouses near the falls of the James and Appomattox Rivers and later along the Blackwater River, these forts were eventually by-passed entirely. In the 1650s, the trader Francis Yardley briefly established a trade house under the direction of Nathaniel Batts at the mouth of the Roanoke River.19 In 1671, a year after Lederer had been shocked at the scarcity of trade goods among the “remoter Indians,” a young William Byrd inherited over five thousand acres at the

18 Earlier in the century several traders and explorers had departed from these outposts, as the examples of Bland, Lederer, Batts, and Fallam attest. But Alan Briceland in *Westward from Virginia* believes these early adventurers and the failures they met with were the exception that proved the rule that travel beyond the fall line by Europeans was rare before the last quarter of the century. Alan Vance Briceland, *Westward From Virginia: The Exploration of the Virginia-Carolina Frontier, 1650-1710* (Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 1987).

19 Yeardley, "Narrative."
falls of the James River, complete with "Several Slaves, Houses Cattle Households Stuff Goods [and] Merchandizes."\textsuperscript{20} Within a few years he was outfitting frequent trading expeditions from his warehouse and constantly seeking out ships to transport the hides and furs to England.

Eliminating the bottlenecks that had slowed the passage of traders into the Carolina piedmont and inner coastal plain helped make the next four decades the golden age of Virginia's southwestern trade. By the end of the century between fifty and sixty Virginia traders embarked annually on the "trading voyage" to the Indian nations in the Carolinas and beyond. By 1708 their numbers had perhaps reached as many as one hundred.\textsuperscript{21} Before 1711 many of these expeditions made the Tuscaroras their final destination or a temporary stopping point as they wound their way south, ferrying across the Pamlico, Neuse, and Tar rivers, pausing to trade for hides at the numerous towns, villages, and scattered plantations of the Tuscarora heartland before ultimately turning west towards the piedmont tribes.\textsuperscript{22} Other traders called "coasters" came by water, meeting Indians along the shores of the Pamlico or Albemarle Sound, or traveling further inland by river.\textsuperscript{23} The result of these transformations was that in their own territory Tuscaroras were encountering English traders in greater numbers and for longer periods than ever before.

\textsuperscript{20} Quotation in Mary Miley Theobald, "The Indian Trade in Colonial Virginia" (M.A. thesis, Dept. of History, The College of William and Mary, 1980), 58.

\textsuperscript{21} Merrell, \textit{Indians' New World}, 29.

\textsuperscript{22} Merrell, \textit{Indians' New World}, 28-29.

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{NCCR}, 22: 732-35; Yeardley, "Narrative."
For the English traders beginning to venture south out of the settled tobacco plantations of Virginia, the territory they were entering was unfamiliar. "The Land between James River and Roanoke River is for the most parts low sunken swampy land not well passable but with great difficulty," the legend on a 1673 map grimly reported; even worse, "therein harbours Tygers Bears and other Devouringe creatures." But what seemed foreboding and new to early English traders was familiar ground for Indians who had been trekking and trucking between various tribes in the region long before Europeans got involved in the trade. Even before the English showed up on at their doorways with loads of cargo, the Tuscarora town of Katearas was reported to be a place of "great trade and commerce." Copper, deerskins, flint, shellfish (tiny black marginella shells), pearls, and buffalo hides had passed through Tuscarora towns on their way back and forth in a busy commerce as tribes exchanged their local abundance and surplus for distant delicacies. Later, European goods entered the mix and reached the Tuscaroras through a long filter of


25 Lederer, "Discoveries," 162.

Indian middlemen. As early as 1622 an Englishman exploring the area reported seeing a “China box” that had probably passed through a long line of Indian traders’ hands northward from Spanish settlements on the Gulf Coast. Virginia had inherited for its traders a cluster of well-trod routes that connected the old Powhatan empire at the fall line with other peoples to the south and southwest where war parties and traders had alternately passed through for diplomacy, war, and trade. Locals knew one of these routes, not far from a “great swamp” on the Roanoke River where a group of Weyanokes fled in the mid-seventeenth century, as the “tuscaroora path.” An archeological assortment of potsherds of Tuscarora and Powhatan manufacture reveal that the region experienced a constant flow of goods, people, and technology.

27 RVCL, III: 641-642. The king who possessed it “declared, that it was sent him from the West, by a King that dwells ouer the great hils, whose Countrey is neare the Sea, he hauing that box from a People, as he said, that come thither in Ships, and weare clothes, and dwell in houses, and are called Acanackchina.”

28 A high mixture of Gaston (generally Powhatan) and Cashie (Tuscarora) pottery reveals that the southern border of the Powhatan empire experienced a great deal of trade with the Tuscaroras. (Rountree, Powhatan Foreign Relations, 91.) A Tuscarora route known as the Wecacanna Path linked the Occaneechee Path to the Chowan River (Parramore, “Tuscarora Ascendancy,” 311). See Dawdy, “Meherrins’ Secret History,” 397 for a map on which several of these routes can be seen. The same map is also in William Byrd, William Byrd’s Histories of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina, William K. Boyd, ed. (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1929).


30 Rountree, Powhatan Foreign Relations, 91.
Rather than plunging into this stream of commerce alone, Englishmen waded in accompanied by Indian guides and translators. These were the men and women who led the traders past swamps and down rivers, who hunted daily meals, and when paths split in the woods, chose the one best traveled. In old age Richard Booth could look back upon his first forays as a young trader paddling down the Blackwater River toward Carolina guided by a Weyanoke Indian named Tom Frusman. “Being a Stranger in those parts” he recalled, he had brimmed with questions: “what river that was they first mett with on their Right Hand?” Who planted that field over there? “How far . . . to Maherine River?”

Besides leading traders across the landscape, these Indian companions showed traders heading into Tuscarora country the ins and outs of unfamiliar cultural territory. There were numerous pitfalls and missteps to avoid. Approaching strangers needed to announce themselves to a village with a gunshot, a halloo, or an unthreatening child sent running home, or else they risked being suspected as spies, or what was worse, Iroquois raiders. Traders needed to be taught when to shake hands and when to scratch and stroke the shoulders of their hosts and potential customers.


32 *NCCR, I*: 661-662.


Even where to sleep, whether in the house of the town leader, in a separate structure built for visiting traders, or in the “mercenary” embrace of a “trade girl” next to her seemingly indifferent parents, had to be carefully thought out and considered. Mistakes could do more than hinder trade among Indians who considered commerce on a single continuum with diplomacy, kinship, friendship, and war; they could be dangerous. These were the sort of blunders that Bland’s boisterous band and Lederer after him had made, turning every town they visited into a hotbed of suspicious whispers.

To be successful, traders had to learn more than geography and cultural niceties; they needed to be able to communicate verbally with their customers. Often they depended upon their guides to serve double duty as interpreters. But such dependence had its weaknesses. On his first trip into Tuscarora territory, Lawson wasted half a day ineffectually shouting and waving across a flooded stream at a pair of Tuscaroras on the other side. Only when his native guide, Enoe Will (bringing up the rear with a stubborn pack horse), finally arrived could sense be made of what was being said. Such linguistic roadblocks were liable to occur constantly. The numerous tribes each had their own language so that “it often, appears, that every dozen miles, you meet with an Indian Town, that is quite different from the others you last parted withal.” Easing the confusion, however, was the convention that, despite this babble

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of tongues, "the most powerful Nation of these Savages scorns to treat or trade with any others (of fewer Numbers and less Power) in any other Tongue but their own, which serves for the Lingua of the Country." As for North Carolina, "we see that the Tuskeruro's are most numerous . . . therefore their Tongue is understood by some in every Town of all the Indians near us."\textsuperscript{37}

Lawson's early linguistic helplessness shows that any sensible trader or traveler needed to pick up at least a few crucial Tuscarora words and phrases. Lawson himself later recorded over a hundred and fifty words and an assortment of phrases in the Tuscarora language (far outnumbering the few words in Woccon and Pampticough he also put down).\textsuperscript{38} His choice of words gives a glimpse of the stuttering exchanges he and other traders attempted in Tuscarora towns. The wordlist begins with translations of numbers. They are followed by names for an assortment of trade goods including Rum ("oonaquod"), Blankets ("Oorewa"), Gunpowder and shot ("ou-kn" and "cauna"), kettle ("oowaiana"), and gun ("Auk-noc"). If the trader knew the wares he carried, he also knew how to name his price. He sought raw skins undressed ("ootahawa"), dressed-skin, ("cotcoo"), buckskin ("ocques"), fawn-skin ("ottea"), bear-skin ("oochehara"), fox-skin ("che-chou"), and others. Traders were also armed with such handy phrases as "I will sell you Goods very cheap," "Englishman is thirsty," "How many?" "Give it to me," and "I am sick."\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{37} Lawson, \textit{New Voyage}, 233.


Knowing a few awkward words and becoming fluent were two different things. To make themselves understood, Tuscaroras spoke simply and slowly to non-natives. This practice contributed to the wrong impression that “their Languages or Tongues are so deficient, that you cannot suppose the Indians ever could express themselves in such a Flight of Stile, as Authors would have you believe.”

Practice could be had by patient exchanges over a campfire with a guide who might know an equivalent smattering of English. A method more pleasurable to many traders was having “an Indian Female for his Bed-fellow” according to the belief that “this correspondence makes them learn the Indian Tongue much the sooner, they being of the . . . opinion, . . . [that a] Wife teaches her Husband more . . . in one Night, than a School-master can in a Week.”

Opportunities for such companionship abounded, with native guides and middlemen frequently introducing traders to “trading Girls.” Distinguishable by specific haircuts, these young women often met native and English traders and “design’d to get Money by their Natural Parts.” A price was set, with either the parents, local leader, or occasionally the girl herself naming the sum, and the couple retired either to a cabin of their own or to a less-than-private corner of the family dwelling. Sometimes these women would turn down the traders, seeing that they had nothing they wanted. Other times they would take as payment more than the

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40 Lawson, *New Voyage*, 239.


trader had bargained for: one of Lawson’s companions had his pockets picked and his shoes stolen and had to hop along the next day barefooted.43

Long-term relationships also resulted between traders and Tuscarora women, with the man being “constant to their Indian Wife, and her Relations, so long as they liv’d.”44 In such cases the woman became an invaluable assistant and guide who not only fixed food and dressed hides, but also worked “instructing ‘em in the Affairs and Customs of the Country.”45 Their kinship ties, language skills, and practical knowledge could smooth over a host of difficulties for a trader among the Tuscaroras. On occasion relationships ended in bitter tears and abandonment.46 But a trader had every incentive not to let this happen because, as Lawson noted, when a trader “is reserv’d from the Conversation of their Women, ‘tis impossible for him ever to accomplish his Designs amongst that People.”47 Such relationships were especially valuable when one considers how many of the trader’s wares, whether metal hoes or draw-knives to replace curved digging sticks and oyster shell scrapers, were bound for female hands.48

43 For a trade girl’s refusal of trader’s advances, Lawson, New Voyage, 36. For the theft of shoes, Lawson, New Voyage, 47.
44 Lawson, New Voyage, 192.
45 Lawson, New Voyage, 192.
46 Lawson, New Voyage, 195.
47 Lawson, New Voyage, 192.
48 Lawson, New Voyage, 217.
Whatever the goods, traders among the Tuscaroras and other southeastern Indians had to learn to provide products that met the exacting standards of their clientele. William Byrd's letters to his suppliers fumed with the frustration of trying to get goods that pleased his fickle customers: "Beads you sent mee large white instead of small . . . send mee none but small white this year, all others a drug." Indians turned up their noses at "kettles which they say had holes in them." They preferred blue above all other colors, but a shade that was "sad" and dark, prompting Byrd to protest that "Your duffields much complaind of both ye goodnesse & color a darker blew pleases the Indians best." An Indian buying a gun might blast away a hundred or more valuable rounds before being satisfied that it fired true. Byrd begged his supplier to "Pray Speake to the Gun Smith that the Dogs of all the Gun Locks have good Hold otherwise the Indians will not buy them." An Indian trader's account books occasionally listed "Guns returned." Whatever the trader thought of his choosy buyers, he had to learn to hold his tongue and put forward a proper attitude. Indians looking for goods "never frequent a Christian's House that is given to Passion," reported Lawson, "nor will they ever buy or sell with him, if they can get

49 Quotation in Theobald, "Indian Trade," 60.
50 Quotation in Theobald, "Indian Trade," 60.
51 Quotation in Theobald, "Indian Trade," 60.
52 Lawson, New Voyage, 33.
53 Quotation in Theobald, "Indian Trade," 60.
54 CRNC, 4:420.
the same Commodities of any other Person; for they say, such Men are mad Wolves, and not more Men."\textsuperscript{55}

This choosiness on the part of the Tuscaroras and other southeastern Indians shows that new goods being brought by traders were being weighed against traditional native products and used in familiar ways. Even with native precedents, however, European goods represented a technological revolution. Brass kettles were less liable to shatter when placed directly over an open fire than pebble-tempered, pattern-stamped clay pots the Tuscaroras had been shaping for several centuries. Gradually these were replaced in the archeological record.\textsuperscript{56} When trade kettles finally wore out, the Tuscaroras could cut them up and recycle the brass into decorative bracelets, gorgets, and amulets, in addition to utilitarian knives and arrow points.\textsuperscript{57} Traders carried small metal knives and scissors by the dozens because Tuscaroras recognized that they held an edge longer and could be re-sharpened more easily than painstakingly knapped stones.

When Lawson visited the backcountry, the Indians were in the midst of a fashion revolution as English trade cloth (which was lighter, warmer, more pliable,


\textsuperscript{57} Merrell, \textit{Indians' New World}; Lawson, \textit{A New Voyage}, 203.
and easier to cut, sew, and wash than leather) was worked into distinctively native styles.\textsuperscript{58} Tuscarora women often still wore aprons of “Deer-Skin dress’d white, and pointed or slit at the bottom, like Fringe.” But in place of white skins some women began to wear the dark reds and blues of English trade bays and plains, tucked at the corners and cinched around the waist with a belt.\textsuperscript{59} Men sported ornate cloaks of rabbit, raccoon, or beaver skins. The fanciest of these “match-coats” were painstakingly sewn entirely of the shimmering green feathers of a mallard’s head and were worked with ornate designs and figures. But some dandies traded in their skins for English-made military coats that they pulled out on festival days. Their bottom halves remained wholly native, however, for they continued to prefer moccasins, bare legs, and breech clouts for unrestricted ease of movement.\textsuperscript{60} Even when they went to war, Tuscaroras daubed themselves with European dyes, painting their faces red with English-bought vermilion and adding black circles of lead around their eyes.\textsuperscript{61} To arm themselves for war or the hunt, Tuscaroras eagerly sought guns, whose large-bore stopping power, ability to shoot in heavy underbrush without being tangled up, and fearsome noise made them more desirable than quicker, quieter, and often more

\textsuperscript{58} Axtell, \textit{Indians’ New South}, 62.

\textsuperscript{59} Lawson, \textit{A New Voyage}, 197.

\textsuperscript{60} Some of the Tuscaroras closest to the settlements may have dressed like members of small groups near Virginia and the Albemarle region who being “more civilized than the rest, . . . wear Hats, Shooes, Stockings, and Breeches, with very tolerable Linnen Shirts.” The loose, open-breasted cotton hunting frock, ever-present among southeastern Indians in the mid-eighteenth century, apparently had not yet achieved much popularity among the Tuscaroras. Lawson, \textit{A New Voyage}, 200.

\textsuperscript{61} Lawson, \textit{A New Voyage}, 201.

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accurate bows. Opposite the ever-present pouch of shot and powder on his waist was usually strung a tobacco pouch and pipe. Indians had long used a bitter native variety of tobacco for ceremonial purposes, but as Chesapeake plantations rolled out hogsheads of sweeter-tasting varieties by the tun, Tuscaroras joined Europeans in the early eighteenth century in picking up a daily tobacco habit.  

Other products that the traders brought to the Tuscaroras were entirely new with no native analogue. Chief among these was rum, whose portability, high value for its weight, and tendency to loosen up contumacious customers made it a favorite among traders. One trader’s accounts showed nearly five hundred gallons being dispensed in a single year. But Indian drinking took on a distinctly native cast. Rather than mixing rum into punch as the Virginia planters habitually did, the Tuscaroras took theirs straight and were “never contented with a little but when once begun, they must make themselves quite drunk.” These all-night “frolicks” gave normally stoic tribemen and women an opportunity to unleash and vent frustrations and dislikes that were otherwise frowned upon, for “they never call any Man to account for what he did, when he was drunk; but say it was the Drink that caused his

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62 Lawson, *A New Voyage*, 175-76;


64 *CRNC*, 4: 419-420.

65 Lawson, *A New Voyage*, 211; They called rum and medicine by the same word; the implication was that rum falls onto a gradation of spiritual power that can either heal or hurt (*Lawson, A New Voyage*, 240.)
Misbehaviour, therefore he ought to be forgiven." The social costs were painfully high, however. Drink occasioned fights, accidents, and sickness. It contributed to the dark depression of one chief's son, who upon being chastised by his mother "at his drinking too much rum" replied "that he would do the like no more," and shot himself. Tuscarora women normally held veto power over a suitor's advances; but upon being rebuffed, frustrated men armed with alcohol might "strive to make her drunk," and then rape her, shear her hair in grim parody of a trade girl's coiffure, and sell the clippings to the English.

Besides being used for local consumption, rum joined an assortment of other goods that the Tuscaroras resold to "Westward Indians, who never knew what it was, till within very few Years." Lawson reported that by the Indians in close contact with Europeans, "but the Tuskeruro's chiefly," carried rum "in Rundlets several hundred Miles, amongst other Indians." Often these "merchants" would cut into their stock enroute, have a raucous trailside drinking session, and afterwards add water or urine to make up the remainder. When they staggered into town, an even more boisterous scene followed. A buyer picked out the man with the biggest mouth among his compatriots and the drink was measured out by the mouthful, with the

67 Lawson, *A New Voyage*, 211.
68 Lawson, *A New Voyage*, 212.
seller looking on ready to clobber the man if he tried to sneak a swallow.\textsuperscript{70} The last days of Lawson's journey were spent being guided by one such Tuscarora rum seller who was going to the English to restock.\textsuperscript{71}

Besides selling rum, Tuscaroras sold guns, pots, pans, and cloth to Indians further removed from Europeans. European traders might have initially provided the merchandise, but their practice of entrusting large stores of goods to Tuscaroras, who often took it upon themselves to trade, sell, or gamble away part, shifted influence into native hands.\textsuperscript{72} Acting as a middleman, however, was nothing new to the Tuscaroras, who merely added these goods to established patterns of exchange. Making the same rounds were peddlers of small black shellfish that the coastal Indians east of the Tuscaroras harvested on long knotted strings baited with bits of oyster meat. The Tuscaroras were well positioned to carry these cockles “a great way into the main Land, to trade with the remote Indians, where they are of great Value.”\textsuperscript{73} Another occasion for selling European and native goods was at various feasts, in the spring for the corn planting, or fall for harvest when they “gave thanks to the good Spirit” and asked for the “same Blessings for the succeeding Year.” These celebrations, which brought people together from fifty to sixty miles away, were

\textsuperscript{70} Lawson, \textit{A New Voyage}, 232-33.

\textsuperscript{71} Lawson, \textit{A New Voyage}, 66.

\textsuperscript{72} \textit{CVSP}, 1: 65; \textit{EJCCV}, 2: 402.

\textsuperscript{73} Lawson, \textit{A New Voyage}, 218.
occasion for dancing, gambling, and a fair-like market where everything from carved 
bowls to guns might be exchanged.\textsuperscript{74}

The quest for deerskins that would be shipped ultimately from the Indian 
towns probably affected Tuscarora society almost as much the guns, pots, and cloth 
that European traders brought to them. European demand for leather for book 
bindings, gloves, belts, workman's aprons, trunks, coach seats, buckets, hats, and 
horse tackle (to name only a few items) made the hides of the whitetail deer the staple 
export of Tuscarora towns.\textsuperscript{75} Initially, Indians had been content to sell leftover hides 
from deer hunted for food and skins that would otherwise be worked into native 
clothing, moccasins, bags, or blankets. But increasingly Tuscarora society geared 
itself towards producing ever-larger numbers of skins that could be traded for 
essential and desirable European goods.

Providing the thousands of skins entailed more than merely shooting deer in 
the woods. The task was a community-wide effort that affected life throughout the 
year. In the winter almost an entire community, numbering five hundred or more, 
would relocate from sprawling neighborhoods and scattered riverside farms to more 
compact hunting quarters, consisting of neat rows of ridge-topped pine-bark houses. 
On his first visit to Tuscarora territory in midwinter, Lawson made the mistake of 
visiting summer residences which he found to be a virtual ghost town, abandoned

\textsuperscript{74} Lawson, \textit{A New Voyage}, 178.

\textsuperscript{75} Axtell, \textit{Indians' New South}, 48; Kathryn E. Holland Braund, \textit{Deerskins & Duffels: 
The Creek Indian Trade with Anglo-America, 1685-1815} (Lincoln: University of 
Nebraska Press, 1993).
except for “an Old Woman or two; the rest being gone to their Hunting-Quarters.”

Shorter, less community-wide versions of these yearly hunting retreats predated European contact, but the added impetus of cross-Atlantic demand began to put an added strain on the local deer population. Lawson attributed the shortage to overpopulation among the Tuscaroras, writing that “tho’ they are expert Hunters, yet they are too populous for one Range; which makes Venison very scarce to what it is amongst other Indians, that are fewer.” Since the Tuscaroras’ population had been declining from disease in recent years, the culprit was more likely the Tuscaroras’ greater exposure to the market, not overeating or hunting for local use. In response, Tuscaroras began to hunt farther afield and for longer periods, in the process encroaching on native and English neighbors. In 1702 the Nottoways complained to

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77 John E. Byrd, *Tuscarora Subsistence Practices in the Late Woodland Period: The Zooarchaeology of the Jordan’s Landing Site* (Raleigh: North Carolina Archaeological Council, 1997), 67 and throughout. Examining the zooarcheological record, Byrd suggests that prior to a widespread deer trade, hunters left town on temporary forays, but remained close enough to bring back nearly whole deer carcasses that could be divided and added to simmering pots of family members who remained at home. Later, further-ranging hunters only brought back cuts of meat.


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Virginia officials that the Tuscaroras “come in great bodies into this country to hunt whereby the game which is their chief support is destroyed.”

Another enterprising solution was for Tuscaroras to trade with westward Indians who “perhaps have greater plenty of Deer and other Game.” By this avenue, even women and men who were unskilled at hunting could tap into the deer trade by spending their winter months weaving baskets and mats and carving bowls, dishes, and spoons to be exchanged for “raw” hides (with the hair still on) from westward Indians. Thus, even beyond the direct reach of European traders, exchanges of goods made, sold, and used by Indians reflected the growing influence of Atlantic markets.

Spring thaw and the return to summer settlements did not end attention to the deer trade. Summers were spent dressing raw and half-dressed hides either purchased from westward Indians or shot by Tuscarora hunters. Women, slaves, and old men soaked the skins in water, loosening the hair, and then scraped them clean with a polished deer-hoof or an iron draw-knife. Next they smeared on a mixture of ashes and deer brains. When dried, the skins were worked and scraped soft with an oyster shell. Finally, they were either cured in a cabin over a sooty fire or tanned in a mixture of tannic water steeped in bark.

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80 EJCCV, 2: 275; The English settlers of Henrico County (in the same region) made similar complaints against the Tuscaroras encroaching during their hunts in 1693; see JHBV 1659/60-1693, 454-55. See also Hening, Statutes, 2: 202-203; JHBV 1659/60-93, 23; EJCCV, 1: 333; CVSP, 1: 65.

81 Lawson, New Voyage, 217.
Working deer hides, which had previously been only a small part of the schedule of the busy townspeople, took up larger amounts of time. Although women continued to spend much of their days making their own pots, fabrics, and tools, they spent increasing hours finishing deer hides that could be exchanged for the European equivalent. Why painstakingly make a clay pot when for a few hides a more durable copper one could easily be purchased? Besides the social implications of this shift, the outward character and appearance of communities took on a different cast as more space and time were devoted to working the skins. The smells of town life, never subtle, could become overwhelming with the reek of hundreds of half-dried hides in the sun. Vermin and parasites attracted by hair and gristle became a problem, prompting Lawson to complain that “they are often troubled with a multitude of Fleas, especially near the Places where they dress their Deer-Skins.”

Tuscaroras already relocated their towns every several years to escape pests and bring themselves closer to fresh fields and abundant firewood; greater infestations likely prompted them to accelerate this cycle.

If the influx of European traders affected Tuscaroras' tools, work habits, and schedules, it is harder to determine what changes trade caused in conceptions towards wealth and status. Products, previously valued according to their immediate usefulness, increasingly took on fixed values, especially in terms of deerskins. A good set of gambling sticks (used in a counting game) cost one doe-skin.

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and wampum, which had been used in trade and in ceremonial uses, acquired a more monetary function: five cubits were worth a dressed doe-skin, seven or eight cubits, a buckskin.\textsuperscript{84} A captive, valuable as a trophy of prowess, a target of torture, or a candidate for adoption into a grieving family, could be sold into the growing slave market.\textsuperscript{85}

The greatest sources of respect remained skill on the hunt and at war. That these activities were rewarded by skins and slaves could blur the distinction between market and non-market sources of prestige. Typically, at a man’s funeral, an orator enumerated the deceased’s “Guns, Slaves, and almost every thing he possess’d of, when living.”\textsuperscript{86} But this was only part of a longer speech that described the deceased’s “Valour, Conduct, Strength, Riches, and Good Humour.” The speaker would go into detail on “who the dead Person was, and how stout a Man he approv’d himself; how many Enemies and Captives he had kill’d and taken; how strong, tall, and nimble he was; that he was a great Hunter, a Lover of his Country, and possess’d of a great many beautiful Wives and Children.”\textsuperscript{87} Products were important largely as outward displays of prowess and skill; if they were earned some other way, they might provoke scorn as easily as admiration. “Several of the Indians are possess’d of a great many Skins, Wampum, Ammunition, and what other things are esteem’d

\textsuperscript{84} Lawson, \textit{New Voyage}, 203.

\textsuperscript{85} The slave trade will be treated in detail in a later chapter.

\textsuperscript{86} Lawson, \textit{New Voyage}, 187.

\textsuperscript{87} Lawson, \textit{New Voyage}, 187.
Riches amongst them; yet such an Indian is no more esteem'd amongst them than any other ordinary Fellow, provided he has no personal Endowments, which are the Ornaments that must gain him an Esteem among them; for a great Dealer, amongst the Indians, is no otherwise respected and esteemed, than as a Man that strains his Wits, and fatigues himself, to furnish others with Necessaries of Life, that live much easier and enjoy more of the World, than he himself does with all his Pelf.\textsuperscript{88}

Even if many Tuscaroras looked askance at the coveting of European goods, increasingly these wares became invaluable in ways inconceivable generations earlier. In Lawson's time, Tuscaroras still knew how to spark a fire using two flints or by rubbing sticks together, but they only used these methods in case of some sort of accident, instead preferring European flint and steel.\textsuperscript{89} Bows were still carved and used, but mostly by children learning the arts of forestry by stalking birds and squirrels, almost never by grown men who felt naked and unarmed without a firearm. Tuscaroras learned to carve a new stock, bend the barrel straight, and make simple field repairs, but the gun itself and the powder and shot still needed to come from European traders. Rum became such an integral part of daily life that when a group of Tuscarora leaders sought to stem the flow, "the young Indians were so disgusted . . . that they threatened to kill" those who made the agreement.\textsuperscript{90} Visiting Senecas may have struck a nerve when they taunted the Tuscaroras and "told them that the Whites

\textsuperscript{88} Lawson, New Voyage, 206-207.

\textsuperscript{89} Lawson, New Voyage, 212-13.

\textsuperscript{90} Lawson, New Voyage, 211-12.
had imposed upon them . . . [and] that they were fools to slave and hunt to furnish themselves” for trade with Europeans; “it was but killing of them and possessed of their substance.”

Trade with Europeans quickly became an inseparable part of Tuscarora culture. By the time of Lawson’s visit in 1700, a steady stream of packtrains had been winding southward from Virginia for nearly thirty years. More appeared from the south with the establishment of trading routes from Charleston, the same paths Lawson had taken on his own journey. Traders crisscrossed Carolina on trails that centered along the fall line where they could easily turn east towards the Tuscaroras or west to the inner piedmont tribes. The near-nonchalance with which Lawson was received, compared to Lederer’s frightening foray, reveals how commonplace such contacts had become. Nowhere on Lawson’s journey was he out of easy hale of a trader, guide, or townsman who was intimately familiar with the ins and outs of the trade. Increasingly, Tuscaroras were becoming accustomed to traders staying two, three, or more years, learning the language, taking wives, fathering children, and bringing new goods. Whatever barriers had once existed between Tuscaroras and Europeans were quickly being dismantled.

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92 It appears that traders from Charleston preferred to trade with the Tuscaroras’ Siouan neighbors on the piedmont, resulting increasingly over time in competition between two trade axes. This will be described in greater length below.
Settlers in a Tuscarora World

Arriving at nearly the same time were settlers pushing at the borders and crossing into the Tuscarora homeland. A few Virginians began coming to the Albemarle region, with its narrow sounds, sandy banks, and shallow passages dividing low lands, in the late 1650s, but large numbers did not come until the late 1670s. Some came looking for fresh pasture for their cattle, others for cheap land, still others for land not exhausted by the rigors of tobacco agriculture. A Virginia official wrote that “many families of old Inhabitants whose former plantations are worn out as well as great numbers of young people & servants just free . . . seek for settlements in the province in North Carolina where Land is to be had on much easier Termes than here.”93

In 1663 Charles II awarded North Carolina to eight proprietors—a reward for loyalty to the royal family during the Interregnum; two years later the region was incorporated into the county of Albemarle. Soon the proprietors published grand plans for their colony, complete with a set of “Fundamental Constitutions” written by philosopher John Locke. But the visions these documents contained of semi-feudal lords, leet-men, and near-fiefdoms were far removed from the hardscrabble improvisation that was the reality of life in the young settlements. The settlers numbered only a few hundred, most of whom were clustered upon small tracts on the far northeastern edge of the region, pressed against the underbelly of Virginia around

93 NCCR, 1: 690.
Currituck Sound. The population slowly increased, reaching between three and four thousand by 1694, but the region kept its rough-and-tumble frontier atmosphere. Few ships were willing to brave the barriers of shifting shoals and dangerous banks, so products shipped in and out of Albemarle usually had to cross the short but uncertain land route from Virginia. Except for a few wealthy slave owners, reported a missionary unhappy with his station, "men are generally of all trades and women the like within their spheres." The men needed to be "Carpenters, Joiners, Wheelwrights, Coopers, Butchers, Tanners, Shoemakers, Tallow Chandlers, Watermen and what not" while the women were "Soap makers, Starch makers, Dyes etc." Hard-pressed newcomers found little help among their callous neighbors, who "love to see new comers put to their shifts as they themselves have been." Among Virginians the region gained a reputation for "harbouring our debtors, and servants and receiving such as are fled from hence for their treason and Rebellion."

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94 Lefler and Powell estimate around five hundred settlers by 1663, I suspect that the number was slightly lower; Hugh Talmage Lefler and William Stevens Powell, *Colonial North Carolina: A History* (New York: Scribner, 1973), 32. The average size of a land grant for the entire proprietary period was approximately 492 acres, with half being less than 375 acres; Christine A. Styrna, "The Winds of War and Change: The Impact of the Tuscarora War on Proprietary North Carolina, 1690-1729" (Ph.D. diss., Dept. of History, College of William and Mary, 1990), 308.

95 For complaints of the cost of having to ship through Virginia see *NCCR*, 1: 247.

96 *NRRC* 1, 764.

97 *NRRC* 1, 764.

98 *JHBV* 1659-1693, 75.
Despite rough beginnings, settlement in North Carolina continued to expand, making beachheads near the mouths of the major rivers. In the late 1690s, French Huguenots, who had previously attempted to settle at Monacan Town along the James River in Virginia, began to take out patents to the south around the Pamlico River.\(^9\)

In 1705 Lawson, acting as surveyor general, laid out the town of Bath, in truth little more than a village, near the mouth of the Pamlico not far from the sparse settlements to which he had emerged at the end of his “five hundred mile” journey.\(^1\)

By 1708 it could count a population of fifty or sixty inhabitants.\(^2\) In 1710 Lawson plotted the bounds of another town farther south, where the Neuse and Trent rivers intersected. In this case the settlers were Palatines: German and Swiss Protestant refugees fleeing from poverty and religious wars along the upper Rhine, who, remembering their homeland, named their settlement New Bern. These added about 400 people to the sprinkling of English settlers who had set up scattered plantations in the area a few years earlier.\(^3\) By the beginning of the eighteenth century, contemporaries estimated the colony’s white population at around five thousand, plus an unknown number of black slaves.\(^4\)

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\(^9\) Before 1701 there were only five patents for lands south of Albemarle Sound. Between 1702 and 1707, 155 land grants were signed. Styrna, “Winds,” 316.


\(^3\) Styrna, “Winds,” 86.
At every step of the settlement process, the Tuscaroras made their presence felt.\textsuperscript{104} Even before settlement in the area began, contemplating the prospect, the Virginia Assembly had declared that any plantations near the Roanoke River or south of the Chowan River needed to be located “advantageously for security, and be sufficiently furnished with ammunition and strength” to repel a possible attack.\textsuperscript{105} These grim predictions were not unfounded. When settlers from the Currituck region moved across the Chowan River, the Tuscaroras struck back and “killed some English dwelling on the So. shore in Carolina.”\textsuperscript{106} The colonial government responded by pressing nearby settlers from Knott’s Plane and Back Bay into the militia for several short campaigns. Hostilities simmered on until 1672, when a visitor to the region recorded that they expected the arrival of the “emperor” of the Tuscaroras and “thirty kings under him” to arrange a peace.\textsuperscript{107} The provisions of this treaty have not


\textsuperscript{105} NCCR, 1: 17.

\textsuperscript{106} Stanard, “Indians of Southern Virginia,” 347-48. Unfortunately, few documents relating to these hostilities survive.

survived, but it seems that fear of further repercussions contributed to the scarcity of patents west of the Chowan River for the next thirty-five years.\textsuperscript{108}

In some cases, the Tuscaroras acted as a magnet for settlement.\textsuperscript{109} The first permanent European settler to North Carolina was Nathaniel Batts, who in 1654 built a house on the neck between Salmon Creek and Roanoke River as a trading station for the Tuscaroras.\textsuperscript{110} Numerous other settlers in the Tuscarora borderlands, particularly those with sufficient money or credit to purchase goods for trade, blurred the line between planter and trader. William Duckenfield, who in 1710 owned a “fine plantation” with several slaves on Solomon Creek near the Chowan River, frequently traded with Tuscaroras.\textsuperscript{111} Seth Sothel, governor between 1682 and 1689, had on his

\textsuperscript{108} Paschal, Parramore, and Boyce all suggest that the undated “Sun and Moon Treaty” might come from this conference. However, George Stevenson of the North Carolina State Archives points out that the language (its anachronistic mention of “North” Carolina) and handwriting (probably Pollock’s) probably date it to the early 18th century. For an example of Virginia settler expansion causing friction between the Tuscaroras and settlers in the Blackwater River area in 1693, see \textit{JHBV} 1659/60-1693, 455.

\textsuperscript{109} Styrna, “Winds,” 314-316.

\textsuperscript{110} Appears as “Batts House” on the neck between Flatts (Salmon) Creek and Moraticco (Roanoke) River on the Nicholas Comberford 1657 Map. See also, Elizabeth McPherson “Nathaniel Batts,” \textit{NCHR} 43 (1966): 66-81. Batts is the same “young man” mentioned as helping to establish trade the Tuscaroras in a 1654 letter from Yeardley to Farrer.

\textsuperscript{111} For Duckenfield meeting with (and probably trading with Tuscaroras) see \textit{EJCCV}, 1: 147. For his ownership of slaves, including several “mustees,” see \textit{NCCR}, 2: 331-333. For the location of his plantation, see Christoph Von Graffenried, \textit{Christoph Von Graffenried’s Account of the Founding of New Bern}, ed. Vincent H. Todd (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1920), 229 [hereafter cited as Graffenried, \textit{Account}].
plantation an “Indian Store-House . . . made of Logs” filled with “Blankets, Powder, Shot and Rum.”

Entire communities that had no intention of becoming permanently entwined in the Indian trade nonetheless often knew that early success would depend upon fruitful commerce with the Tuscaroras. Despite misapprehensions, such settlers sought to establish themselves as close to the Tuscaroras as they could reasonably risk. William Hancock made claims near the Tuscarora community of Heeruta, while a settler with the unlikely name of Farfinold Green acquired title to a plot near another community called Nonawahritsa. Sometimes this proximity resulted because the Tuscaroras, as an agricultural people, had already occupied and cleared the most fruitful territories; in other cases settlers valued the opportunity for commerce. This pattern was true of Bath to an extent, but was more evident in the case of New Bern. An early map of the town depicts the tensions inherent in this cheek-by-jowl pattern: several “Indian cabins” are depicted on the edge of town, but farther afield was a “Millfort: redoubt erected thus at first for protecting against the Indians.” Several of these cabins probably predated the European settlement. The site was none other than the Coree town of Chattooka, near which Lawson had lived for several years. Christopher Von Graffenried, the eager youngest son of a Swiss nobleman who headed the New Bern adventure, only considered the site when Lawson (whom he


met in London where he was overseeing the publication of his _Journal_) assured him that there was little danger and that he would purchase the location from its native owners.\textsuperscript{115}

Lawson probably envisioned making the site into a major entrepôt by using canoes to ply the rivers and creeks that reached into the nearby Tuscarora heartland to divert trade from Virginia. Graffenried leaned towards the eventual establishment of well-ordered farms radiating from a neat town of able craftsmen of "all kinds of avocations and handicrafts."\textsuperscript{116} Planting would be eased by using previously cleared Indian fields. But in the short run he agreed that trade would sustain the Palatines in their first years. A Palatine settler writing to his family in Europe assured any who might follow in his footsteps that "the so-called wild and naked Indians" are "not wild, for they come to us often and like to get clothes of us." In return they traded deerskins, and perhaps most valuable to the struggling settlement, "bacon, beans and corn."\textsuperscript{117} Another settler recommended that anyone coming bring "one hundred iron tobacco pipes, knives, iron pots, and copper kettles."\textsuperscript{118} After arriving, Graffenried noted that, "tanners of furs are much needed for the skins of the wild and tame animals."\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{115} Graffenried, _Account_, 42.

\textsuperscript{116} NCCR, 1: 908; Graffenried, _Account_, 285.

\textsuperscript{117} Graffenried, _Account_, 316-17.

\textsuperscript{118} Graffenried, _Account_, 313.

\textsuperscript{119} NCCR, 1: 908; Graffenried, _Account_, 285.
As settlers established themselves along the seaboard, natives paddled or walked the short distances to these new communities. There the two peoples traded, supped, argued, and puzzled over each other. The engine for much of this interaction was economic; as had been the case with the traders, deerskins were a staple of exchange, with many Tuscaroras bringing hides to the settlements to trade. In the cash-strapped colonial economy, hides often took the place of currency (in a situation similar to the case decades later in South Carolina and Georgia where inhabitants measured their worth in “bucks”). Numerous other native wares made their way into settlers’ homes. Native women near the coast busied themselves weaving baskets of bulrush and silkgrass into which they worked “figures of Beasts, Birds, Fishes, etc.” for sale in the settlements. They also made rush mats, which settlers found to be “commodious to lay under our Beds, or to sleep on in the Summer Season in the Day-time, and for our Slaves in the Night.” Other mats, “which the Tuskeroro Indians make, and sell to the Inhabitants” were fashioned from old strips of European cloth, an example of European materials literally being interwoven with Tuscarora know-how.

Services as well as goods were sold. North Carolina and Virginia settlers often employed Tuscarora men as expert hunters to provide fresh game for the table.

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120 For an example of a minister being paid in “barrels of skins” see NCCR, 1: 766.
121 Lawson, New Voyage, 195-96.
122 Lawson, New Voyage, 195.
123 Lawson, New Voyage, 195.
or as escorts to "guide the Christians through the forests and show new ways."\textsuperscript{124}

Along the southwestern borders of Virginia, Tuscaroras even came into the settlements for part of the year to work during the tobacco harvest. This seasonal fieldwork became so common that neighboring counties complained of the practice, saying that it was unfair because the Tuscaroras, who were neither servants, family members, nor slaves, were not taxed.\textsuperscript{125} Along the labor-poor frontier where slaves and servants were scarce, Tuscarora labor probably helped planters compete with more established regions, thereby fueling expansion into these frontier zones. Indians also may have found temporary employ within households under the supervision of the plantation mistress.\textsuperscript{126}

The frequency and fluidity of these meetings made trade into more of a free-for-all than when lone English traders unloaded their goods and established brief miniature monopolies at Ucoughnerunt, Torhunta, or some other Tuscarora town. Indians of the Carolina coastal plains became bargain hunters, shrewdly calculating whether to stay home awaiting the arrival of traders or to bring their furs, hides,

\textsuperscript{124} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 317.

\textsuperscript{125} These same reasons probably explain why the practice does not appear on any other records except for the petition to have taxes applied, a request that was ultimately denied. \textit{JHBV-1702}, 156.

\textsuperscript{126} This practice would explain why William Byrd occasionally recorded giving his wife Indian goods, presumably to pay such native workers. See, for example, September 29, 1709 where Byrd recorded that "I presented my wife with some Indian goods to the value of 4 pounds 10 shillings;" William Byrd, \textit{The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709-1712}, ed. Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling (Richmond, Va.: The Dietz Press, 1941), 237.
slaves, baskets, and mats to the settlements themselves. When they arrived, the Tuscaroras had the option of going house to house until they encountered a settler who not only would offer acceptable goods at a fair price, but also would be accommodating and evenhanded (as often as not, this search proved as fruitless as Diogenes's search for one honest man.).

The economic advantages of contact with the settlements was not one that the Tuscaroras were eager to share with other Indians. Tuscaroras took advantage of their geographic position that shielded many North Carolina settlements from direct trade with more interior Indians. As Lawson’s motley party headed through Tuscarora country towards the English settlements, a pair of Tuscaroras he met, “Hating that any of these Westward Indians should have any Commerce with the English, which would prove a Hinderance to their Gains,” told stories of how the English “were very wicked people” until several of Lawson’s native companions were deterred from traveling any farther.

Besides boosting prices, a multiplicity of trade connections among the settlements gave the Tuscaroras other channels in case one source dried up—an unwelcome discovery for irate Virginia officials who found it all but impossible to impose embargoes. Empathizing at times may have been Tuscarora chiefs, elders, and “big men” who lost some of their clout when they too learned that if they tried to

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128 Lawson, *New Voyage*, 64.

129 See below Chapter Two. *EJCCV* III, 182, 185, 191, 199, 207, 211.
control trade between the two peoples, young men bucking authority could bypass them and go directly to the “Englishmen’s houses.”

Like English traders who had to learn new sets of behavior when they came among the Tuscaroras, Indians near English and Palatine settlements got a crash course in European manners. Many Tuscaroras learned to speak their neighbors’ languages. Salty directness partially compensated for any lack of fluency, since they “learn[ed] to swear the first thing they talk of.” Other Tuscaroras, especially among the generation that grew up among the settlers, learned to speak with confident glibness. At the very least, most in the Pamlico region could distinguish the “ja ja” of the Palatine settlers from the “aye aye” of the English.

But familiarity also meant exploring differences. One of the most acerbic of these splits arose from their contrasting approaches to the environment. The European newcomers and the Indians of the Carolina coastal plain both hailed from long agricultural traditions. John White’s early illustrations of native towns depict nearby communities as surrounded and nearly overwhelmed by fields and gardens. Analysis of the Tuscarora diet reveals that most of their calories came from corn and beans, supplemented by protein from hunting and fishing. Encouraged by their

130 Lawson, *New Voyage*, 212.


elders, young Tuscarora men cleared fields by girdling trees of their bark and planted beans and corn around the leafless stumps. A carved wooden idol representing the ghost of an honored warrior gave additional spiritual oversight to the work. This revered figure would supposedly intercede with the spirits reward hard labor by making the youths into stout hunters and warriors.\textsuperscript{134} The initial clearing completed, women tended the maize, harvested it, and in heavy mortars beat it into a coarse meal. Non-native crops also entered their diet. Peaches so thoroughly infiltrated Tuscarora cuisine that observers had to be reminded that the fruit was an exotic introduced by Europeans. Archeological excavation of a Tuscarora fort revealed storage chambers containing thousands of peach pits – antecedent seeds of peach farms that cover much of the region.\textsuperscript{135}

Also altering the landscape was the intentional use of fires to drive deer on the hunt, to clear underbrush, and to promote edge habitats where game and useful berries and shrubs would be abundant. The result was areas of “tall timber trees without any underwood” which would appear as “a bright horizon . . . through the woods, which travelers take as a mark of some plantation.”\textsuperscript{136} Recent archeology of the Contentnea Creek Basin backs up visitors' descriptions of the region as consisting of long waterside neighborhoods of scattered fields, homes, and occasional village squares. As soil in a particular spot wore out and firewood within a short haul grew scarce,

\textsuperscript{134} Lawson, \textit{New Voyage}, 177.

\textsuperscript{135} Byrd, \textit{Tuscarora Subsistence}.

\textsuperscript{136} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 215.
Tuscaroras would relocate close by. But rather than being permanently abandoned, the richest bottomlands at the intersections of rivers and smaller streams were revisited generation after generation. The result was a patchwork of farms, “old fields,” orchards, and open forests created over centuries of use.

These native practices created a landscape that was attractive and desirable to European settlers, but the underlying customs were not compatible with the settlers’ own style of cultivation and land use. Settlers tended to view “old fields” as abandoned forever and ripe for the taking. Settlers purchased, seized, surveyed, or squatted upon tracts that would be cultivated not for several years before moving on, but possessed on a continuous basis under strict laws of ownership. European concepts that favored the ownership of land, even if unfarmed or fallow, expanded their footprint beyond fields actually cut by the hoe or plow. A headright system, whereby settlers received additional acreage for bringing slaves, servants, or family members with them, attempted to ensure that land would be linked to a labor force suitable for intensive agriculture. Many settlers, originally from Virginia, hoped eventually to emulate that colony’s sprawling tobacco plantation culture. Graffenried imagined finely laid-out lands, with each family receiving space for “house, barn, garden, orchard, hemp field, poultry yard and other purposes.” Either way, Indians expecting the settlers to move on after several years would have been sorely disappointed.


138 NCCR, 1: 333.
The biggest “crop” for the new settlers, however, was livestock, in particular cattle and hogs. Graffenried described cattle farmers coming to the region “like a wave” because of the ready forage available to farmers who turned their cattle out to the woods. Running semi-feral, the hogs and cattle would compete with deer for forage, root out and trample less resistant native plants, and invade unfenced and lightly tended Indian fields. Exacerbated by European livestock, Indians in turn frequently killed cattle and hogs to drive them off and as an easy source of food that partially compensated for declining deer populations being over hunted for the hide trade. In addition to adding pork to their own diets, some Indians even traded pork and beef back to the settlers.\textsuperscript{139} Some of this might have been stock raised by Tuscaroras mimicking the Nottoways north of them, who even registered distinctive earmarks for their stocks.\textsuperscript{140} More likely it was poached.

Hog poaching and cattle rustling added to settlers’ generalized distrust of Indians on the hunt. Tuscarora males considered hunting second only to warfare as an honorable pursuit. Moreover, the concept of exclusive land ownership that precluded trespass or even following a roaming deer across property lines seemed foreign to Tuscarora conceptions. Settlers, on the other hand, hailed from a European tradition

\textsuperscript{139} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 317; Lawson, \textit{New Voyage}, 182.

that viewed hunting either as the rightful pastime of an elite leisured upper class or as
the shady misbehavior of scruffy ruffians. Armed Indians “skulking” near other
people’s property, in their minds, came closer to the latter.\textsuperscript{141} That the Tuscaroras
were probably as willing to kill a hog as a deer or, if hungry and unsuccessful at
either, to take food from an unwatched field, added to settler misgivings.

Moreover, the Tuscaroras, like most Indians of the region, set large fires
during their hunts to drive game.\textsuperscript{142} For Europeans, who feared fire as the destroyer
of cities and homes, such blazes were dangerous carelessness at best and deliberate
arson at worse. Tuscaroras along the Pamlico eventually sought to ease tensions by
seeking an agreement that allowed “Indians to hunt where they wish without any
hindrance, except in case they come so close to our plantation that the cattle would be
driven away or injured or danger of fire might be feared.”\textsuperscript{143} More typical were \textit{ad
hoc} administrations of rough justice less favorable to the Indians. When William
Byrd’s men caught six Indians hunting on patented land, he “threatened them and sent
them away after they had victuals given them.”\textsuperscript{144} Graffenried reported rougher
treatment in which settlers catching hunting Indians “under this excuse took away

\textsuperscript{141} For “skulking,” see Hening, \textit{Statutes}, 2: 202-203. The word is actually used by
Nottoways complaining of Tuscarora encroachments, but probably echoed back
English usage and attitudes. William Duckenfield complained in a January 25, 1696
letter that Indians “have almost killed all my hoggs” (Indians: Treaties, Petitions,
Agreements and Court Cases (1698-1736), Colonial Court Records, Box 192,
NCSA).

\textsuperscript{142} Krech, \textit{Ecological Indian}, 101-23; Silver, \textit{New Face}, 59-64.

\textsuperscript{143} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 281.

\textsuperscript{144} Byrd, \textit{Secret Diary}, 405.
from them their arms, munitions, pelts or hides, yes even beat an Indian to death.\footnote{145} Two Tuscaroras complained to Lawson that the English were cruel and “threatened the Indians for Hunting near their plantations.” His guide retorted that the two were nothing but “a couple of Hog-stealers.” Both parties probably spoke the truth.\footnote{146}

Less common but potentially more troublesome were faux pas over belief and religion. Neither group undertook much in the way of proselytizing the other. Tuscaroras lacked the inclination, Europeans the resources. The Albemarle region had to make do with two bickering Anglican ministers whose contempt for each other was matched only by their disdain for their poor, ill-educated congregants.\footnote{147} A minister in the Pamlico area admitted that there were a number of Indians close by who “understand English tolerably well, but our own distractions have hitherto prevented my thoughts of doing any great matters among them.”\footnote{148} These distractions included settlers who cared little for religion and Quakers who challenged Anglicans for the hearts of the rest. George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends, made as much effort as anyone to evangelize the Indians when he came to the region. But his outreach consisted of brief discussions about the Flood with some Chowans, and

\footnote{145} Graffenried, _Account_, 234.

\footnote{146} Lawson, _New Voyage_, 64.

\footnote{147} See, for example, _NCCR_, 2: 121-23, 125-28, 227-29.

\footnote{148} _NCCR_, 1: 734. See also _NCCR_, 1:601-603 in which Blair reports that the Pamlico “a great nation of Indians that live that government, computed to no less than 100,000, many of which live amongst the English, and all, as I can understand, a very civilized people. I have often conversed with them, and have been frequently in their towns: those that can speak English among them seem to be very willing and fond of being Christians.”
leaving behind a written sermon to be read aloud to a delegation of Tuscarora chiefs coming in to negotiate a treaty. Whether anyone listened is not recorded.

Perhaps in part because of this dearth of crusading fervor, settlers found themselves observers of Tuscarora practices that they could not easily understand or explain. Governor Seth Sothel (who served from 1682 to 1689) played host to a healing ceremony when a Tuscarora chief who had come to sell slaves fell sick at his plantation. An ancient, white-haired shaman, so shrunken he had to stand on a wood pile to reach the patient’s bed, spurted water and waved beads over the sick man. When the beads danced as if alive in the shaman’s hand, he told the disbelieving “company that he would recover and that his Distemper would remove into his Leg, all which happen’d to be exactly as the Indian Doctor had told.” Europeans heard stories of monstrous canoe-eating snakes lurking in the Neuse River and conjurers who captured lightening and tamed it like a pet. In awe Graffenried personally watched inexplicable lights leaping from a Tuscarora grave and flitting above the dead man’s hut.

Europeans could not easily explain such events, but they did not readily embrace their veracity either. Misunderstanding could creep into profound insults.


151 Lawson, New Voyage, 222 for an account of keeping Lightening “in the Likeness of a Partridge;” Graffenried, Account, 280 for catching a mysterious light that becomes “a small wood spider.”

152 Graffenried, Account, 279.
Lawson recorded many of these happenings, but the same scientific curiosity that
impelled him to describe them, made him stubborn in his disbelief. Convinced that a
shaman was a scoundrel and a liar, Lawson cornered an English-speaking Indian who
had lived among the English since childhood. "What a Parcel of Lyes," insisted
Lawson, who was convinced the youth "thought so, as well as I." He was wrong. No,
replied the boy. The boy's reply shocked Lawson—the ancient priest "did never tell
Lyes," asserted the Indian; he believed everything the old man said. Disgusted,
Lawson turned his back on the "Fellow's Ignorance," in a silence that spoke words.
The Tuscarora probably considered Lawson equally ignorant. At that moment a gulf
opened between him and an erstwhile ally.

The greater the misunderstanding, the greater the potential for affront. Near
New Bern, Indians had constructed a miniature hut made out of woven twigs, that
served as an alter in which they put two carved wooden figures. One was half-white,
half-red; across from it sat another colored black and red "with an ugly face."
Through small holes in the side of the hut the Indians hung offerings of coral and
wampum before the two statuettes at sunrise. A Swiss settler, seeing that the second
idol was "the very colors of the Canton of Bern" from which he had been driven,
attacked the image in a buffoonish gesture of mock rage with an ax, cutting it in two.
Afterwards the fat settler strutted about and bragged "as though he had split the devil
in two at one blow" to the laughter of his fellows. When the Indian chief stormed into
the settlement "very angry, taking this for a sacrilege and a great affront, and
complaining bitterly," Graffenried ineptly tried to smooth over the outrage. He
laughed that it was “only a bad idol [that] was injured and destroyed, that it was of no
great harm, but if it had been the good one, I would inflict severe punishment.” In
Indian cosmology, however, the “ugly face” idol probably represented a figure similar
to Okeus, a capricious and arbitrary deity worshipped among nearby Algonquian
groups who had to be continuously appeased to prevent chance disaster such as
storms, fires, snakebites, floods, and illness. Rather than being a devil that had to be
battled and overcome as Europeans often imagined, it was better to pacify and soothe
the forces he represented. And the settlers had hacked him to bits! Not surprisingly,
when the “Indian king saw that I made a joke of the matter,” Graffenried recorded, “it
did not please him, but he became serious.” Finally Graffenried promised not to
allow such things to happen again and half-heartedly assured the chief that he would
look into punishing the offender. The meeting ended with Graffenried trying to
lubricate tensions among the chief and his companions by offering rum all around.
Graffenried thought they departed “well contented and satisfied.” The Indians
probably disagreed.\footnote{\textit{Graffenried, Account}, 278.}

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In the space of one or two generations, Tuscaroras and Europeans settlers had
gone from being timid strangers, cautiously teasing out the borders of each others’
societies, to being closely, almost suffocatingly, intimate. No longer a rarity,
European traders were a daily feature of Tuscarora life. Still awkward, they had
nonetheless overcome their greenness to learn the essentials of Tuscarora language
and culture. Their very presence and the goods that jangled from their horses' bags altered the habits of their customers. On the surface, some of these changes were insignificant matters of convenience: guns stood in for bows, kettles for pottery, and woolen strouds for skins. Rum joined but did not supplant cockleshells in the list of goods that Tuscarora middlemen toted west to trade with the interior tribes. Harder to quantify are the deeper, underlying changes in mindset and values that occurred as towns reshaped their schedules, as men redoubled efforts to hunt deer, and women emphasized dressing hides to accommodate new roles as consumers and producers in Atlantic-wide markets. Still, native crafts and skills did not disappear. They even found a new outlet through the Tuscarora traders — counterparts of the European traders — who frequented settlements along the southwestern swamps of Virginia and North Carolina's Albemarle and Pamlico sounds. Palatines and English alike depended upon Tuscaroras for what they ate, what they slept upon, and for guidance amid the unfamiliar marshes and pine stands of the coastal plains they hoped to make home.

Far from being the inevitable victims of these encounters, through the first decade of the eighteenth century, Tuscaroras wielded great influence. Even if Tuscaroras wanted, in some cases clamored for, European goods, they still carried great weight in their interactions. Ultimately, Tuscaroras and their European neighbors were only teased by the unreachable prospect of true cultural understanding, but hate was slow to surface from beneath shared interests. Still, encounters were hardly a happy middle-ground of cheerful compromise. The closer
the peoples came, the more points of contact that were established, the more abrasive interactions became. Specks of contention refused to be worn smooth, and instead rubbed into maddening irritations. Differences in belief, contrasting uses of the land, alternative systems of values—all revealed that while the two societies had become interlocked, all of their components did not easily mesh. Given their numbers, military strength, and economic sway, it seemed clear that the Tuscaroras would continue to wield great influence in the region—too much in the minds of some colonial officials.
CHAPTER TWO

"NEIGHBOURS TO A GOVMT JEALOUS OF INDIANS":
TUSCARORAS AND PLANS FOR COLONIAL FRONTIERS

Guns, kettles, and cloth from overseas had brought the Tuscaroras under the indirect economic influence of their new neighbors, but a generation of commerce had brought the Tuscaroras no closer to being under the direct control of any colonial government. As contacts between Europeans and Tuscaroras became daily occurrences, the colonial governments surrounding the Tuscarora borderlands looked on with increasing concern. Initially, North Carolina’s newcomers had settled on the eastern periphery of the Tuscaroras—in the coastal regions of Currituck, Albemarle, Chowan, later Bath, and finally New Bern—more often squeezing or pushing aside weaker coastal tribes than directly displacing the Tuscaroras. Future expansion would necessitate taking into account the presence of the powerful Indian group to the west.

Virginia’s Executive Council, also deliberating expansion southwest into the Roanoke basin, likewise warily scrutinized its relations with the Tuscaroras. But that colony’s officials also fretted that any misstep with the Tuscaroras might topple the precarious network of tributary Indians (themselves neighbors and close cultural cousins of the Tuscaroras) who inhabited, patrolled, and protected Virginia’s borderlands and served as its closest customers in trade. If North Carolina and Virginia
shared similar concerns, in practice they often disagreed over the best course to take towards the Tuscaroras and Indian relations in general. As a result, Tuscarora communities found themselves engaged in diplomatic wrangling on two fronts with colonies who were themselves split over issues of trade, borders, settlement, and Indian policy. Even as they embraced the technological revolution occurring within their midst, the Tuscaroras tried to limit the reach of colonial authority. At times they found space for themselves between the two competing governments. But the range of interactions created by these differences also helped provoke diverging views among the inhabitants of the many Tuscarora towns regarding the best course to protect their autonomy.

Tributaries, Strangers, and Tuscaroras on Virginia’s Frontier

Of the two colonies, Virginia had the more organized and comprehensive Indian policy. At its core was a system that divided Indians into two groups: those farther afield with whom few except for traders had direct relations—"strange
Indians"—and those with which it had close, daily contacts—"tributary Indians."¹ This latter category included numerous small tribes within one or two day's journey of the plantations. North of the York River were the Rappahannocks, Mattaponis, Portobaccos, and Nanzatico. Nearly directly west of the tobacco-rich Lower Peninsula, near the falls of the James River, were the Monacans and Appomattox. The Nottoways, Meherrin, Weyanokes, and Nansemonds made their towns, planted their fields, and dug tuckahoo root in a broad crescent, sweeping from south of the Appomattox River through rolling pine-land to the Roanoke River and east through swamps and pocosins past the Blackwater and Chowan rivers—a swath cramped between the Virginians, North Carolinians, and Tuscaroras. Nearly all of these tribes numbered fewer than 250 members. The largest, the Nottoways, counted about 90 bowmen in the 1670s. The smallest numbered only a few souls. The Weyanokes could field 15 warriors around 1670. Within thirty years, members of that tribe were nearly entirely absorbed among their native neighbors, with only a few old women able

to recall their days as a separate people. A South Carolina official, critical of Virginia, was fairly on the mark with a jab that Virginia’s tributary tribes “compounded of at least eighteen or twenty different nations and the largest of them not above eighty men and some but ten men.”

All of these groups were shadows of their former selves, having either been defeated in war or brought low by disease. For their preservation they had made treaties with Virginia regulating their movement, trade, and contact with outsiders in return for easy access to goods, the support of the colonial militia, and an avenue of complaint against misbehaving settlers. They were the colony’s first line of defense, acting as eyes and ears on the frontier responsible for reporting rumors of activities by the Spanish, French, or potentially hostile “strange” Indians to the west.

Typical was the treaty of 1677, which made peace among Indian groups at the end of Bacon’s Rebellion. Although Virginia’s government half-heartedly attempted to revive the old Powhatan Empire under the authority of the Pamunkey Queen, many tribes—some of them Iroquoian groups who were never under Powhatan rule—signed

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2 Numbers of bowmen from Briceland, *Westward*, 1-4; I multiplied the number of bowmen by a factor of 5 for a generous total population estimate. For the absorption of the Weyanokes, see Harrison, “Deposition,” 47-50 and Stanard, “Indians of Southern Virginia,” 337-58, and below.

separately. Therefore, Virginia found itself working with numerous small tribes, each of which consisted of no more than several towns. The leadership of most of these consisted of one or two headmen called “teethas” or “werowances”—depending on if they were Iroquoian or Algonquian, respectively—who served as spokespersons and nominal leaders of their communities. These individuals, called “kings” by Europeans (or “queen” in the case of the Pamunkeys who were led by a woman), on occasion might appear to wield power single-handedly and gain influence over several towns through force of personality, control of trade, or military prowess. More typically, however, they relied on the consent of their people and the advice of a community council. “Tho’ the chief person of the Indian Nations is distinguished amongst themselves by the Title of King,” wrote Governor Alexander Spotswood of Virginia, “... everyone knows that those Kings are of no great consideration among the English, nor of much authority among their own people.” “As to the Nottoway Nation,” continued Spotswood, “I will maintain that there is no great distinction between their kings and their people as there is between a corporal and their private[s]” in the English military. Nonetheless, in the Treaty of 1677 and elsewhere, Virginia’s government found itself working with and bolstering the authority of these leaders in


an effort to formalize relations with neighboring Indian groups who would become the backbone of a policy for controlling the frontier.

In that treaty, the Indian "kings" and one "queen" acknowledged their dependence and submission to the king of England and governor of Virginia and promised a symbolic annual tribute of twenty beaver skins. In return the Indians were guaranteed their fields and settlements upon reservations laid out for them. Outside these reservations they were allowed to go "oystering, fishing, and gathering Tuccahoe, Curtenemmons, wild oats, rushes, Puckoone, or any thing else for their natural Support not usefull to the English," but only unpainted and unarmed, and after getting permission from the local magistrate. (No provision was made for deer hunting.) They were to be "defended in theire persons goods and properties against all hurts and injuries of the English," with any breach being brought to the governor. The tributaries were enjoined to report "any march of strange Indians near the English quarters or plantacons" and, if they were needed, to "strengthen and joyne" the militia in defense of the colony. Trade with the tributary Indians was to be "continued, limited, restrained, or laid open" according to the wishes of the governor and his council. Finally, in order to deter dangerous sympathies and alliances, the tributaries were themselves protected from enslavement and were encouraged to act as slave-
catchers, policing the fringe of the region’s increasingly African chattel-based tobacco plantation system.  

Under Virginia’s policy, its tributary Indians saw innumerable aspects of their lives scrutinized. Official interpreters, militia captains, prominent council members, and deputized traders had their hands constantly full overseeing, visiting, spying upon and writing reports on the affairs of the tributary Indians. Few parts of native life went untouched. When word of the Pamunkey Queen’s death reached Williamsburg, Virginia’s councilors asserted their authority by sending the interpreter George Smith to inform the tribe’s great men that they needed to come to the capital to have the successor confirmed.  

If the Nottoways wanted to plant fields outside their original grants, or travel between their main town and a religious site at their “Quiocosin House,” they needed to pass on a petition through Nathaniel Harrison, a council member who lived nearby.  

William Byrd rushed to the western borders numerous times to investigate rumors of marauding Senecas and other “strange” Indians.  

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6 For example, in the 1677 treaty, the Indians were enjoined to restore “al such children, servants, and horses . . . which they can make a discovery of.” The treaty promised that Indian servants would not “serve for any longer time then English of the like Ages should serve” and that they “shall not be sold as Slaves.” “Articles of Peace,” 289-297.

7 EJCCV, 1: 79

8 EJCCV, 3: 98. For another example in which the Nottoways cleared and planted outside their reservation and sought permission to hold onto the fields, see EJCCV, 3: 45. For a description of their Quiocossin House, see Beverley, History of Virginia, 152.

9 EJCCV, 1: 53, 333.
with the rangers and the militia, he had the option of commandeering "some Indians joinèd with the English, being more Expert in the woods."\textsuperscript{10}

Officials struggled to untangle, understand, and oversee the convoluted webs of native treaties, alliances, and agreements among the confusing array of villages and bands. The Nottoways, Meherrins, Pamunkeys, Rappahannocks, and Nanzaticos were forced to face the governor's council to answer charges that they "had prepared a Peake [wampum] belt (being the token that usually passes between them when they desire a treaty of peace)" for a secret alliance with the Tawittawayes. They got a tongue lashing and agreed to hand over the belt.\textsuperscript{11} Differences between different tributary groups, such as when the Nansemonds complained that two of their men were kidnapped by the Pamunkeys, got settled according to European, not native, courts and codes of conduct.\textsuperscript{12} The government could decide that for the defense of the colony two separate groups, such as the Rappahannocks and Nanzaticos, each with their own language and customs, would have to merge.\textsuperscript{13}

But if the tributaries saw their options circumscribed by a paternalistic government, they partially offset the costs by learning to take advantage of the system. Indian leaders whose titles were confirmed by the colonial government, perhaps festooned in one of the coronets and silver badges sent by the king of England, saw

\textsuperscript{10} \textit{EJCCV}, 1: 333.
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{EJCCV}, 2: 41.
\textsuperscript{12} \textit{EJCCV}, 2: 148.
\textsuperscript{13} \textit{EJCCV}, 1: 54.
their status become much more unassailable by competitors within the tribe.\textsuperscript{14} When Indian leaders received such gifts and were “accommodated with provisions and house roome at the publique charge” when visiting Williamsburg, some colonists feared that the message of who exactly was in charge and who paid tribute was unclear.\textsuperscript{15} If an interpreter like Thomas Blunt seemed to be overly interested in acquiring native lands, the Nottoways and Meherrins could “express . . . a dissatisfaction” and refuse to cooperate until another spokesperson was appointed.\textsuperscript{16}

Tributary groups were often able to use Virginia’s concern for the defense of its frontiers to push their own agenda. In times of danger from attacking Indians, tributaries could go on the defensive and temporarily take cover among Virginia settlements, or go on the offensive backed by promises of English assistance. During one crisis, the Weyanokes built cabins in Benjamin Harrison’s apple orchard; during another, after a midnight ambush by the Tutelos, the Nottoways struck back with guns and ammunition provided by their English allies.\textsuperscript{17} Nottoways successfully pressed the government to curb the rum trade (temporarily) at their town by arguing that it “may prove of very dangerous consequence, by reason that many of their men getting drunk therewith may at such times be made an easie prey to any strange Indians who shall

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{EJCCV}, 1: 4.

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{EJCCV}, 1: 4; "1677 Indian Treaty," 294. For an attempt by the government to limit visits by Indians at the “countries charges,” see \textit{EJCCV}, 1: 40.

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{EJCCV}, 2: 315.

\textsuperscript{17} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 202; Benjamin Harrison, "Deposition of Benjamin Harrison in Regard to Indian Affairs, 1707," \textit{PMHB} 5, no. 1 (1897): 48.
In one case, using their diligence in patrolling the frontier as an excuse, the Meherrins literally got away with murder. After ambushing and killing five English traders in their bark canoe, the Meherrins absolved themselves by claiming to mistake the victims for “spyes come from the Senequa Indians” \(^{19}\) If the Indians were prevented from making their own private treaties with troublesome Susquehannocks and other distant Indian groups, they could appeal to the Virginia government to use its connections with the Maryland officials to help broker a truce.\(^{20}\)

Moreover, they learned to maneuver within a justice system that was frequently sympathetic. When William Brown petitioned to evict Indians that had moved onto his land, cut the trees, disturbed his servants, and could be heard shouting late into the night, the council decided that the Indians should be allowed to use the fields for the next two years. They had to restrain from burning Brown’s fencing, but could burn trees that they had already “barked.”\(^{21}\) Sent to investigate a different series of disturbances, Colonel Harrison, council member and liaison for Indians south of the James River, reported, “I have taken all the care I can to remedy all Complaints between the English and Indians; and truly, I think our people are as much or more to blame than the Indians.”\(^{22}\)

\(^{18}\) *EJCCV*, 2: 316.

\(^{19}\) *EJCCV*, 2: 322-23.

\(^{20}\) *EJCCV*, 3: 45.

\(^{21}\) *EJCCV*, 3: 172.

\(^{22}\) *CVSP*, 1: 131-132.
Such concessions adhered to the spirit of the treaty of 1677, which laid much of the groundwork for the tributary system. That seminal document had explicitly set out to prevent "the mutual discontents, Complaints, jealousies, and feare of English and Indians occasioned by the violent intrusions of divers English into their Lands, forcing the Indians by way of Revenge, to kill the Cattle and hoggs of the English, whereby offence, and injuries being given, and done on both sides, the peace of this his Majesties Colony hath bin much disturbed." This had been written in the wake of Bacon's Rebellion, which had begun when a bloody series of unauthorized vigilante raids and counter-raids between settlers and Indians slipped out of the governor's control. That conflict had opened the government's eyes to the dangers of an unregulated backcountry. Treaties like this were meant to keep the governor informed and allow him to put a brake to any conflict before it overheated. Moreover, lining the frontier with tributary reservations protected by three-mile-radius buffers would check uncontrolled expansion by settlers and squatters, keeping them within easy reach of the sheriffs, courts, and tax collectors and impose a denser, more easily governed and defended, and more economically advantageous settlement pattern. Continued concern for these issues were seen in 1690 when Virginia officials complained that uncontrolled settlement near the Blackwater River was irritating Indians, putting settlers in a position where they could get themselves killed, and risked dragging the whole colony into conflict.24

23 "1677 Indian Treaty," 291.

24 EJCCV, 1: 136.
Compared to settlers apparently bent upon throwing off authority and to whom, according to Harrison, "proclamations sent out by the Government signifies not a rush," tributary Indians assumed a meek position in the eye of the paternal-minded government. After all, the Indians had for the most part entered into treaties because they had been militarily defeated. Despite (and to some extent, because of) regulations creating reservations, the Indians could be moved about and placed according to the whims of the government. If for now they took up valuable land, in time these "vanishing Indians" would disappear and make room for the march of progress. The people who were in charge of "caring" for the Indians in many cases were the wealthy landowners and government officials who were in the best position to use such oversight in their own long-term speculation schemes. Meanwhile, the government could demand children from Indian leaders to be taught the Queen's English, "reduced" to civility at the College of William and Mary, and serve in times of emergency as hostages.

By the late seventeenth century, Virginia's officials had committed themselves to a policy of regulating and controlling the frontier that depended heavily upon

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25 CVSP, 1: 131-32.


supervision of its tributary Indians.28 Of the colony's tributaries, William Byrd had supposedly bragged of "how great order they keep them."29 His boasts were not in vain. By giving the government a say among nearby Indians in matters of trade, military affairs, settlement, and movement, Virginia's tributary policy gave the highest officials a useful back channel of authority in the region. The tributaries were important symbols of the governor's authority and reach in a region where churches, courts, prisons, and other emblems of control were few and far between. At the policy's heart was the idea that all the Indians along the frontier with whom traders and especially planters came into regular contact would be officially bound to the colonial government through treaties and a complex web of paternal obligations.

The glaring exception to Virginia's blueprint of control were the Tuscaroras, who were tributary to no one. The anomaly was intensified by their status as the largest tribe on Virginia's southwest border, the region into which Virginia was most rapidly expanding. Beyond easy reach during most of the seventeenth century, the Tuscaroras had steered clear of the colonial wars that had defeated and brought into subjugation many of its smaller northerly neighbors. They had suffered the ravages of newly-introduced European diseases, but their dozen or so towns still made them far

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29 NCCR, 2: 251-52.
more populous than the typical Virginia tributary group. 

No Tuscarora signatures appear among the lists of native names that conclude numerous documents recording the recruitment and subjugation of new tributaries in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In 1712, Spotswood listed nine tribes of Indians who were tributaries to Virginia. He continued,

These are all in an Entire Subjection to this Government and live quietly on our Frontiers trafficking with the Inhabitants their skins and furrs for cloathing. The next nation of Indians with whom we have had frequent correspondence and who are most like to annoy us is the Tuscaruro, said to be about 2,000 fighting men.

Nor could the Tuscaroras easily be pegged as the opposite of a “tributary” in Virginia’s dualistic conception of the frontier. Virginia’s model for Indian affairs was essentially binary: by default an Indian who was not a tributary was the opposite—“strange” or “foreign.” These Indians were exactly what their name implied: strange, unknown, and unfamiliar. When such Indians appeared around Virginia, the colonial government usually felt compelled to investigate. In 1691 “strange Indians” were rumored to be prowling the northwest border near Maryland and had briefly captured

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30 In 1712, Spotswood estimated the total population of the tributary Indians at 700 men, women, and children. Spotswood, Letters, 1: 167.

31 Spotswood, Letters, 1: 167. By the time of this statement, fighting had already broken out in the early stages of the Tuscarora War.

32 Often—but not always—such “strange Indians” turned out to be Iroquois. The Tuscaroras’ relations with the Iroquois Confederacy will be discussed in subsequent chapters.
an Indian slave belonging to a Virginia planter. When six were caught, Virginia’s
council sent investigators to grill the prisoners: Who were they and where were they
from? What were they doing in Virginia? Did they trade with Maryland? What sort
of relations did they have with Virginia’s tributary Indians? Even the most basic
information was a mystery. Such uncertainties, breeding suspicion and fear, led
Virginia to try to keep foreign Indians away from its borders. When they appeared,
colonists sounded the alarm, beefed up their militias, and marched out to meet the
threat—usually to discover that the intruders had already disappeared. By contrast,
the Tuscaroras, who by the end of the eighteenth century were a constant presence
among the settlements—trading skins, hunting game for settlers’ tables, working as
hands picking tobacco, stopping for rum, supplies, or merely to shelter for the night—
hardly counted in anyone’s minds as strange or foreign. They “had a constant trade
with our Inhabitants for the like commodities as our own Indians,” wrote
Spotswood. Indeed, for Virginia officials, relations between Tuscaroras and settlers,
or Tuscaroras and tributary Indians, were too constant, too familiar, and far too
unregulated.

The Tuscaroras threatened to undermine the basic underpinnings of Virginia’s
tributary system. From Virginia’s official point of view, one of the principal duties of
the tributary Indians was to serve as a buffer between the settlements and outside

33 *EJCCV*, 1: 205-7.

34 *EJCCV*, 1: 312, 332; 2: 9-10.

Indians. Officials recognized that tributary Indians were likely to interact with tribes like the Tuscaroras, a practice that Virginia’s officials hoped to exploit. Through such dealings, Virginia hoped to gather news and information through their tributaries. These Indians could also potentially act as mediators, semi-neutral messengers who could carry messages and make arrangements in situations where a Virginia official or deputized trader would be either unwelcome or unsafe. During one crisis two Nansemond Indians and two Meherrins “were sent by the Tuscaroras” to pass a message. During another, the Nottoways hosted a summit between Tuscarora leaders and Governor Spotswood (accompanied by most of his executive council) at their town.

But Virginia officials were apprehensive that there were too many interactions between the Tuscaroras and their tributaries. The very fact that the tributaries were able to serve as such apt go-betweens made Virginia officials suspect them as well. Where did the tributaries’ true loyalties lie? Would they become turncoats or harbor the enemy in moments of crises? There was always the suspicion that around council fires or crowded in a smoky hut away from European eyes, Tuscaroras were making their own alliances with the very Indians Virginia depended upon for the defense and order of its frontiers. After all, many of the groups were linguistically and culturally almost identical. In 1694 a Tuscarora “queen” visited the Weanoaks and “brought a

36 William Byrd, The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709-1712, ed. Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling (Richmond, Va.: The Dietz Press, 1941), 7. This occurred during the Pate Murder Case, described in detail below.

37 This meeting occurred at the outbreak of the Tuscarora War.
present of Deerskins . . . to the Wyanoke Queen" and tried to persuade her to remove her people from the edge of the English settlements along the Blackwater River closer to the Tuscaroras.\(^3^8\) This Queen Ervetsahekeh was familiar not only to the Weyanokes. A Meherrin testified that he knew her and two Tuscarora kings named “Nicotaw Warr” and “Corrowhaughcoheh” “very well.”\(^3^9\) In 1704, members of six tributary tribes applied for a passport from the Virginia governor to journey north to New York with two Tuscarora leaders to try to negotiate a peace with Senecas who had captured some local tributaries. The Virginia council ordered that the envoys go no further than the Virginia border and that they be chaperoned by three English interpreters meant to spy upon any budding alliances.\(^4^0\)

The issue went beyond creating alliances with tributaries. The Tuscaroras often stirred up a cauldron by provoking and taking part in wars between and among the tributary Indians. The Nottoways, in particular, gained a reputation for cooperating with Tuscaroras to disrupt the peace that Virginia was trying to sow on its frontiers. Frequently, members of the two nations ganged up to attack other Virginia tributaries.\(^4^1\) Virginia officials found themselves stuck with the unwholesome,


\(^3^9\) Stanard, "Indians of Southern Virginia," 9-10.

\(^4^0\) *EJCCV*, 2: 331, 369, 380; 3:45.

\(^4^1\) *EJCCV*, 2: 269, 275; 3: 220, 222-24; *CVSP*, 1: 89, 131-32; Harrison, "Deposition," 49.
confusing task of trying to moderate truces to prevent the tributary network from
disintegrating into a morass of revenge killings. Even worse, in 1705 rumor reached
Benjamin Harrison of the “secret practices of the Tuscaruro and Nottoway Indians and
that there was two hundred Tuscaoruro Indians at the Nottoway town with an
intention to fall on the English.” It came as a relief when, after rushing to the
Nottoway town, “he found the Reports that had been spread, to be groundless, there
being only ten Tuscaruro Indians there and that they had no design on the English.”

Nearly as unsettling, in officials’ eyes, were the unruly and unchecked contacts
between colonists and Tuscaroras. As part of its tributary program, Virginia officials
had long been wary of colonists interacting freely with natives, in the parlance of the
day, “keeping” or “entertaining” Indians. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth
century, these worries increasingly focused explicitly upon the Tuscaroras. Already
mentioned, for example, was a proposal either to enforce a tax upon employers of
Tuscaroras that “come amongst the English” to grow tobacco, or “that they be
restrained from coming amongst the English.” In 1693 citizens of Henrico county
proposed that Tuscaroras specifically be prohibited from hunting too close to English

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42 EJCCV, 3: 453.

43 EJCCV, 1: 202; 2: 14, 28.

44 CSP, item 354, vol. 17 (1699): 197-99. See also JHBV 1695-1702, 156.
settlements. A 1705 law made it illegal to “entertain or employ any Tuscarora, or
other Indian, not being a servant or slave, to hunt or kill deer.”

Despite officials’ fears of collusion, often word of these surreptitious contacts
came from tributary Indians who had their own reasons to resent unrestrained
meetings between the two peoples. In 1663 several tributary groups complained to
the Virginia government that the Tuscaroras “lie skulking about our English plantation
“ and “there covertly have underhand dealings with the English,” often to “sinister
ends.” For Indian groups like the Nottoways or Weyanokes who found themselves
under the thumb of Virginia officials, one of the chief compensations for their loss of
autonomy was privileged access to English trade and the opportunity to establish
themselves as middlemen. But the Tuscaroras often circumvented both the tributaries
and officials to directly visit and trade with settlers. Attempting to overturn the
economic motivations that motivated settlers to welcome rather than apprehend
trespassing Tuscaroras, officials altered the law to levy a fine against Englishmen
found in Tuscarora company, half of which would reward the informer. Moreover,
the tributaries, who lived closer to English settlements recognized that they were likely

45 JHBV 1659-1693, 454-55. This law and the proposal to tax Tuscarora tobacco
workers were rejected on grounds that existing laws governing Indian relations were
sufficient—thus demonstrating the ongoing debate regarding whether or not the
Tuscaroras constituted a separate category in Virginia’s system.

46 Hening, Statutes, 3: 343-44.

47 Hening, Statutes, 2: 202-203.

48 Hening, Statute, 2: 202-203.
to suffer the fallout for any squabble that might arise between the English and the Tuscaroras. In their 1663 complaint, the tributaries worried that they were being wrongly blamed for thefts perpetrated by Tuscaroras occurring “dayly” on the southside. These included poaching hogs, “robbing of hedges,” and stealing tobacco and corn from the fields. In a 1699 address to the governor, the Nottoways, were even more specific in their complaints:

[The] Tuskaruoe Indians (being incouraged thereto) do often come into the upper partes of the Countrey, about Appamattox, amongst the English, who furnish them with Gunns and Powder & shott, which enbles them to hunt upon and burn up all their grounds, whereby their game is Destroyed and their hunting spoyled. That the English trust the Tuskaruroes in trade with Rum and other goods which they bring out amongst the Nottoways, and sometimes set into Play, and lose all or great parte of those goods, and not being able to make satisfaccon to the English, they tell them the Nottoways take their goods from them, which occasions Differences and dissatisfaccons between the English and the Nottoways.

Tuscaroras clandestinely visiting settlers to buy guns and ammunition; gaming, gambling and forming who knows what ties with tributary Indians; upsetting the

49 Hening, Statutes, 2: 202-203. Presumably, some of this tobacco may have been resold to other European settlers.

50 CVSP, 1: 65. I suspect they were gambling, using the gambling sticks described as a common and addictive game by Lawson.
deerskin trade; taking a lead role in the rum trade; squabbling with tributaries; leaving a wake of ill-will between tributaries and settlers—here was a swirling frontier that fell far from the order to which Virginia’s government aspired.

It often seemed only a matter of time before widespread violence broke out owing to contacts between colonists and Tuscaroras. When isolated incidents did occur, the Tuscaroras gave officials a lesson on the limits of authority in Virginia’s hinterland. In June 1689 William Byrd dashed off a worried letter to Lord Effingham. Earlier, several Indian slaves who had run away from Virginia masters encountered two Tuscaroras and killed one of them. The runaways had been recaptured, but the murder created a diplomatic crisis for Byrd, to whom “the Taskeroodas have sent to demand Satisfactione.” The victim’s relatives and the “great men” of his town were expected any day. Byrd had written to the president of the Virginia council for advice, but word had not yet returned. Besides, Byrd could see no alternative but “to make satisfaction by paying for the Slain man.” Doing otherwise, or even to merely delay, could “sett the whole Country in a flame.” In April 1707 when Simon Kilcrease, a King William County planter, killed a Tuscarora named Parridge, the demands were more explicit.

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51 See, for example, the case of Fontaine, a free black Indian trader accused by North Carolina of stirring the Tuscaroras and other Indians against North Carolina. A “Fontaine Creek” near the border of North Carolina and Virginia may bear his name. EJCCV, 2: 390, 381-82, 402, 405; 3: 199-200. For other tension, see EJCCV, 1: 147.


themselves,” the Tuscaroras demanded “to have Six hundred Cubitts of Roanoke and one hundered and twenty Cubitts of Peake, two Gunns, Six White Stript Blanketts, tenn bottles of Powder, Six thousand Shott, Six Cloth Coats, & twenty four yards of plaines.”

These demands of “satisfaction” were an integral part of Tuscarora culture—a reconciliation ceremony whose basic outlines would have been familiar to Indians across the eastern woodlands. The acceptance of goods by the bereaved “to cover the dead” (to borrow the Iroquois phrase) stilled restless spirits, checked the need for revenge killings, and preserved the peace. Lawson, was essentially accurate when he derisively wrote of the process among the Tuscaroras, “With this they buy off Murders; and whatsoever a Man can do that is ill, this Wampum will quit him of, and make him, in their Opinion, good and virtuous, though ever so black before.” The Tuscaroras’ extension of this practice to include Virginia settlers shows how much they wanted to prevent violence from severing trade relationships. It also showed the Tuscaroras’ confidence that their own principles and notions of peace and diplomacy prevailed in contacts with Virginia. But for Virginia, being forced to pay under the threat of violence felt too much like extortion or even tribute—a reversal of the relations that Virginia’s council was attempting to foster. Therefore rejecting the

54 CVSP, 1: 113. Roanoke consisted of shells attached to an animal hide; peake was hollowed shells strung upon cords (referred to as “wampum” in the north.) According to “the Indian measure,” a cubit of roanoke “contains as much in Length, as will reach from the Elbow to the End of the little Finger” (Lawson, New Voyage, 203). “Plaines” refers to coarse blue woolen cloth.

55 Lawson, New Voyage, 204.
Tuscaroras' claims, the King William county court concluded that Parridge had been the "first aggressor" and acquitted Kilcrease, a move that would come back to haunt them. 56

Instead of letting the Tuscaroras take the lead in disputes, officials thought they should follow the example of better-disciplined tributaries and abide by Virginia's legal decisions. One of the chief successes of Virginia's policies had been to extend Virginia's legal system so that it prevailed among their native neighbors. When, in an internal quarrel two Chickahominies burnt the cabin of one of their tribesmen along "with all his corn and goods," Virginia's executive council stepped in to settle the case. The bereaved Indian even knew to sharpen his accusations by also charging that the two arsonists "spake diverse words agst his Excellcy and the Government." 57

Virginia's council was even more eager to exert its notions of justice in cases between Indians and Virginia settlers, particularly in cases of murder. Mid-morning on September 11, 1704, ten Nanzaticos speaking English "in a friendly manner," approached the home of John Rowley. When the settler's guard was lowered, they attacked, killing the planter, his wife, son, and mother-in-law, leaving only a young

56 Parramore, "Tuscarora Ascendancy," 320, EJCCV, 3: 156.

57 EJCCV, 2: 359, 364, 368-69, 380. This incident was part of a larger, confusing dispute that also included accusations of land fraud and plans to assist Seneca raiders. Earlier, the Chickahominy chief had also charged that Tom Perry (the man whose cabin had been burned) had "Broke down [the Chicohomany Chief's] cabin, beaten his woman and threatened his Life." Initially, the Indians through interpreters had told Virginia officials that "they had this morning accommodated all differences between them," but the government had already been notified and continued to stay involved.
daughter to escape. Virginia officials attempted to turn the ensuing investigations and trials into a showcase for the efficacy and efficiency of European-style justice and the tributary system in general. The council immediately sent interpreters to the other tributary tribes to notify them of the affair and to admonish them not to harbor suspects. They also cautioned the Pamunkeys, Chickahominies, Nottoways, and Meherrins to remain in their towns, probably to protect them from suspicion by local vigilantes and prevent them from coordinating a general uprising. Later, when the trial was underway, the council tipped off its didactic tactics by inviting two “great men” from each of the tributary tribes to watch and learn from the proceedings, even authorizing expenditures to pay for horses to rush the leaders to the trial.

Every effort was made to present an orderly and righteous front. Taking care to spare the innocent, the council released women and children snatched in the sweep and provided them food and clothing while their husbands and fathers remained in custody. After discovering that posses had also stuffed their pockets with loot, the council inventoried the stolen goods, and ordered “any skins, wampum, or other goods or chattels of what nature or quality soever” to be returned. The remaining suspects were kept separated to prevent them from colluding on an alibi, but were allowed an

58 *EJCCV*, 2: 383-86.
59 *EJCCV*, 2: 383-86.
60 *EJCCV*, 2: 388.
61 *EJCCV*, 2: 388.
ample allowance of food and clothing against the deepening autumn chill of their cells.\(^{63}\) Doubtless the carefully shepherded native observers were told of these arrangements and paraded before these accommodations, but lest the wrong lesson get across, they were prohibited from meeting privately with the inmates.\(^{64}\) The inner workings of the trial were not recorded, but after its conclusion the Virginia council tried to demonstrate its compassion by recommending that the sentences of two of the Nanzaticos be commuted. Instead of hanging, these two “objects of mercy” were sold into seven years of slavery in Antigua—an effective death sentence, likely to fool no one, except perhaps, the native observers.\(^{65}\)

The trials of the Nanzaticos exemplified the extension of Virginia’s authority over its neighboring Indians, but when suspects were Tuscaroras, not tributaries, success proved more elusive.\(^{66}\) In the October 1707 several Tuscaroras killed Jeremiah Pate, an inhabitant of New Kent County.\(^{67}\) The timing of the murder, only months after courts rebuffed Tuscarora demands and acquitted Kilcrease, suggests that it may have been an act of retaliation for the death of Parridge (at the very least the earlier incident may have made Tuscaroras more credulous of Virginia claims that it

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\(^{63}\) *EJCCV*, 2: 400.

\(^{64}\) *EJCCV*, 2: 388.

\(^{65}\) *EJCCV*, 2: 396-97; *EJCCV*, 3: 98.

\(^{66}\) The timing of this murder suggests that perhaps it was retaliation for the death of Parridge, several months earlier. *EJCCV*, 3: 158, 159, 161, 162-74, 182, 185, 191, 200, 167, 165, 185, 191, 211.

\(^{67}\) *CVSP*, 1: 123.
sought justice). As it had in the trial of the Nanzaticos, Virginia’s council attempted to make the prosecution into a showcase for the orderliness and authority of the Old Dominion’s justice system. Instead it became a dark comedy of errors.

Virginia’s government launched an immediate manhunt. Although the Tuscaroras in question were not tributary Indians, and one report referred to them as “vagrant Indians,” they were no strangers; the suspects sported anglicized names, were “well acquainted” with locals, and “used to hunt for the inhabitants of the frontier Plantations.” Later evidence suggested that they were also involved in the rum and deerskin trade. Major Joshua Wynne soon arrested one Tuscarora named Tom Robin, based upon the scanty evidence that he often frequented the locale of the crime and that “we find him to be in Several Stories, wch makes it the more suspicious.” Another suspect, Jack Mason, was probably caught further north, cut off from escape south to Tuscarora territory by fast moving Virginians. Threats of violence and offers of reward induced the Tuscaroras from one town to hand over another suspect named George. But disappointments in the pursuit foreshadowed difficulties to come. Nathaniel Harrison reported in frustration that his men would have captured another five suspects, “if the Notoway Indians had not befriended them and Deceived

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68 CVSP, 1: 123; EJCCV, 3:133

69 EJCCV, 3: 159

70 CVSP, 1: 117. Tom Robin may have been the same person as Tom Jumper who later poisoned himself, EJCCV, 3: 173.

71 CVSP, 1: 117.

72 EJCCV, 3: 173;
us.” Only after a frantic all-night search did Harrison give up, having learned that the remaining suspects, warned by the Nottoways, had “Run quit[e] to the Tuscororo Towne without making any stop, so as for us to overtake them.” Attempts to capture these remaining suspects would rattle and shake Virginia’s entire Indian policy for the next several months.

Virginia’s officials initially proceeded according to much the same formula that they had previously followed to such success—straightforward prosecution of everyone involved. They did not intend to be paid off with bundles of wampum, nor were they going to allow simple eye-for-eye justice to prevail. They sent two or three experienced traders to the Tuscaroras to give them a quick lesson in European justice—“by our Laws whenever any murder is committed, every person concerned therein are to be tryed and suffer death for the same.” The traders promised that all suspects handed over would receive a “fair tryal” and, if found innocent, would be released unharmed. Four witnesses whom officials desired to question would even be paid for their time. All of these offers, the Tuscaroras ignored. Virginia’s messengers also invited the Tuscaroras to send several representatives to attend in order to satisfy themselves of the proceedings’ fairness—an offer that a few headmen accepted, only to be treated with suspicion after arriving. Local tributaries had less

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73 CVSP, 1: 117.

74 EJCCV, 3: 173.

75 Some Tuscarora witnesses eventually attended. EJCCV, 3: 159-60, 166
choice. The Nottoways, Nansemonds, Meherrins, Pamunkeys, and Chickahominies each dutifully sent two observers to Williamsburg to attend the upcoming trial.76

Whatever lessons Virginia hoped to get across became horribly garbled as complications mounted. The same messengers charged with explaining the virtues of Virginia justice carried the uncomfortable news that two of the Tuscarora suspects already in custody had committed suicide with poison before the trial even began. Jack Mason, the sole surviving suspect in custody, was quickly convicted of "wilfull murder."77 But the courts had moved too fast. Soon afterwards, an Englishman named Colonel Hill came forward with an alibi: the night of the murder Mason had been at Hill's plantation, the "place where he used to sleep."78 Suddenly, rather than showing off the efficiency of their system, Virginia officials found themselves tangled up in its legalisms. Law required that any acquittal for murder necessitated a pardon from the queen. Already proven innocent, Mason was required to sit in a Williamsburg cell for months waiting first for the request to work its way to London and through the corridors of royal power and then for the reprieve to cross the Atlantic.79

77 CVSP, 1: 123.
78 EJCCV, 3: 167, 173.
Such foul-ups wounded the efforts of Virginia's officials to convince the various Tuscarora towns to surrender the remaining suspects. One town had quickly handed over George (who shortly afterwards poisoned himself), but the remainder "of the said Towns . . . had declared they would rather hazard their Lives than to surrender" the others.\textsuperscript{80} Messengers to the Tuscaroras were instructed to threaten that Virginia would "fetch them" with force if necessary. Towards this martial end, the messengers kept secret notebooks to record the strength and numbers of the towns they visited. Virginia's leaders must have been intimidated by the figures they brought back. Pulling back from talk of war, Virginia set aside the sword and settled on a more subtle tool—trade. Messengers announced a twenty-day ultimatum for the return of the suspects. Afterwards, sheriffs of the frontier counties would instruct traders not to "furnish or sell . . . Armes powder and shott" to the Tuscaroras.\textsuperscript{81} The embargo, Virginia officials thought, would force the Tuscaroras to hand over the suspects, teach them where true authority lay, and in the meanwhile, "disable them from doing mischief."\textsuperscript{82}

Instead, the embargo illuminated the fragility of Virginia's attempts to govern the frontier via neighboring Indians. Rather than isolating the Tuscaroras behind iron-clad edicts, the embargo was shot through with loopholes. Traders were reluctant to let pursuit of three renegade murder suspects hamper their bottom line. The sheriff of

\textsuperscript{80} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 171.

\textsuperscript{81} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 182.

\textsuperscript{82} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 185.
Prince George county hauled in George Fontain, a "free negro" trader who frequented the no-man's land between North Carolina and Virginia, for selling contraband.\textsuperscript{83} Other traders, better connected, unhindered by the mark of race and less likely to be targeted by the law, doubtlessly got through. Equally irksome was the "clandestine practice of diverse persons who under the pretense of trading with the Nottoway and Meherrin Tributary Indians" secretly sold goods to the Tuscaroras.\textsuperscript{84} Some of these tributaries themselves surely took part in their own illicit trade with the Tuscaroras. The attempted cure, extending the embargo to include all the Indians south of the James River, threatened to critically injure Virginia's carefully nurtured relations with its tributaries. Within months, war captains and sachems of the tributary tribes were pleading that because they were cut off from powder and shot, they were unable to hunt, close to starving, and at risk of losing the deerskin trade. Was this any way to treat loyal subjects?\textsuperscript{85} Besides, trade goods continued to flood into Tuscarora territory from other directions. Virginia's council could only plead ineffectually that merchants should no longer "sell any goods to the inhabitants of Carolina who by the supplys they have hitherto given the Tuscaruro Indians have frustrated the effect of the late proclamation and made them less forward" to hand over Pate's murderers.\textsuperscript{86}

\textsuperscript{83} \textit{EJCCV, 3:} 199.

\textsuperscript{84} \textit{EJCCV, 3:} 199.

\textsuperscript{85} \textit{EJCCV, 3:} 204-5.

\textsuperscript{86} \textit{EJCCV, 3:} 207.
Virginia's requests and threats to North Carolina exacerbated disputes over a contested boundary between the colonies, but did not curb smuggling.

Finally, after almost a year-long standoff, at a meeting of the Virginia Council, William Byrd learned that the Tuscaroras still "would not deliver up the men we demanded and Colonel Harrison now wrote that now it was his opinion the trade should be open, contrary to what he thought before."\(^{87}\) Many of the councilors, themselves intimately involved in the Indian trade, agreed, fearing that their "goods are like to perish on their hands."\(^{88}\) In effect, they conceded defeat. The Tuscaroras brought from the Pate case the opposite of the lesson that Virginia's council had intended. Rather than being brought to heel by Virginia's trading strength and its authority over the buffer Indians, settlers, and traders, the Tuscaroras had instead proved the vitality of their niche on the edge of Virginia's tributary system. In ways, Virginia's tributaries shielded not only the colony but the Tuscaroras. Tuscaroras did not encounter crushing settlement pressure from the direction of Virginia. Direct economic pressure was also partially deflected by the tributaries because they were likely to suffer indirectly in any effort to limit trade with the Tuscaroras. Still, the Tuscaroras were close enough to frequently come and go, interacting with Virginia's colonists and enjoying the benefits of trade. Despite Virginia's undoubted influence in Tuscarora society, the embargo proved that traders, settlers, and tributaries were as much influenced by the profits that the Tuscaroras offered and could not be counted

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\(^{88}\) *EJCCV*, 3: 214.
on to blindly side with Virginia’s government in any dispute. Virginia was hesitant to
take on the Tuscaroras by force, but a trade war was just as likely to impinge upon
their tributary allies. Traders unwilling to risk nurtured networks, tributaries hesitant to
alienate their powerful native neighbors, officials fearful of sparking an unpredictable
border war—all worked to limit the abilities of Virginia’s council to enforce its will
upon the Tuscaroras. This is not to say that the Tuscaroras were entirely satisfied with
this stalemate, but it was one in which they wielded immense influence.

The final coda to the Pate case transpired only weeks after the Council decided
to reopen trade. Rather than reestablishing order, Benjamin Harrison found himself
hosting a confounding conference between leaders from two tributary groups,
Nottoways and Saponies, who hurled accusations of murder and threats of revenge at
one another. Decades earlier, as signatories of the treaty of 1677, the Saponies had
become tributaries of the colony, but they had removed westward, out of Virginia’s
reach. But during the midst of the Pate affair, as the tributary system seemed to be
crumbling all around, the Saponies “return’d and prayed to be received again into
protection, and to have land assign’d them for a settlement.”89 They were reapplying
to be tributaries, voluntarily—models of the dependent behavior that seemed to be
evaporating from among other groups. Better yet, they were inveterate enemies of the
Tuscaroras. So the council welcomed them as prodigal sons and assigned them a plot
on the Meherrin River, squarely in the path of incoming Tuscaroras. Colonel Jennings,
writing on behalf of the Council, could barely contain his excitement that “the

character they have of being stout fellows, and withall very friendly to our inhabitants, makes me hope their Settlement . . . will be some kind of barrier against the Tuscoruros.” But the infusion of new allies did little to bolster the ailing system.

Now, months later, as Harrison found himself trying to sort out mixed stories regarding who killed who and watched as supposed allies squared off against each other, it became apparent that the Tuscaroras were still at the heart of the colony’s Indian troubles: “By the best accot I can gett, it was a Tuscarodo that fierd the first gun, and the same Indian went to Ben Harrisons Quarter over night to discover what Indians was there.” After a year of battling it out with Tuscaroras, Harrison was reluctant to interfere in matters among the tributary Indians at the risk of re-igniting disputes with the Tuscaroras. “What is best to be done in that case, I shall leave to better judgements, but I am very sure if the Government delivers a Tuscarodo Indian to the Sapponeys, and they Kill him, twill cost the life of an Englishman, if not more.”

Uncertain Authority in North Carolina

Despite the troubles that plagued Virginia, proprietors of North Carolina also hoped—at least initially—to subject their neighboring Indians to paternal, controlling relationships and that those dominated would include the region’s largest group, the

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90 CVSP, 1: 131-32.

91 CVSP, 1: 131-32.
Tuscaroras. After all, early skirmishes between the region's first settlers and the Tuscaroras had resulted in the Tuscarora “Emperor” and the “thirty kings under him” (probably a Tuscarora “teetha” and his councilors) traveling to the North Carolina settlements in the winter of 1672 to negotiate a peace. Shortly afterwards, proprietors looking from afar in England may have expected that the carnage of Bacon’s Rebellion that had exacted tributary treaties from Indian groups along the Tuscaroras’ northern periphery would be echoed to the south by similar victories over the Indians in North Carolina. In 1676, proprietors of Carolina asked the governor and council of “that parte of our province called Albemarle”—soon to be North Carolina—to “send us by the next opportunity a true account of what tribute or payment are rendered by any of our people or officers from any of the Indians.”

But these hopes never came to fruition. Even though no records of the 1672 meeting survive, subsequent events indicate that what was negotiated was a peace between two peoples weary with war and wary of one another, but not anything close to a wholesale capitulation by the Tuscaroras. During Bacon’s Rebellion, the Tuscaroras steered clear of conflict in North Carolina. Therefore, despite the wishes

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92 It does not appear that the Tuscaroras had a single leader akin to Powhatan during the 17th century, but sources for this period are scarce. Reference to an “emperor” and his “kings” either refers to a town leader (“Teetha”) and his councilors, or perhaps a powerful spokesperson able to speak for several towns, akin to King Hancock and King Blount. Quoted in Herbert Richard Paschal, "The Tuscarora Indians in North Carolina" (M.A. Thesis, Dept. of History, U. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1953), 28. See also George Fox, Selections From the Epistles of George Fox (Cambridge: Trustees of Obadiah Brown's Benevolent Fund, and the Managers of the Mosher Fund of the New England Yearly Meeting of Friends, 1879).

93 NCCR, I: 230.
of its proprietors, instead of North Carolina's colonial government imposing a host of rules and restrictions upon the Tuscaroras, what emerged over the next several decades was a series of constantly re-negotiated and hotly contested improvisations. Part of this flexibility reflected the strength and influence that the Tuscaroras wielded in the region, but it was also a reflection of a more general trend in North Carolina. As opposed to Virginia, which steadfastly attempted to order relations with its Indians according to a uniform program to shape its frontiers, North Carolina never held fast to a plan to erect an orderly method for dealing with its Indian neighbors.

If one looks at the courts, it may seem that North Carolina experienced success where Virginia did not. But closer examination reveals that getting Tuscaroras into the courtroom did not equate to capitulation. In the Pate case, Virginia had espoused an inflexible approach in attempting to use murder trials to incorporate the Tuscaroras according to the patterns established under their tributary system. This failed. North Carolina, with its weak, thinly-strung settlements, and a barely-organized government in which many officials—including the governor—often personally traded and negotiated with the Tuscaroras, could not even seriously attempt to make itself the exclusive arbiter of justice. The result was a mélange of overlapping notions of justice along the Tuscarora-North Carolina borderlands. But rather than being an example of blissful accommodations between two peoples, such grudging compromises increasingly satisfied no one.

Sometime in the 1680s, threatening to "take a course . . . that would not be very agreeable to them," Governor Sothel bullied the inhabitants of a Tuscarora town
in the Albemarle region to turn over a man accused of breaking into his storehouse and stealing rum, gunpowder, and dozens of deerskins and blankets. But Sothel never turned the moment into an instructive opportunity to demonstrate the clear superiority of colonial courts over Tuscarora notions of justice. Indeed, Tuscarora beliefs continued to exert a clear influence. Although a trail of dropped goods and footprints had led Sothel’s men to the village, crucial in their determination of the particular suspect—the town shaman—was the governor’s belief that Indian magic had been a necessary component of the break-in: the intruder had somehow divined the only small spot where it would be possible to dig under the storehouse walls without being blocked by huge casks. Such evidence, and probable assurances that no death-penalty would be sought, probably played a role in the Tuscaroras submitting to Sothel’s threats.94

Shortly after the arrest, another theft occurred: this time a quantity of peak disappeared from the Tuscarora village. In the ensuing manhunt Sothel found himself witnessing and indirectly participating in Tuscarora justice. The townspeople approached Sothel and told him that “no one could find out the Thief, unless he would let the Prisoner conjure for it, who was the only Man they had at making such Discoveries.” Finally Sothel agreed to let the shaman in his custody root out the thief, but only upon the condition that the prisoner remain in shackles, a compromise that the Tuscaroras “very well approved of.” The governor, his family, and “several others of the Neighbourhood,” came to watch the “experiment” in which the shaman, still in

shackles, lit three fires and donned a leather hood. Blindfolded, he divined the perpetrator’s name and even scraped with a stick in the dirt a sketch of the cross-shaped welts that would be found on the thief’s back. In his description, the shaman may have been trying to expose the actual storeroom thief, or even hoping to revenge himself indirectly upon Sothel. The Tuscarora he indicted was a part-time resident at the governor’s house who had “no Apprehension of being discover’d.” The townspeople’s choice of punishments further reflects the mixing of views. After catching the perpetrator, they “proffer’d to sell him as a Slave to the Governor, but he refused to buy him; so they took him bound away,” perhaps for torture among their people or sale to another trader.

Another case in the early 1700s seems to indicate a more straightforward assertion of English authority. Officials succeeded in forcing the Tuscaroras to hand over for hanging a man suspected of burning an English house and killing a black slave. But closer examination of the incident reveals a more complicated story. When the English demanded the suspect, the Tuscaroras had “shew’d . . . a Reluctancy to deliver him up” but “would have given another in his Room.” Perhaps the Tuscaroras felt that English courts were mistaken and were trying to hand over the actual perpetrator. Perhaps, according to native notions that favored reciprocity towards the bereaved over the European preference for revenge upon the perpetrator,

95 Lawson, New Voyage, 224-25.
96 Lawson, New Voyage, 225.
97 Lawson, New Voyage, 220.
the Tuscaroras tried to hand over a man who for some unknown reason was already anathema among them. Either way, far from willingly agreeing with the colonial court’s verdict, they had only handed over the suspect when threats convinced them that “the Safety of all the People lies at stake,” a situation in which they would have grudgingly “deliver[ed] up the most innocent Person living.”

During the actual execution, the three Tuscarora “kings” who were invited to be passive witnesses of the solemn administration of colonial justice unexpectedly seized active roles. They rushed the hanged man and, as he gasped and slowly twisted in the noose, they gathered around, tugging and punching him, taunting and tormenting him with jeers and insults. European executions often contained an element of grim mirth, but shocked colonial witnesses felt that all sense of dignity and decorum had broken down. Lawson, normally sympathetic to the Tuscaroras, thought the incident “shews these Savages to be what they really are.” The Tuscaroras, however, were behaving as they would have during a native execution in which “all the whole nation, and all the Indians within a hundred Mile” would gather to take part in the grotesque tortures, tormenting the victim with “a great deal of Mirth and Satisfaction.” By making the execution more akin to a native torture ceremony, the kings superseded European protocol and taught their own grisly lessons to the crowd.

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98 Lawson, *New Voyage*, 220. Anger and disappointment at being forced to hand over a man widely considered innocent to colonial courts may have fueled the resistance that manifested afterwards during the Pate case.


100 Lawson, *New Voyage*, 205.
Despite a few partial successes in the courts, North Carolina officials failed to establish a sustainable tributary system largely because of their reluctance to fulfill their own obligations to the Indians. The set of policies enacted by Virginia and in part mimicked by North Carolina, implied a deal of sorts, however biased, that promised a measure of paternal protection for the Indians. In practical terms this meant warding off and controlling settlers, a service North Carolina’s government proved unwilling or unable to provide. Officials did make some early efforts. In 1694 the Chowan Indians, a group near the Great Dismal Swamps to the northwest of the Albemarle Sound (which had signed several treaties with North Carolina), complained that they were “much injured” by encroaching settlers. In response, the colonial government limited new claims and declared void unsettled ones that were above the “old towne creek.”

Similarly upon “Complaint of the Yawpin Indians” (another small group in the coastal swamps), North Carolina’s council ordered a sixteen square mile reservation to be laid out according to a treaty that had been negotiated several years earlier. But such protections were incompatible with rapid settlement favored by officials. Settlers

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101 NCCR, 1, 432. The lands remained unsurveyed for nearly a decade, however, provoking continued disputes. Settlers claimed that in the absence of a formal survey, the Chowans claimed and defended a greater area than allocated and were “threatening yor Honrs petrs by destroying their Stocks burning their houses and other hostilities under pretence they are under yor Honrs protection and no Englishman ought to Seate within four miles of their Towne.” In this unusual example, the settlers offered to immediately vacate any land to be found justly controlled by the Indians after the survey. (NCHGR, 3: 242).

102 NCHGR, 3: 73. Record of Council Held at the House of John Hecklefield, April 12, 1704, Indians: Treaties, Petitions, Agreements, and Court Cases (1698-1736), Colonial Court Records, Box 192, NCSA.
complained that under excuse of protection, the Chowans had engaged in "destroying . . . [settlers'] Stocks burning their houses and other hostilities under pretense they are under yor Honrs protection and no Englishman ought to Seate within four miles of their Towne." More often, it was Europeans who did the pillaging, a situation in which the government typically either openly sided with the intruders or chose to look away.

This departure owed to the desire by the leaders of the young, sparsely-settled colony to attract European settlers. As early as the late 1670s, the colony's proprietors were angrily demanding to know why the colony was not "welplanted." Why had the settlements not spread further inland and south into the region around the Pamlico and Neuse rivers? They also urged the establishment of towns that could double as military outposts. For the next several decades similar instructions accompanied new governors crossing the Atlantic. Although steps were made in 1691 by Governor John Archdale to allow more land speculation, most settlement in

103 NCHGR, 3: 242. March 28, 1702 Petition in Indians: Treaties, Petitions, Agreements, and Court Cases (1698-1736), Colonial Court Records, Box 192, NCSA.


105 NCCR, I, 228.

North Carolina was undertaken by small yeomen farmers who quickly sought small plots often within easy reach of (or in the case of New Bern, upon) Indian towns.\textsuperscript{107} The willingness of North Carolina’s officials to favor settlers over Indians emerged amid a larger pattern of setting aside laws and regulations to encourage growth.\textsuperscript{108} The explicit goal of such policies was “the more speedy peopling” of the colony so that the “Inhabitants of this Government by reason of their fewness” would no longer be “subject to the dayly insults of the Heathen” and owe “their Lives and safety’s to the courtesy of the Heathen rather than their own strength.”\textsuperscript{109} Toward such aims, the proprietors and the colonial assembly periodically passed laws, as early as 1669, making new settlers immune from past debts for five years, a temporary grace that in the increasingly lawless colony often meant permanent immunity.\textsuperscript{110} Similarly, guarantees of religious freedom and lax enforcement of vestry acts beckoned a minor flood of Quakers and other dissenters fleeing from England, Ireland, and more restrictive colonies.\textsuperscript{111} The result was a general reputation for lawlessness. “This is a


\textsuperscript{108} NCCR, I, 674-75.

\textsuperscript{109} NCCR, I, 674-75.


\textsuperscript{111} Styrna, “Winds of War,” 47; Although these freedoms were first proposed as part of John Locke’s idealistic vision of new world settlement contained in his Fundamental Constitutions, their effect in spurring settlement was a clear motivation. Two contemporary estimates in 1708 and 1709 put the percentage of Quakers at between one seventh and one tenth of the total population (CRNC, 4: XV; NCCR, 1: 600-603, 686-87, 708-15). Many of the Quakers in the colony were also converts, rather than immigrants.
nest of the most notorious profligates upon earth,” bemoaned an Anglican preacher who felt that his neighbors consisted chiefly of crooks, adulterers, and bigamists who “for fear of punishment have fled hither.”\textsuperscript{112} Ironically, these same “undue methods . . . for seducing . . . inhabitants,” which had given the region a reputation for not looking too deeply into one’s affairs and had attracted peace-loving Quakers, also made the colony a haven for “Pirates or Sea robbers” who plied the shoals of the treacherous coast.\textsuperscript{113} Edward Teach, better known as Blackbeard, once famously bragged that he would be welcome in any home in North Carolina.\textsuperscript{114} He made his own home in the town of Bath, once the edge of Tuscarora territory. This same riotous reputation—in part intentionally fostered to attract settlers—also freed settlers from fear of reprisals for any crimes they might commit upon Indians as they carved out homes. First for the Indians along the leading edge of settlement and soon for the Tuscaroras, this would spell disaster.

Settlers and Indians could personally experience the contrast between North Carolina’s policies, which generally favored settlers over Indians, and those of Virginia, which often protected tributary Indians as a way of controlling growth and extending authority, in the hotly contested border region between the two colonies.

\textsuperscript{112} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 767.

\textsuperscript{113} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 475. This 1697 Letter of the Council of Trade explicitly links the “undue methods practiced in some of his Colonies for seducing the Inhabitants from others” to the rise of piracy in North Carolina and the harboring of “such Fugitives as leave any of his Plantations contrary to the Laws provided for that purpose.”

\textsuperscript{114} This assessment was shared by a 1697 report that concluded “pirates are kindly entertained in Carolina” (\textit{NCCR}, 1, 475).
The land dispute owed its origins to the fact that North Carolina had two founding charters, each containing different language.¹¹⁵ The first, issued in 1663, set the northern boundary of the colony at 36 degrees north. The second charter, issued two years later, declared that the border reached “from the north end of Currituck River or inlet upon a strait westerly line to Weyanoke creek which lies within or about the degrees of 36 and thirty minutes northern latitude; and as far west, in the direct line as far as the south seas.”¹¹⁶ In strict geographic terms, this difference of thirty minutes latitude translated into about a 40-mile ribbon that included the northern section of the Albemarle Sound, the region’s first area of heavy settlement. In practical terms this ambiguity, two different lines, neither of them properly surveyed, turned the entire border region into a confusing no-man’s land whose ownership was claimed by both but could be proven by neither. A Virginia politician complained that the area had no discernible border, “noe River betwixt it and us, and is but one broad Road.”¹¹⁷

Governing in such a place was nearly impossible. The trackless pine barrens, shallow ravines, disorienting swamps, and confusingly meandering rivers meant that at any time the average settler (or even skilled surveyor, as succeeding generations of surveyors including John Lawson and William Byrd discovered) would be hard pressed to offer more than a guess as to which colony he was in. When tax collectors

¹¹⁵ See William Byrd’s Histories, xvi-xxiv, for a good basic account of the dividing-line dispute, upon which much of this paragraph is based.

¹¹⁶ William Byrd’s Histories, xvii.

¹¹⁷ JHBV 1659-93, 98.
came, settlers were quick to take advantage of the ambiguity. In 1680, settlers in the isolated Currituck and Blackwater region, who had received their titles from the Virginia land office, refused to pay Virginia quit-rents by claiming that their holdings were within North Carolina jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{118} Eight years later, settlers from the same area complained that North Carolina unjustly taxed their Virginia properties.\textsuperscript{119} Although settlement was initially slow, the rich, well-watered soil of the region made both colonies fearful of losing potential tobacco export duties.\textsuperscript{120}

A closer look at the second charter shows that any attempt to fix the vacillating loyalties of the settlers would involve Indians. In addition to specifying a longitude of approximately 36° 30′, the 1665 charter described a straight line running westerly to Weyanoke Creek. But nobody could agree on what river or stream among innumerable backcountry waterways was the forgotten landmark; the two leading candidates were the Nottoway River and Wicocon Creek. Presumably the missing creek had been named for the Weyanoke Indians who at some point inhabited its banks; but this group, knocked about by rival tribes (notably the Tuscaroras) and the English in the uprisings of 1622, 1644, and Bacon’s Rebellion, had perambulated from site to site across the region for over half a century before finally dispersing into

\textsuperscript{118} William Byrd’s Histories, xvii.

\textsuperscript{119} William Byrd’s Histories, xvii; NCCR, 1: 357-358.

\textsuperscript{120} NCCR, 1: 358.
surrounding tribes. To solve the puzzle, beginning around 1707 North Carolina and Virginia took the remarkable step of sending out interpreters to track down and take depositions from surviving Weanocks and other Indians and settlers in the region old enough to remember back to the early days of the charter. Each colony hoped to have its version of the border “fully corroborated by the concurrent testimony of the Tributary Indians.” For a brief moment, high politics left the council chambers and both colonies hung on the words of “Wyanoke women that live at the Nottoway Towne” like Jenny, “aged as we suppose about sixty,” and Betty, “older,” who recalled corn planting, gathering tuckahoe roots, and nearly yearly removes in a bewildering landscape of native place names that proved impossible to trace on any European map. Neither colony was above bribing, begging, and threatening. Indian deponents got a practical lesson in just how divided the two colonies were. More than a few also probably took advantage of their gullible listeners for trade goods, alcohol, or a chance to get their own claims to the land set onto paper.


122 NCCR, 1: 748.

123 Stanard, "Indians of Southern Virginia," 4-10.
Even while the two colonies sorted through and put their spin on contradictory evidence over where the line would eventually be placed, for the time being they both tried to exert practical control over the landscape. Virginia's government tried to bolster claims and extend authority by having the area declared off limits to white settlement until the conclusion of the dispute. In the meanwhile, the colony affirmed tributary relationships with the Indians there, especially the Meherrins who had filled the vacuum left by Weyanokes fleeing from combined Nottoway and Tuscarora attacks. In the contested border region, this policy had the added benefit for Virginia of obstructing the flow of North Carolina settlers. Occasionally North Carolina argued that the Meherrins ought to be subject to their government as tributaries, but more often that colony took an opposite tack. North Carolina tried to swing the loyalty of the region by flooding it with settlers who would be drawn by promises of debt relief, low taxes, and cheap land.

Predictably, the two policies clashed. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, North Carolina complained that the Meherrin Indians "do daily commit great injuries to the inhabitants of . . . [North Carolina] by destroying their stocks and burning their timber and houses and refusing to . . . render obedience . . . under the pretense that they are tributary" to Virginia. A troop of sixty settlers from North

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126 NCCR, 1: 570.
Carolina, led by Colonel Thomas Pollock (an influential council member who later served as governor during the Tuscarora War), struck back by attacking and capturing many of the Meherrins, locking them up in the summer heat without water, pulling down several cabins, and threatening to destroy the rest.127 Virginia was outraged. Remarkably, the Virginia Council wrote to North Carolina that “We might with as much justice treat those who possess the adjoining Lands (and pretend to belong to Carolina) with the same severity as you have used those poor Indians since we have at least as much Reason to believe them within the bounds of Virginia as you have to imagine the Meherrin Indians to be within yours . . .” 128 At about the same time Virginia sent another messenger to the Meherrin Indians promising support and telling them not to cave in to North Carolina’s threats.129

But the depredations continued and their repercussions reverberated among other nearby tribes. Tuscaroras passed frequently through the nearby Meherrin settlements during their winter hunts or on their way to trade with Virginia, and surely learned of the quarrels. Nick Major, chief of the Meherrin, would later figure among the councils of the southern Tuscarora towns as they debated going to war.130 Unless North Carolina imposed order upon its settlers and prevented “unwarrentable intrusions,” warned Governor Spotswood of Virginia, the Indian relations of both

127 NCCR, 1: 670.
128 NCCR, 1: 671.
129 NCCR, 1: 668.
130 NCCR, 2: 644.
colonies would suffer irreparable harm. If North Carolina did not “now restrain” the settlers, the results would be “attended with a train of ill consequences by involving both governments in a war with the Indians” for “tho: they may perhaps surprise that one nation [the Meherrins], they ought to consider there are a great many other tribes that will take the alarm when they find the English have broke their faith with them and there is no dependence on our Treaties.”

Farther south, more Indians were coming to this exact conclusion. In 1701 five Machapunga Indians rescued several stranded Englishmen whose vessel had run aground in the sandbanks, and offered to convey them in a canoe north to an English settlement. What happened next is unclear. Thomas Amy, one of the Englishmen, claimed that the Indians pulled the canoe to a remote shore and turned upon them. One drew a bow and arrow, the other “cocking a gun and setting it to Mr. Amey’s breast,” threatened the passengers. Only Amy’s quick reflexes saved him. As he drew his sword and wrestled with one Indian, the other natives fled, stealing several firearms. The Indians told a different story. They claimed to have fed venison and fish to the stranded Englishmen who in turn got them drunk with pots of rum. When the inebriated Indians overheard that their passengers were from Charleston, the dark center of the Indian slave trade, the Indians feared a trap and panicked. True, they “let fall 3 guns of the English into the water in this escape,” but these they later recovered and returned to another Englishman. Besides, the English had gotten away with “4

raw Dear skins, one Otter [skin], one hairy match coat" and a quantity of corn. When
John Lawson arrived in the Machapunga village to inquire into the affair and arrest the
suspects, their leader told the Indians' side of the story and waved a paper in his
face—a copy of a treaty concluded two years earlier between their people and the
North Carolina government. Among its provisions was the requirement that the
Machapungas assist shipwrecked Englishmen. Lawson reported that the chief "would
make me no positive answer as to delivering up the Indians but always (told me) they
might not . . . [suffer?] any breach of their articles from the English." 132

This treaty had been agreed upon at the eve of extensive settlement in the
Pamlico and Neuse basins. But as English, French, and Swiss newcomers poured into
the area any illusion of ordered relations broke down. In this remote corner of the
colony, the government could not even prevent its own settlers from sacking stranded
ships, much less dictate relations with the Indians.133 The vacuum was filled by
confused confrontations that left both sides baffled. These were not just the hog-
killings, thefts, beatings, and complaints of trespassing that too often characterized
meetings between the two cultures. Mixed in were bewildered attempts to understand
the contradictions between official promises of peace and antagonistic actions by
settlers. An Indian named Wehuna approached Samuel Slockum to "ask him whether

132 Thomas Amy's account, Lawson's relation of his meeting with the Matchupunga Indians, and a copy of the 1699 Treaty are contained in NCHGR, 1: 597-99. A copy of the original can also be found in Indians: Treaties, Petitions, Agreements, and Court Cases (1698-1736), Colonial Court Records, Box 192, NCSA.

133 North Carolina settlers had fired upon and plundered a beached vessel (NCCR, 1: 527).
the English did intend to make war or no." No, insisted Slockum; but Wehuna pressed him, saying that the Indians believed otherwise. 134 In another incident, acting upon the mistaken rumor that William Powell had delivered a note from Lawson urging attacks on the Indians, sixteen warriors seized the settler, robbed his gunpowder, and threatened to burn his house at the next full moon. 135 The raiders had no respect for the governor’s ability to intervene: when Powell threatened to tell the governor, King Lowther unleashed a string of insults and struck Powell across the face with his bow. 136 In this confused environment, even when the Machapungas relocated their town away from recent settlements, the settlers suspected the motive was so that they could “easily repair without being pursued” and revealed more of “a desire to a War with us than a peace.” 137 When an Indian leader visited settlements to assess English attitudes, witnesses wondered whether it was “out of Real Kindness” or part of a plot. 138

Troubles with the smallish coastal tribes were bad enough. Worse was talk that “the neighboring towns of the Tuscarorah Indians are of late dissatisfied with the Inhabitants of this place and severall actions and discourses of the bare-river Indians [the Machapungas] and more than ordinary familiarity of late that is between them

134 NCHGR, 2: 194.
135 NCHGR, 1: 437.
136 NCHGR, 1: 437.
137 NCHGR, 2: 193.
138 NCHGR, 2: 193.
persuade them and the Tuscarora Indians is to believe that they are Indeavouring to persuade them that the English here desires a war against them.”¹³⁹ This “familiarity” was doubly important because it showed the Tuscaroras forming friendships with a group towards whom they had recently been hostile. The threat of Tuscarora involvement drawing the colony into open war spurred a call from the Pamlico region for the governor to end this policy of purposeful neglect. Ten prominent settlers (including William Powell, perhaps still nursing a sore jaw and wounded ego) wrote a letter begging the governor to “speedily take sum Care in the matter.” Maybe, just maybe, order could be restored. Many of the Indian leaders were disposed to some sort of reconciliation. If only the governor would “speedily please to send a good Interpreter here with orders what to doe” and a commission, then “sum of the Cheifs of the Indians would come in” to hear the government’s pledges of peace.¹⁴⁰

This tension simmering in an arc from the Meherrins in the north, south through the Machapungas, touching upon Tuscaroras at every point, finally pushed Governor Robert Daniels, according to Lawson, to call “all the Indian Kings and Rulers to meet, and in a full Meeting of the Government and Council, with those Indians, they agreed upon a firm peace.”¹⁴¹ An undated rough draft of a treaty mandating peace “so long as Sun and Moon endure” may be the only surviving record

¹³⁹ NCHGR, 2: 194.

¹⁴⁰ NCHGR, 2: 194.

¹⁴¹ Lawson, New Voyage, 211-12.
of the agreement. Not surprisingly, its provisions favored its North Carolina author and repeated articles typical in Virginia’s tributary treaties. The Tuscaroras had to return runaway servants and slaves, cease burning around English homes, and limit their settlements to west of the Roanoke river or half a day from English plantations. Highlighting the importance of trade (and Tuscarora habits that took advantage of it), Tuscaroras could no longer avoid repaying debts indefinitely without losing “pauns” left as collateral. Concerns that the Tuscaroras were colluding with other Indians appear in an agreement that during wars the English and Tuscaroras remain neutral and “not assist that other natione with men, powder or shot.” On occasion the English might even call upon the Tuscaroras as independent mercenaries entitled to “reasonable Satisfaction for their tyme.” But the provisions do not merely show the colonists seeking to assert authority upon the natives, they also reflected eagerness by the Tuscaroras for the colonial government to rein in uncontrolled settlers. In return for agreeing to hand over men accused of serious crimes committed upon the English, the Tuscaroras received promises by North Carolina officials to prosecute Englishmen who “who shall injure or wrong any of the Tuscarore Indians.” Moreover, Lawson recorded that Indian leaders used the negotiations to curb the flow of English rum into their towns.

However, for all of its ideas, the treaty only survives as a rough draft. It was not dated; it was not signed. No evidence indicates that its terms were ever applied.

Failure may have owed, in part, to protests by Tuscaroras (particularly young men) against new restrictions on the rum trade, which not only provided a valuable source of wealth and influence for Tuscaroras who traded the commodity further west, but was also highly sought in their own towns. Failure may also have come from the internal stresses of handing over suspects to North Carolina’s courts. (It was around this time that the Tuscaroras had “shew’d [such] a Reluctancy to deliver” up a suspect—a decision that was probably far from unanimous.) Restrictions on hunting and settlement could not have been popular. But most of all, failure owed to the collapse of North Carolina’s government.

At nearly the exact moment that settlers, Tuscaroras, and the government were attempting to order their relations and put aside doubts, fears, and confusion, the colony’s government slipped into a period of division, often called Cary’s Rebellion. North Carolina’s politics had long been beset by “perpetual broils.” For a long time, complained Virginia’s governor, Alexander Spotswood, “it has been the common practice there to resist and imprison their Governors.” The proprietors, in far-off England, fared almost as badly; the people regarded them as having no more authority than “a ballad singer.”

143 Lawson, *New Voyage*, 212.
145 *NCCR*, 1: 686-86.
146 *NCCR*, 1: 798.
147 *NCCR*, 2: xii-xix

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Discontent to varying degrees had ebbed and flowed since the 1670s but moved towards a new peak with the actions of Robert Daniel, the same deputy governor who had negotiated with the Tuscaroras. He required an oath of allegiance to Queen Anne and the Protestant succession as a tool to break the growing influence of Quakers (who refused to swear out of religious principle) and their allies in the fractious colonial assembly. The resulting power struggle quickly spiraled into almost impenetrable turmoil in which many participants switched sides numerous times. Broadly speaking, however, it pitted an ensconced Albemarle Anglican elite (with strong ties to Virginia) against a fragile coalition of Quakers, disenchanted Albemarle politicians, and inhabitants of the newer Neuse and Pamlico settlements who sought greater voice in government.148 Events culminated when the proprietors, favoring the former group, appointed as governor Edward Hyde, cousin of Queen Anne, whose credentials and blood-ties were meant to inspire quick obedience. His superiors urged him to “take great care” in the chaos “that the Indians be not abused and Justice be duly administered to them in our Courts.”149 But due to a series of accidents, he arrived in North Carolina without his commission. His opponents coalesced around Thomas Cary, a former Charleston merchant, and grew even more open in rebellion.

The Tuscaroras felt the disorder of the Cary revolt most directly in the southern Pamlico and Neuse regions where the chaos of the mutinies combined with exponential growth. That region, nearest to the core of Tuscarora towns along the

149 NCCR, 1: 845.
Neuse, Contentnea, and Tar basins, was cut off by forty miles of swamp overland from the administrative heart of the colony. Except for a few Albemarle Quaker enclaves, this southern part of the colony harbored the greatest percentage of Caryites, mostly among ambitious planters and traders who sought greater voice for themselves and their region in government. Cary himself lived nearby. But despite this concentration of supporters of one side, the colonists there were far from united. That region, where the people, according to one disgusted traveler, “for want of sense and reason” were of “such a factious temper, that they are ready to follow any one that will head them,” suffered from the greatest swings in allegiance to competing administrations.\textsuperscript{150} The Tuscaroras were sure to have heard word of the armed pinnaces patrolling the mouth of the Neuse; perhaps they spied upon the posses of the governor’s men tramping inland up the swamps in blundering efforts to arrest Cary in his fortified home.\textsuperscript{151} Numerous settlers were willing to bend a Tuscarora’s ear and put their spin on the latest tales of turmoil.

The cresting tide of newcomers, already a source of tensions with Indians in the region, accelerated during the revolt, amplifying the disorder. Claiming authority, Cary liberalized land policy to encourage immigration and rewarded his supporters in Bath County by lowering the quit-rent rate there.\textsuperscript{152} But not all newcomers were so appreciative. Graffenried, at the head of over four hundred Swiss and German

\textsuperscript{150} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 804.

\textsuperscript{151} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 804.

\textsuperscript{152} \textit{CNRC}, 4: XXX.
Palatines coming to settle New Bern, initially claimed neutrality, savoring the sense that he “could give the balance of power to whichever party . . . [he] fell to.” Soon he decided to side with the royally connected Governor Hyde, and over glasses of madeira wine, he rejected Cary’s sweet-tongued offers of alliance.

The split added to the region’s tensions. Afterwards Cary and his allies saw to it that Graffenried’s credit and banknotes were rejected, making it hard to obtain supplies and pushing his people to the verge of a starving time. Cultural animosities added to the mutual contempt. Baron Graffenried disdainfully looked down upon slovenly scattered English farms (a reaction to cheap land and scarce labor) and contrasted them to the tidy Swiss burgh he envisioned, complete with craftsmen and the region’s first water mill. Graffenried’s own camp, however, was far from harmonious. Some of the Palatines were middle-class burghers seeking new economic opportunities and religious liberties, but others were of the lower sort, whom Graffenried considered the “excrement of the whole Canton of Bern.” Returning the sentiment, the latter group took advantage of colony-wide divisions to resist

153 Graffenried, Account, 229.
154 Jonathan Urmstone, a missionary wrote that by July of 1711 only about a third of the Palatine settlers survived, “and those ready to starve” because of the credit crises caused by Cary’s supporters (NCCR, 1: 775).
155 Christoph Von Graffenried, Christoph Von Graffenried’s Account of the Founding of New Bern, ed. Vincent H. Todd (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1920), 256. There may have also been problems between the Swiss and the German inhabitants. Dill notes that on Graffenried’s map only the names of Swiss, not German families, appear as landowners along the tributaries of the Trent and Neuse rivers. Alonzo T. Dill, "Eighteenth-Century New Bern," NCHR 22, no. 1-4 (Jan., April, July, and Oct 1945): 170.
authority and cast their lot with Cary's supporters (whom Graffenried similarly considered little more than "rowdies" besotted with rum and brandy).\footnote{Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 236.} The Palatines and the English established separate courts and negotiated guidelines establishing jurisdiction in various disputes, but these prescriptions quickly broke down.\footnote{Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 363.} When Graffenried tried to apprehend a Swiss blacksmith accused of theft, the man fled to William Brice, a prominent slaver, Indian trader, and Cary supporter whom the Swiss baron loathed.\footnote{Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 235. For Brice's participation in the Indian slave trade, see Dill, "Eighteenth-Century New Bern," 303-304; \textit{NCHGR}, 3: 270 and \textit{NCCR}, 2: 298.} By "instigating some of the English or Carolinian inhabitants and people on the nearest plantations," Graffenried complained of Cary, "he so frightened my people that no one dared venture to go out of his house."\footnote{Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 230.}

Indians near the Pamlico and Neuse Rivers trying to decode settlers' intentions came to the unsettling realization that negotiations with colonial leaders unable to govern their fractious people could have only narrow and short-lived significance. When Graffenried arrived in North Carolina, he found Chatouka, the future site of his colony, still inhabited. Despite having already paid Lawson (who recommended that he merely "drive off" the natives) and the Lord Proprietors, Graffenried decided to pay the Indians for the land. The meeting between Graffenried and his Indian counterpart became a display of the two men's relative authority. The head of Chatouka "dressed
himself in his best" and arrived at the head of seventeen councilors. Not to be outdone, Graffenried decked himself out in "whatever would glitter most" and had a fine chair brought out for him to the clearing where native leaders sat on the ground arranged in a circle. All began well, with Graffenried handing out gifts and offering rum, but the display of authority quickly broke down. Franz Michel, one of Graffenried's business partners who had been drinking with the English neighbors, stormed into the circle, knocked off the Indian leader's head-dress and began beating one of the councilors. After his servants seized and dragged off the man, Graffenried apologized profusely, promising to have him punished. But the spell had been broken. The native king complained that "if the Christians made peace and their alliances after that fashion he did not want to have anything to do with them."160 As if to prove Graffenried's impotence, the next night Michel hit the bottle again, then sneaked into the Indian camp, found the poor orator, and repeated the drubbing.

Even this sad caricature of orderliness was more than the typical unregulated, muddled encounters. Most survive only as dim rumors, lacking in specificity but ringing in frustration: "they had been badly treated and detained by the inhabitants of the Pamtigo [Pamlico], Neuse, and Trent Rivers,"161 "these poor Indians [were] insulted in many ways by a few rough Carolinians more barbarous and unkind than the

160 Graffenried, Account, 374-75.

161 Statement that "they had been badly treated and detained by the inhabitants of the Pamtigo [Pamlico], Neuse, and Trent Rivers, a thing which was not to be longer endured," in Graffenried, Account, 307.
savages themselves, [and] could not stand such treatment much longer;" women were abused and men mistreated "until the Indians grew weary and tired." Amid the haze are a few tantalizing glimpses of specific incidents. Settlers robbed and beat to death one Tuscarora for hunting too close to their farm. Discontent spread among the Tuscaroras about another "that the White men had punished for a small fault committed in his drink"—a reproof uncalled for according to Tuscarora protocol, which held alcohol, not the individual, accountable for acts committed while drunk. A few complaints even named names. One settler, Mr. Hancock had "taken a gun;" William Brice in his trade, "dealt too hard."

What made these relations so confusing, of course, was that not all contact between the Tuscaroras and the colonists was hostile. Trade, negotiations, perhaps even a few friendships endured; they had to—the Tuscaroras were too entrenched in their new lifestyles to entirely turn away from the consumer revolution in their midst. Settlers too depended upon interactions for trade to pay creditors and food to feed families. Moreover, in the context of the Cary revolt, various groups attempted to strike deals and secure firmer alliances with the Tuscaroras in order to strengthen their


166 *NCCR*, 1: 991.
positions. Already mentioned were Graffenried’s attempts at amicability with surrounding tribes. He pursued a similar policy of goodwill towards the Tuscaroras. Cary’s supporters also strove towards accommodation or more. Rumors raced across North Carolina and Virginia, and were made official in a July 1711 warrant for Cary’s arrest, that the rebels, “in order to the better Carrying on their Seditious Designes have been Discovered to hold a Traitorous Correspondence with the Tuscaroro Indians.”

Accusations in particular centered upon a Cary supporter named John Porter who during the commotion supposedly was discovered “going in person to severall Indian towns and by promises of reward, to bring down the Indians to cut off Man, Woman and Child on the Western Shore of Chowan, that has been the only subjects to her Majesty that on all occasions has expressed their Loyalty.” Other accusations focused on Virginia traders blamed for stirring up anger against their North Carolina competitors. Tuscarora councils listened to, debated, and ultimately rejected such proposals, but not without noting the “unnatural Divisions and Animositys among the Inhabitants” they represented.

167 NCCR, 1: 776-75.

168 NCCR, 1: 802

169 John Barnwell, who led a military expedition against the Tuscaroras during the Tuscarora War, wrote, “I inquired whether any white men had incited them to it, the unanimously answered no, only that ye Virginia traders told them that the people Massacred were outlandish [ie, foreigners—the Swiss and Palatines] and not English, and so they doubted not but soon to make peace with the English and that they were then about it.” Barnwell, "Journal," 398. See also, Dill, "Eighteenth Century New Bern," 305. For earlier accusations, see EJCCV, 2: 390, 381-82, 402, 405; 3: 199-200.

170 NCCR, 1:796-97, 783, 810-11.
Such appeals exacerbated splits among Tuscaroras trying to navigate the best course to take with Europeans. In some ways, Tuscaroras mirrored the confusion of their colonial counterparts. The Tuscaroras were not ruled by a single unified government. Rather, language, kinship, and cultural ties loosely united them. One of the reasons that they were such an enigma to European governments was that when authorities dealt with the Tuscarora "nation," they often met with delegations of leaders and councilors representing several towns, unable to force their decisions upon other villages. Towns did recognize that strength came from negotiating as a block, and attempted to form alliances during times of war. But differences were inevitable, as during the Pate dispute with Virginia, when one town had acquiesced while the others held firm. Barring full cooperation, they tried to stay out of each other’s way and at very least attempted to avoid war with one another by using reconciliation processes like the exchange of wampum.

171 Douglas W. Boyce, "Did a Tuscarora Confederacy Exist?" Indian Historian 6, no. 3 (1973): 34-40.

172 A nineteenth-century Tuscarora claimed that the Tuscaroras had been divided into three groups—the Kautanohakau, Kauwetseka, and Tuscarora—a fascinating suggestion, but one hard to confirm with European sources. Supposedly, they had joined an alliance against the Nanticoke Indians, a group from the Maryland area who later migrated to New York and Pennsylvania. These divisions may have had some correspondence with later divisions during the Tuscarora War. William M. Beauchamp and David Cusick, The Iroquois Trail: Or, Footprints of the Six Nations in Customs, Traditions, and History in Which Are Included David Cusick's Sketches of the Ancient History of the Six Nation (Fayetteville, N.Y.: H. C. Beauchamp, 1892), 35.

At the village level, Tuscarora politics resembled that of their close cultural cousins, the Nottoways, whose leaders Spotswood had derided as mere corporals. Most decisions were ultimately at the village level, headed by the “teetha” or king, a semi-hereditary position, whose title literally meant “one who did not have to work.” Even this person could not enforce spot decisions without the consent and advice of the village, represented by family heads, councilors, and war captains. They met together in all “general Councils and Debates, concerning War, Peace, Trade, Hunting, and all the Adventures and Accidents of Humane Affairs.” Lawson, clearly impressed at the order he saw among the Tuscaroras compared to the disruptions occurring in North Carolina, noted that all issues would be “argued pro and con, very deliberately (without making any manner of Parties or Divisions) for the good of the Publick.”

174 For discussions of Tuscarora politics in North Carolina, see John E. Byrd, Tuscarora Subsistence Practices in the Late Woodland Period: The Zooarchaeology of the Jordan’s Landing Site (Raleigh, North Carolina: North Carolina Archaeological Council, 1997), 3-5, who discusses the role of trade with the Spanish and later Virginians as a possible cause for power being consolidated under increasingly powerful chiefs. Douglas W. Boyce, in “Notes on Tuscarora Political Organization” convincingly argues, however, that councils were “the most important governing or decision-making unit of the Tuscarora” (43). Seventeenth-century references to “Emperors” probably reflected a poor understanding and exaggeration of the strength of Tuscarora leaders. One effect of the Tuscarora War was greater consolidation of authority into the hands of a few leaders willing to negotiate with Europeans.

175 Personal communication with Blair Rudes. See Graffenried, Account, 245, for heredity.

176 Lawson, New Voyage, 204.

177 Lawson, New Voyage, 204
Despite Lawson’s belief that consensus could be reached “without any Jars and Wrangling,” Tuscaroras did not inhabit an egalitarian paradise. Elsewhere, Lawson himself discussed political intrigues, poisonings, and false accusations where discord could mean torture or death. Divisions over the course to take with Europeans had not reached that point—yet—but groups were coalescing. An investigation of Porter’s treacherous meetings with the Tuscaroras revealed that “the Indians own that the proposal was accepted by their young men, but that their old men (who bare great Sway in all their Councils) being of their own nature, Suspicious of some trick or else directed by a Superior providence, refused to be concerned in that barbarous design.” In this case the Tuscaroras’ political system worked smoothly, with younger men graciously giving way to the experience and wisdom of their elders. But differences were emerging, between towns and within them. An Indian had told a settler in 1703 that “2 particular towns do intend for to make war and that one and all are agreed for it except 3 Indians.” Another “two towns . . . are very much against it, but as for any of the other towns [they] as yet” have not agreed “to make war with the English.” Later stories told by Tuscaroras suggest the depth of internal divisions. One tale told of a reformer (perhaps sent from heaven) who tried to revitalize Tuscarora culture by teaching lessons in morality, and by warning against conflict with Europeans. But, according to the tale, young men scorned the message

178 Lawson, *New Voyage*, 204

179 *NCCR*, 1: 796-97; 783.

180 *NCHGR*, 2: 194.
and killed the messenger—a grim portent of internal divisions to come.\textsuperscript{181} Moreover, the relative balance of power within communities may have been undergoing a shift as trade, and growing tensions with Europeans positioned some leaders to seize greater authority if hostilities broke out.\textsuperscript{182}

Such divisions probably occurred within every community, but some regional patterns emerged. Some Tuscaroras favored fleeing the region altogether.\textsuperscript{183} Others favored stability and continued efforts at accommodation with the Europeans. This view was more prevalent among the “upper” villages, further inland and closer to routes into Virginia, particularly the “Tuscaroro” or “Weecacana” trading path.\textsuperscript{184} Their position allowed them to enjoy benefits of extensive trade with Virginia traders, while being removed from the direct line of settlement.\textsuperscript{185} They had managed to capture considerable role as middlemen. A memorial later written by the Virginia Indian Company confirmed that there had been “no Trade carried on from hence with any forreign Indians, the Tuscaroras only excepted” between 1709 and 1711.\textsuperscript{186} Moreover, these upper Tuscaroras were shielded behind and in constant contact with

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\textsuperscript{181} Byrd, \textit{Prose Works}, 303; Beauchamp, \textit{Iroquois Trail}, 31. These stories are discussed in greater detail in chapter eight.

\textsuperscript{182} The roles of the two most prominent Tuscarora “kings,” Tom Blount and Hancock, will be discussed within the context of the Tuscarora War in chapters 3-6.

\textsuperscript{183} Relations with the Iroquois will be discussed in chapter seven.

\textsuperscript{184} Boyce, “Did a Tuscarora Confederacy Exist?” 37-38.

\textsuperscript{185} Boyce, “Did a Tuscarora Confederacy Exist?” 37-38.

\textsuperscript{186} Quoted in Boyce, “Did a Tuscarora Confederacy Exist?” 37.
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Virginia's tributary tribes. Their language may even have been closer in some respects to these tributary groups, particularly the Nottoways and the Meherrins, than with some of the Tuscaroras of the lower towns, whose speech gradually shaded off southward into a slightly different dialect. The tributaries, who had a foot in either camp, often had an interest in influencing the Tuscaroras to resolve any conflict peacefully. At the same time, the reliance Virginia placed upon its tributary system made it hard for that government to bear down too hard upon the Tuscaroras. These upper Tuscaroras had learned in the drawn standoff with Virginia over the Pate murder that patience could work in their favor and that a tense, but workable, settlement could be achieved.

If accommodation seemed like a possibility for some Tuscaroras, others, particularly in the chaotic region around the Pamlico Sound saw little reason for hope. The inhabitants of these “lower” towns, lived in the direct path of the disorganized, rapid expansion occurring in the lower Neuse and Pamlico basins. Numerous encounters had only proved that colonial leaders could or would not control their own fractious peoples nor enforce any meaningful agreements. The resulting frustration mounted particularly among younger males, who were culturally encouraged to see war as a solution.

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187 Blair Rudes, personal communication.

188 Unlike Boyce, I feel that the Tuscaroras’ political experiences with Virginia, not just their trade connections, encouraged some Tuscaroras to remain neutral and later seek a diplomatic solution through Virginia.
More discontent sounded from retreating coastal tribes who had crowded closer to Tuscarora settlements. Many of these groups at one time had been at odds with one another. Sometime in late seventeenth century, for example, a group of Machapungas who had been invited to a feast by the Coree Indians, on cue drew concealed weapons, attacked their hosts, and sold the prisoners as slaves to the English. The Tuscaroras had threatened to go to war to revenge the Corees. Within a few years, however, animosities had subsided in the face of the greater threat of encroachment, however, and many of these Indians were reported as being in “more than ordinary familiarity” with one another. Europeans often misunderstood these relationships. North Carolina court officials thought that the Corees, for example, were “slaves” of the Tuscaroras that the larger group could discipline and influence at will. Instead, the opposite was true. As Tuscaroras came into closer contact and in some cases increasingly shared villages with such displaced coastal Indians, the newcomers helped sway the population against the settlers.

Few of these Indians imagined entirely driving off the Europeans—later treaties reveal how highly they valued trade—but many “could not stand such treatment much longer, and began to think of their safety and vengeance.”

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189 Parramore, “Tuscarora Ascendancy,” 319; According to Graffenried, these tribes who allied with the lower Tuscaroras included the Mattamuskeet, Bear River, Weetock, Pamlico, Neusiok, and Coree Indians.

190 Lawson, New Voyage, 209.


192 Quotation in Lefler and Powell, Colonial North Carolina, 67.
yearned for the moment that relationships could be redefined under their terms. And many thought that the moment would require force.

* * * *

If anyone in 1711 was in a position to know of these tensions it was John Lawson. He was arguably the one European most familiar with the Tuscaroras. As surveyor, speculator, trader, and explorer, he had traveled among and lived near them for nearly a decade. He laid out the town of New Bern and was in a better position than most to witness the tensions that increased settlement were causing among the Tuscaroras and their native neighbors. Beyond the Pamlico where he made his home, as a participant in the boundary dispute with Virginia he had personally met and interviewed settlers and discontented tributary Indians along that contentious borderland. He was a political insider who, while steering clear of direct participation in the Cary revolt, moved among the inner circles of both sides and could see its effects upon the colony. He noted injustice to the Indians and had publicly reproached his countrymen, claiming that the Indians "are really better to us, than we are to them. . . We look upon them with Scorn and Disdain and think them little better than Beasts in Humane Shape, though if well examined, we shall find that, for all our Religion and Education, we possess more Moral Deformities . . ."193 In the time since he wrote this, partially owing to his own land speculation, tensions had only increased.

193 Lawson, New Voyage, 243.
More than anybody, Lawson should have known all of these things. But somehow, he was blind to them or underestimated them, or felt that his own familiarity would allow him to negotiate himself out of any bind. His own book, after all, was a travel guide, preaching the precepts by which Europeans could adventure among the Indians safely. Perhaps he had grown overly accustomed to these tensions and considered them the cost of contacts that had become commonplace. Perhaps he was lulled by a recent respite in the Cary dispute, fine weather after a drought, a desire to pick grapes, and an eagerness to survey a road towards Virginia—all reasons he used to convince Graffenried to join him. Together the two men set out once more to travel into Tuscarora country. The journey would be Lawson's last.
CHAPTER THREE
A STORM ON THE FRONTIERS

Word raced through the colonies: Lawson was dead. During his journey with Graffenried, he had been captured by Tuscaroras and other Indians, tortured, and killed. The exact details remained hazy. Graffenried, who survived, recorded that some Indians boasted of slitting Lawson’s throat with a razor found in his sack, but "some say he was hanged; others that he was burned. The savages keep it very secret how he was killed. May God have pity on his soul."¹ In Virginia, William Byrd likewise heard that the Indians “cut his throat from ear to ear.”² A more gruesome version reached South Carolina via an emissary from North Carolina named Christopher Gale:

But the fate of Mr. Lawson (if our Indian information be true) was much more tragical, for we are informed that they stuck him full of fine

¹ Graffenried, Account, 270.
small splinters oftorch wood like hog’s bristles and so set them gradually afire.\(^3\)

Lawson, perhaps more than anybody else, had personified all the potential and failures of the freewheeling, disorderly relations between Europeans and Tuscaroras during their first decades of contact in North Carolina. And Tuscaroras killed him.

These accounts came appended to news of broader tragedy. Shortly afterwards, in September 1711, an alliance of many Tuscaroras and smaller coastal tribes launched coordinated surprise attacks against settlements along the Pamlico Sound and Neuse River in North Carolina. Christopher Gale, who had been sent by Gov. Edward Hyde, described to a joint session of South Carolina’s council and assembly this “grossest piece of villany that perhaps was ever heard of in English America.”\(^4\) To the north in Virginia, Gov. Alexander Spotswood prepared plans to “divert the storm from our own frontiers.”\(^5\) Even further abroad, in Boston, newspapers carried accounts of the attack. In New York, Governor Hunter worried to the Board of Trade that “the war betwixt the people of North Carolina and the Tuscarora Indians is like to embroil us all.”\(^6\)

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\(^3\) NCCR, 1: 826. At the time Gale believed Graffenried also to be dead, judging from his sleeping mat, which had been found “all daubed with blood.” These various accounts are collected together in Lawson, *New Voyage*, xxxvi.

\(^4\) NCCR, 1: 826.


\(^6\) NYCD, 5: 343.
Far from enflaming the whole of British North America, the Indians who participated in the attack—predominantly from the Tuscarora “lower towns” and communities of nearby smaller tribes—had anticipated a limited, local conflict. Lawson’s killers knew him; likewise, the first attacks came from Indians often acquainted with their victims: in some cases settlers even welcomed killers into their homes as friends. The jarring assault, these Indians hoped, would end local patterns of abuse and institute measures for more equitable relations in the region. Paired with the attack, these warring Tuscaroras and their allies also attempted to negotiate a separate peace with other settlers. Judging from widespread divisions within the colony and with its neighbors, they had anticipated that their opponents would be isolated and the war short-lived. Likewise, many other Tuscaroras, predominantly from the “upper towns,” thought the conflict would be limited. In the meantime, these Indians refrained from participating in the war and instead imagined that neutrality and diplomacy could be a viable course. In both cases, these Indians were wrong.

Such miscalculations were understandable but deadly. One distinction of the Tuscarora War was the extent to which a series of local raids in an isolated corner of North Carolina quickly involved a far-flung cast of participants—North and South Carolinians, Virginians, New Yorkers, and Iroquois—who all sought to use the war as an opportunity to recast this region in their preferred image. North Carolina’s leaders, already weakened by political and religious divisiveness, staggered helplessly from the force of the blow and spent most of their energies accusing one another of conspiracy and cowardliness. Desperate, they appealed to their neighbors for aid. Subsequently,
much of the fighting and negotiating was directed by South Carolina and Virginia (and to a lesser extent, New York and the Iroquois). Neighborly goodwill played a role in the colonies’ participation, but each also carried their own agenda that transformed the nature and meaning of the war.

Since South Carolina’s beginning, traders seeking deerskins and Indian slaves operated among Indians throughout the Southeast, competing not only with the French and Spanish but with rival Virginia traders. In the process they had repeatedly inspired or participated in Indian wars meant to provide slaves for market and to strengthen bonds with Indian partners. During the Tuscarora War, South Carolina sent two expeditions of booty-seeking adventurers leading a motley assortment of Catawbas, Yamasees, and other tribes. Thereafter, although Tuscaroras had targeted local settlers, much fighting in the war would consist of Indians fighting Indians. In the process, native captive-taking practices dovetailed with and were transformed by a desire to capture Tuscaroras for sale in Charleston slave markets. For South Carolinians, the fact that Tuscaroras had been prime customers of Virginia competitors sweetened the deal.

Virginia took a different approach. In Virginia’s long history of employing subjugated Indians to secure its frontiers, Tuscaroras had been a sore-spot – interacting freely with settlers and tributaries alike, but falling under no formal treaty of their own. Recognizing that not all Tuscaroras were equally culpable in the uprising, Governor Spotswood sought to use the threat of wholesale retribution to force broad segments of the Tuscaroras – particularly those who avoided fighting – to
accept Virginia rule, thereby transforming North Carolina's enemies into Virginia's subjects.

Often divided, North Carolina's leaders swung between and sometimes embraced both of these contradictory policies. At times, agents of the colony celebrated South Carolina's "laudable custom" of utterly exterminating their enemies and advertised that thousands of Tuscarora slaves could be purchased from their colony. In other instances, especially after it became increasingly clear that South Carolina's military victories alone could not induce a workable peace, North Carolina's governor adopted Virginia's tactics aimed at acquiring Tuscarora tributaries.

Tuscaroras and their native neighbors were unprepared for such a widespread response. Rather than rectifying local abuses, they found themselves pinned between the colonial aspirations of several different colonies. For both Tuscaroras who had participated in the uprising and others who sought neutrality, the result was defeat and narrowing choices. Nonetheless, several paths wound through the narrow spaces between clashing colonial approaches. This resulted in no single conclusion for the Tuscarora War. Instead at the war's end, Tuscaroras found themselves embarking on numerous, different trails.

**Meanings in Life and Death:**

*Treaties and War between Tuscaroras and North Carolina*
Befitting Graffenried’s Germanic roots, his story almost reads like a dark fairy tale: a story that began with fair weather, grape-picking, and scouting in the forest darkened into captivity, torture, death, and war. Initially, five men embarked up the Neuse River: Graffenried, Lawson, and two black slaves shared a boat; an Indian interpreter scouted on horseback along the river’s edge. But a detour by the native scout through Catechna, a principle Tuscarora town, raised suspicions. The local leader, “King” Hancock, dispatched warriors to arrest the intruders. That evening Lawson, Graffenried, and the two slaves found themselves captive and being rushed “through forests, bushes, and swamps” until they arrived at Catechna where Hancock awaited them, “sitting in all his glory upon a raised platform.”7 Within days, Lawson lay dead, Graffenried was hostage, and the region was at war—a rapid, bewildering turn of events made even more unclear by the fact that only Graffenried recorded his story.8 Lawson could tell no tales and the slaves and Indian guide disappeared from the records. The views of Hancock and the other Tuscarora and Coree Indians whose decisions determined the course of events survive only insofar as they can be gleaned from the views of a frightened outsider. The result is a tale whose importance cannot be denied, but whose exact meaning remains difficult to decipher.

Most historians, transfixed by Lawson’s death and the Tuscarora uprising that followed, confine discussion of the captivity to how it was the “first overt act” by

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7 Graffenried, Account, 264-65.

8 Graffenried’s account is especially problematic because it openly blamed Lawson for many of the problems faced by the New Bern settlement. See Graffenried, Account, 392.
disgruntled Indians. Viewing the captivity solely as a precursor to war, however, inserts preordained certainty into highly contingent events. One standard history of the era even posits that hostile Indians had already set the date for the attack—Graffenried and Lawson only happened to stumble unluckily into a hornet’s nest of plotting conspirators. Close examination, however, reveals captors uncertain about the intruders’ intentions and divided among themselves about future actions. Moreover, an eye for the native perspective reveals an alternative narrative: while a coalition of Tuscaroras and threatened coastal tribes initiated war with Lawson’s death, they also spared Graffenried as an avenue towards peace. Graffenried ultimately departed Catechna with word of Lawson’s death and a treaty. It is in this context of intertwining tales of life and death, war and peace, that these events must be understood.

Graffenried’s and Lawson’s anxious predawn audience with Hancock upon his dais—the first documentary glimpse of the Tuscarora leader—included a speech that floundered in the absence of an interpreter. Unfortunately, understanding Hancock’s broader motives and intent is similarly difficult. Hancock’s anglicized name, probably borrowed from a trader or settler, suggests some prior English contact. Moreover, Catechna’s location, less than two days from New Bern, made his town the closest

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Tuscarora community in the Neuse basin both to European settlements down river and to coastal tribes bearing the brunt of contact.\textsuperscript{11} Catechna’s setting and prominence made the community into a fulcrum feeling the full weight of Tuscarora-English relations from both sides, and its \textit{teetha} (chief) into a likely leader in an emerging coalition among disgruntled Tuscaroras and other tribes. As sunrise approached during that first meeting with Graffenried and Lawson, however, two things became clear: first, despite a history of tensions, a decision on the fate of the intruders had not yet been made; second, despite Hancock’s lofty perch, the decision was not solely his to make.

Rather than the captives facing an immediate death sentence, a debate among Hancock and several councilors “whether we should be bound as criminals or not” resulted in a decision to treat the prisoners with respect and the occasion as an opportunity for broad negotiations.\textsuperscript{12} Indeed, the Indians initially mistook Graffenried for Edward Hyde, the governor of North Carolina.\textsuperscript{13} They were probably only slightly

\textsuperscript{11} It took Graffenried, exhausted and nearly lame, two days to return to New Bern. Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 261. For the location of Catechna, see John E. Byrd and Charles L. Heath, "The Rediscovery of the Tuscarora Homeland: A Final Report of the Archaeological Survey of the Contentnea Creek Drainage, 1995-1997" (East Carolina University, David S. Phelps Archaeology Laboratory, 1997).

\textsuperscript{12} Apparently the Indian interpreter was absent and the discussion exceeded Lawson’s linguistic ability. Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 265.

\textsuperscript{13} This mistaken identity may have been particularly troubling to the Tuscaroras because in a bid for their support during the Carey revolt, John Porter may have warned that Hyde intended to take Tuscarora lands. Noeleen McIlvenna, "Oliver's Days Come Again': North Carolina, 1660-1713" (Ph.D. diss., Dept. of History, Duke University, 2004), 233.
less elated to learn that the man they held was a baron, the colony's second-highest-ranking official, and leader of the nearby New Bern settlement. As Surveyor-General, council member, and frequent ambassador to the Indians, Lawson possessed credentials nearly equal to Graffenried's. Therefore, Hancock treated them "very politely:" he personally served the involuntary guests a meal of cold boiled venison and dumplings (accustomed to finer service, the baron turned up his nose at its presentation in a "lousy fur cap") and granted them the "liberty of walking about the village." 14

The real ordeal was yet to come. The two Europeans spent the day watching the steady arrival of Tuscaroras and other Indians from surrounding communities for a meeting that would double as a trial and peace conference. That evening "a great number of Indians with the neighboring kings" assembled in council around a great fire in the middle of a broad open space.15 Graffenried and Lawson took their seats in the ring upon two wicker mats specially laid out for them as "a sign of great deference and honor." 16 Although "King Hancock presided," and "always formed the questions" to be debated, a younger orator did most of the speaking. Nearby, sat the Indian who had set out with Graffenried and Lawson now acting as their "interpreter and spokesman." 17

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14 Graffenried, Account, 265.
15 Graffenried, Account, 265.
16 Graffenried, Account, 265.
17 Graffenried, Account, 266.
The questions began with inquiries about their personal actions—"what was the cause of our journey? . . . why . . . had we not paid our respects to him [Hancock] and communicated our project to him?"—but quickly moved to a broader agenda of resolving more "general complaints." These Indians had "been very badly treated and detained by the inhabitants of the Pamtego [Pamlico], Neuse, and Trent Rivers, a thing which was no longer to be endured." (Here, Lawson had to do some fast talking, because as surveyor he was specifically named in some of these grievances). By the end of the evening, some sort of accord had been reached. "After considerable dispute . . . and deliberation" the captors decided to release the prisoners—an unlikely decision if they planned a surprise uprising. Graffenried and Lawson planned to depart the next morning.

Dawn arrived. But before Graffenried’s and Lawson’s canoe could be retrieved and made ready, several previously absent chiefs arrived from nearby communities and demanded another conference. Graffenried and Lawson again trotted out the “same answers” as the night before, but this smaller meeting, held privately in Hancock’s hut outside of town, went horribly wrong. Among the late arrivals was Coree Tom of the Coree community of Cartuca. According to

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18 Graffenried, Account, 266.

19 Graffenried, Account, 266.

20 Graffenried, Account, 266.

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Graffenried, Coree Tom "reproached Lawson with something so that they got into a quarrel on both sides and became rather angry. This spoiled everything for us."\textsuperscript{21}

The past experiences of Coree Tom's people help explain this sudden reversal. In these meetings, most Tuscarora complaints centered on trade and the treatment of hunters who approached European plantations; complaints about land focused on fears of future European intrusion. On the other hand, Corees, who inhabited coastal plains south of the lower Neuse (as well as Neuse, Bear River, and Machapunga Indians), already experienced invasion. Tensions had threatened to escalate for several years. As early as 1703, Gov. Robert Daniel had mustered militias in preparation for a war with the Corees that did not occur.\textsuperscript{22}

More recently, Corees had relocated at least one of their towns upriver to the junction of the Neuse with Catechna Creek. But the new location proved no safe haven. Soon after the move, Graffenried had riled Coree Tom with cheerfully tactless inquiries about relocating his New Bern settlement from the swamps to the Coree's "well situated" and "cooler" new home.\textsuperscript{23}

If the Corees peered uneasily from their new address towards Swiss, German, and English farms only half a day downstream, it is less clear how they felt about well-established Tuscarora communities at their backs. The Corees had not removed

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{21} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 266.
\item \textsuperscript{22} "War declared against the Core and Nynee Indians, 1703," in \textit{NCHGR} 2: 204.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 366-67. Throughout the war, other Europeans, including Barnwell, Hyde, and Pollock, would each in turn come to covet this tract of land.
\end{itemize}
entirely into the assemblage of Tuscarora towns; instead they carefully settled on the outskirts, half-way between the Europeans and Catechna, perhaps reflecting a degree of mutual ambivalence. It is uncertain what linguistic and cultural group the Corees belonged to, but archeological evidence reveals their homeland to have been in the cultural estuary where Cashie (Iroquoian) and Colington (Algonquian) archeological traditions mixed and overlapped. In other words, while the Corees frequently traded, treated, and traveled among the Tuscaroras, they may have retained enough “foreign” traits that they did not feel entirely at home among the Tuscaroras. At one point, North Carolina officials had considered the Corees as “slaves” of the Tuscaroras whom the larger group could discipline, influence, and perhaps even sacrifice at will—a widely held perception that would continue into the Tuscarora War.

Did Lawson act with “unguardedness in such a critical condition” because he felt that the Corees were militarily weak and unlikely to muster serious support among the Tuscaroras?26 Previously at the full council Lawson had “excused himself the best

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25 CNCR, 3: 511.

26 Graffenried, Account, 266.
he could.” An Indian “dressed like a Christian,” who spoke with Graffenried, wondered why then had Lawson stupidly quarreled with Coree Tom and “threatened that we would get revenge on the Indians?”

In Virginia, William Byrd also heard that Lawson met disaster because he was “so foolish as to threaten” his captors. If so, Lawson fatally misjudged the influence of the Corees and the extent that his own fate hung in the balance. Coastal tribes had sought Tuscarora assistance against Europeans before. Lawson may have provided the perfect moment for Coree Tom to secure a military alliance with Tuscarora neighbors once and for all.

Instead of releasing Graffenried and Lawson, the Indians at Catechna resumed their councils. These lengthy ceremonies culminated in Lawson’s execution and a decision for war. Months later, Tuscarora captives described a split within the council along age lines, saying that the “young men were wheedled by Hancock to joine in the villanies committed by him, but the old men and chiefs wept bitterly and told them the ill consequences would follow.”

Elders had succeeded in warning off younger, more-bellicose men before, but this time they failed and the execution proceeded. War would go forward.

But this dramatic finale was not the only result. Simultaneously, the Indians pursued a series of ceremonies and negotiations that resulted in promises of neutrality.

27 Graffenried, Account, 266.


and pledges of peaceful future interactions. Therefore, these events need to be analyzed in the context of making war and peace. Although later codified in the formal language of a treaty, the sentiments were first expressed in the less recognizable cadences of ceremony:

In the middle of this great space we sat bound side by side, sitting upon the ground, the Surveyor-General and I, coats off and bare headed; behind me the larger of my negroes; before us was a great fire and around about the fire the conjurer, that is an old gray Indian, a priest among them, who is commonly a magician, yes, even conjures up the devil himself. He made two rings either of meal or very white sand, I do not know which. Right before our feet lay a wolf skin. A little farther in front stood an Indian in the most dignified and terrible posture that can be imagined. He did not leave the place. Ax in hand, he looked to be the executioner. Farther away, before us and beyond the fire, was a numerous Indian rabble, young fellows, women, and children. In the middle was the priest or conjurer, who, whenever there was a pause in the dance, made his conjurations and threats. About the dance or ring at each of the four corners stood a sort of officer with a gun. They beat time with their feet and urged on the other dancers and when a dance was over shot off their guns. Beyond this, in a corner of the ring, were two Indians sitting on the ground, who beat upon a little drum and sang, and sang so strangely to it, in such a melody, that it
would provoke anger and sadness rather than joy. Yes, the Indians themselves, when tired of dancing, would all run suddenly away into a forest with frightful cries and howling, but would soon come back out of the forest with faces striped black, white, and red. Part of them, besides this, would have their hair hanging loose, full of feathers, down, and some in the skins of all sorts of animals. In short in such monstrous shapes that they looked more like a troop of devils than other creatures; if one represents the devil in the most terrible shape that can be thought of, running and dancing out of the forest. They arranged themselves in the old places and danced about the fire. Meanwhile there were two rows of armed Indians behind us as a guard, who never left their post until all was over: Back of this watch was the council of war sitting in a ring on the ground very busy in consultation.

Graffenried remembered passing “the night between life and death,” alternately praying and pleading. Turning to an Indian who understood English, Graffenried touted his innocence and his relation to the great and vengeful Queen of England. He offered his “services and all sorts of favors” and promised that his only intent had been

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to “live on good terms with them.”\textsuperscript{32} Finally came results: a flurry of talks, messengers sent to and from other Tuscarora villages, waiting, and sudden salvation. “Oh how dumb-founded I was, when . . . the Indian said to me in my ear, in broken English, that I should not fear, they would not kill me, but would kill General Lawson.”\textsuperscript{33} Leaving behind the English surveyor to face torture and execution, Graffenried was led away to feast among “a great number of the Indian rabble” who “all evidenced a great joy at my deliverance.”\textsuperscript{34}

While the exact circumstances of Graffenried’s experiences were unique, comparison with another famous captivity a century earlier helps elucidate their meaning.\textsuperscript{35} In January 1608, Captain John Smith, leader of the struggling Jamestown colony fell into the hands of Powhatan. Overlaps in their accounts suggest similar rites:

\begin{quote}
early in a morning a great fire was made in a long house, and a mat spread on the one side, as on the other, on the one they caused him to sit, and all the guard went out of the house. Presently came skipping in
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{32} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 269.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{33} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 269.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{34} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 269.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{35} Although these events are separated by over a century, and the Powhatans and Tuscaroras hailed from distinct cultures, the two peoples traded, fought, made treaties, and shared versions of several ceremonies such as the Huskanaw (a puberty rite). For Huskanaw among the Iroquois see Boyce, Douglas W., "Iroquoian Tribes of the Virginia-North Carolina Coastal Plain," in \textit{Northeast}, ed. Bruce G. Trigger, \textit{Handbook of North American Indians} (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 285.
\end{quote}
a great grim fellow, all painted over with coal, mingled with oil; and
many snakes and weasel's skins stuffed with moss, and all their tails
tied together, so as they met on the crown of his head in a tassel; and
round about the tassel was a coronet of feathers, the skins hanging
round about his head, back and shoulders, and in a manner covered his
face; with a hellish voice and a rattle in his hand. With most strange
gestures and passions he began his invocation, and environed the fire
with a circle of meal. Which done, three more such like devils came
rushing in with the like antic tricks, painted half black, half red; but all
their eyes were painted white, and some red strokes like mustaches
along their cheeks. Round about him those fiends danced a pretty
while, and then came in three more as ugly as the rest, with red eyes,
and white strokes over their black faces. At last they all sat down right
against him, three on the one hand of the chief priest, and three on the
other. Then all with their rattles began a song, which ended, the chief
priest laid down five wheat corns, then straining his arms and hands
with such violence that he sat, and his veins swelled, he began a short
oration. At the conclusion they all gave a short groan, and then laid
down three grains more. After that, began their song again, and then
another oration, ever laying down so many corns as before, until they
had twice encircled the fire. That done, they took a bunch of little
sticks prepared for the purpose, continuing still their devotion, and at
the end of every song and oration, they laid down a stick between the
divisions of corn. Until night, neither he nor they did either eat or
drink, and then they feasted merrily, with the best provisions they could
make. Three days they used this ceremony, the meaning of which they
told him was to know if he intended them well or no. The circles of
meal signified their country, the circles of corn the bounds of the sea,
and the sticks his country. They imagined the world to be flat and
round, like a trencher, and they in the midst.36

Basic elements overlap: the great fire; the in and out rush of fantastically
dressed dancers with faces painted red, black, and white; the chanting conjurer in the
midst of the swirling activity; and, perhaps most intriguingly of all, the carefully
constructed rings of grain. Examining the Powhatan ceremony, historical
anthropologist Frederick Gleach, has concluded that it was a “ritual of redefinition”
used to establish “the forms of the relationship between the colony and the
Powhatans.”37 Perhaps a better phrase would be “ritual of incorporation.” Europeans

36 John Smith, The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles

37 Frederic W. Gleach, Powhatan's World and Colonial Virginia : A Conflict of
Cultures, Studies in the Anthropology of North American Indians (Lincoln: U. of
Nebraska Press, 1997), 114-15. Smith may have heightened the portrayal of his own
danger, and emphasized the role of Pocahontas in order to capitalize on her fame
(Rountree, Pocahontas's People, 38-39). Nonetheless, the parallels to Smith’s
account support the basic elements of its veracity.
who asked southeastern Indians to sketch maps often found themselves scratching their chins over bewildering diagrams that denoted spiritual and political relationships as much as geographic locations. The Powhatan ceremony, concludes Gleach, served as a sort of symbolic re-mapping, with the rings of meal demonstrating "that the Powhatans were redefining the world to include the English colony." Famously, Pocahontas saved Smith from sudden death—an act that may have been the next carefully staged ritual in a rite to alter the relationship between the English and Powhatans. Afterwards Powhatan told Smith, "now they were friends, and presently he should go to Jamestown, to send him two great guns, and a grindstone, for which he would give him the country of Capahowasick, and forever esteem him as his son Nantaquod." The sum of these procedures, concludes Gleach, reveal a ritual designed to adopt Smith into Powhatan kin networks and to incorporate Jamestown as another village in the Powhatan empire.

Graffenried’s ordeal also ended with a close escape from death, demands of tribute, and a redefinition of the terms of the relationship between New Bern and the

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40 Smith, Complete Works, 151.
The next morning, as Graffenried struggled to make sense of the night before, the Indians told the baron "that they had it in mind to make war on North Carolina." They hoped "to surprise the people of Pamtego, Neuse, and Trent Rivers, and Core Sound." There was an exception, however—one that showed that Graffenried’s salvation represented a broader political covenant as much as a personal judgment: "they promised that Caduca, which is the old [native] name of the little city of New Bern, should receive no harm." 42

Already, Graffenried had offered his "services and all sorts of favors" and promised that his only intent had been to "live on good terms with them." 43 In place of John Smith’s cannons and grindstone, Graffenried found himself agreeing to fit each of the chiefs from ten separate villages with a coat, and to outfit Hancock with two powder flasks, five hundred bullets, and two bottles of rum. 44 Graffenried refused even greater demands of guns and ammunition. Although he considered these goods mere ransom, the Indians, in light of Smith’s experiences, may have intended them to symbolize broader clarifications of power: not ransom, but tribute.

41 Gleach ultimately argues that the whole procedure sought to ritually adopt Smith into Powhatan kin networks, and more broadly to incorporate Jamestown as but another village in the Powhatan empire. It seems that Graffenried’s experiences, while gesturing in this direction, did not strive for quite so much. This shortcoming may owe to cultural differences between the Tuscaroras and the Powhatans, or perhaps a century of evolving understanding of European intruders and the limits of diplomatic behavior towards them.

42 Graffenried, Account, 270.

43 Graffenried, Account, 269.

44 Graffenried, Account, 271.
Over several days Graffenried and the Indians refined their agreement into a formal treaty. Dictated to a hostage in no position to argue, this remarkable document reflected the wishes of Indians assembled at Catechna. Even with Graffenried at their mercy, however, the agreement revealed a desire not for the destruction or even the full removal of Europeans from the region, but rather for a redefinition of the relationship between the Indians and the settlers into a formalized, workable condition. For over two decades, particularly around the raw, young outposts of southern North Carolina, relations with Indians had been ad hoc and unscripted. Given the opportunity, it was a coalition of Tuscaroras and coastal allies who sought to inject order into the chaos. The treaty’s first point dictated that “both parties shall forget the past and henceforth be good friends.” Other points continued this theme, with Graffenried promising neutrality in the current war, agreements being made to create avenues for resolving conflict by appeals to “the authorities of both sides,” limits being imposed on territorial expansion without Indian approval, and rules enacted to allow Indians to hunt near settlers’ farms tempered with promises not to interfere with cattle or to set uncontrolled fires. The Indians gained a pledge that “wares and provisions shall be allowed to come at a reasonable and just price.” To signal their agreement, Graffenried agreed to urge his people to emblaze an “N” (for “Neuse”) on their doors, as a signal to marauding Indians to pass over homes like an Old Testament angel of death. The destruction was yet to come.

45 The text of the treaty appears in Graffenried, Account, 281-82. No plan was arranged for word of the agreement to reach the people of New Bern before the attack took place. Graffenried continued to be held hostage for several weeks.
Sunrise on September 22 signaled the beginning of the attack.\textsuperscript{46} The attack came as a complete surprise, especially since no provisions had been made for Graffenried to warn his people.\textsuperscript{47} Within the space of two hours, Indians looted and set fire to homes, destroyed crops, and slaughtered or drove off cattle, hogs, and horses.\textsuperscript{48} Approximately sixty English settlers died in the initial attack. Although the Indians spared New Bern itself, Palatines farther from the town suffered similar casualties.\textsuperscript{49} Simon Forteskue, who had planted north of the Pamlico River since 1704, later recalled how he somehow survived into a world of loss after “he was shot in the head[,] his wife and children taken prisoners and carried away, his house burnt down to the Ground[,] all that he had lost.”\textsuperscript{50} Another settler from the north shore of the Neuse noted a similar litany of loss: one son, one white servant, and two black slaves—all dead; another son shot through the shoulder but escaped; “Plantation [,]

\begin{enumerate}
\item[\textsuperscript{46}] Spotswood, \textit{Letters}, 1: 116
\item[\textsuperscript{47}] Only a small percentage of Palatine settlers, around twenty families—mostly artisans—actually inhabited the town where they would largely escape the initial assault. Alonzo T. Dill, "Eighteenth Century New Bern," \textit{NCHR} XXII, no. 1-4 (Jan., April, July, and Oct. 1945): 168.
\item[\textsuperscript{48}] (\textit{NCCR}, 1: 827-29; 819-20)
\item[\textsuperscript{49}] Spotswood, \textit{Letters}, 1: 116; The following March Pollock estimated initial casualties at 130 or 140 (\textit{NCCR}, 2: 24); Ffarnifull Green—a settler estimated “they have Kill’d about 100 people and have taken prisoners abt 20 or 30” (\textit{NCCR}, 1: 815).
\item[\textsuperscript{50}] \textit{NCCR}, 4: 801
\end{enumerate}
House [.. Stock of Cattle [.. and hogs entirely destroyed and Plundered."

Death took its ugliest forms. Survivors investigating the gutted and smoldering homes of their neighbors found bodies mangled, mutilated, or arranged in grotesque positions. Unburied, bodies fell victim to dogs, wolves, and vultures.

For Christopher Gale, who was quickly dispatched to beg assistance from South Carolina, it was the "various and unaccountable" nature of the targets and methods that rendered the morning's "butchery" so horrific. But his own accounts reveal patterns and meanings behind the apparent randomness. Far from being unconcerned or unaware of their victims' identities, many of the attackers were frequent household guests and visitors, in some cases "esteemed as members of the several families where the mischiefs were done." They had arrived "with smiles in their countenances, when their intent was to destroy." The Tuscaroras and other Indians attacked the settlers whom they knew best. Unlike the conscripted armies of Europe and her colonies, war among the Tuscaroras and most other eastern Indian tribes was a personal affair. Lawson wrote that Carolina's Indians "ground their Wars on Enmity, not on Interest as the Europeans generally do."

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51 NCCR, 5: 653
52 NCCR, 1: 827.
53 NCCR, 1: 827
54 NCCR, 1: 828.
55 Spotswood asserted that "the first attacks fell upon those Family's in which the Indians were most conversant." Spotswood, Letters, 2: 114.
56 Lawson, New Voyage, 208.
colonists' homes on the morning of September 22 in many cases could probably recite victim's specific offenses.

It would be wrong, however, to ascribe the war merely to retribution for individual insults. Nor did the attackers simply intend to cut off all European settlement. The Tuscaroras' willingness, even insistence, on bargaining with Graffenried, coupled with evidence of continued trade with Virginia traders suggests that the attackers did not seek to empty the region of Europeans. Instead, Hancock and other attackers meant to employ a sudden blow to force colonists to reevaluate their actions and to restructure relations along lines laid out in the treaty negotiated with Graffenried.57

Matching specific wartime acts to points from Graffenried's treaty would be impossible, but a comparison reveals shared themes, transforming aspects of the war into a dark mirror of the peace that Indian combatants sought. Persistent prewar complaints against traders had resulted in treaty provisions that called for goods to be delivered fairly and cheaply; it was no coincidence that traders appeared as some of the chief victims in the uprising.58 Similarly, worries over colonial encroachments figured into the treaty. Besides killing Surveyor-General Lawson, Indians also later burned

57 In "Something Cloudy in Their Looks': The Origins of the Yamasee War Reconsidered," Journal of American History 90, no. 1 (June 2003): 44-76, William L. Ramsey similarly argues that the Yamasee War owed its origins to efforts by Indians to use violence to break through the confusion of "English diplomatic behaviors that can only be described as schizophrenic."

58 NCCR, 1: 828. Traders' valuable merchandise and proximity to Indians also probably contributed to their frequency as targets.
the home and papers of Jonathan Lillington, the surveyor of Bath County, thereby erasing paper claims to much of the region.\textsuperscript{59} Around the Pamlico and Neuse rivers settlers retreated from exposed farms into eleven garrisons, leaving lands vacant and allowing patents to lapse.\textsuperscript{60} Worries over the impingement of cattle upon hunting territories resurfaced in the form of a “Dayley Destruction in our stocks and horses and fencing being burned.”\textsuperscript{61}

To attain these goals the Lower Alliance employed military tactics at the war’s outset that echoed a style or “aesthetic” of warfare widely employed by Indians in the region.\textsuperscript{62} Over a century earlier, members of the Roanoke voyages to Carolina’s shores had noted that “their manner of war amongst themselves is either by sudden surprising one another, most commonly about the dawning of the day, or moon light, or else by ambushes or some subtle devices.”\textsuperscript{63} Similarities between past tactics and the present conflict did not go unnoticed. The Tuscarora uprising was so “alike in Plot, Secrecy” and “Circumstances” to a series of well-coordinated surprise attacks by Powhatan Indians in 1622 and again in 1644 that an observer in South Carolina

\textsuperscript{59} \textit{NCCR}, 2: 141.

\textsuperscript{60} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 825-27; 2: 239-42.

\textsuperscript{61} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 819; 5: 653.


\textsuperscript{63} David Leroy Corbitt, ed., \textit{Explorations, Descriptions, and Attempted Settlements of Carolina, 1584-1590} (Raleigh: State Dept. of Archives and History, 1948), 84.
privately noted the corresponding pages of *Purchas's Pilgrims*, a widely-read Virginia history.  

Other instances reveal Indians taking pages from the same playbook. After being invited to a Coree feast, and partaking of "victuals, fruit, and such things . . . to make these new Friends welcome" a Machapunga King "gave the Word, and his men pull'd their Tamahauks or Hatchets from under their Match-Coats" and killed or enslaved their hosts. Such reversals could take the most intimate form: a Powhatan leader greeted and embraced the "King of Chowan," but then suddenly "whipt a bow string around the King of Chowans neck, and strangled him." Such attacks displayed a common cultural sensibility towards war: craft and guile allowed a bold strike deep at the heart of the enemy, allowing a statement of superiority punctuated with violence, followed by safe retreat while the enemy reeled in confusion and dismay. Not surprisingly, European survivors only saw the work of a "hellish crew" who "perpetrated the grossest piece of villainy that perhaps was ever heard of in English America."


The violence, however, revealed an intimacy with its victims combined with a systematic desire to act out against authority and influence. Gale related the details of the Nevill family's demise:

the old gentleman himself, after being shot, was laid on the house-floor, with a clean pillow under his head, his wife's head-clothes put upon his head, his stockings turned over his shoes, and his body covered all over with new linen. His wife was set upon her knees, and her hands lifted up as if she was at prayers, leaning against a chair in the chimney corner, and her coats turned up over her head. A son of his was laid out in the yard, with a pillow laid under his head and a bunch of rosemary laid to his nose. A negro had his right hand cut off and left dead. The master of the next house was shot and his body laid flat upon his wife's grave.68

This was hardly the random outcome of a struggle between strangers. This was violence with meaning, a chance to show scorn for the victim in a way that displayed irony and wit, and added insult to injury. During Virginia's "starving time" in the winter of 1609-10, settlers had robbed Indian granaries and food stores. In retaliation the Powhatans killed a band and left their bodies with mouths crammed full of bread in "contempte and skorne" as a message to the others.69 Deciphering the Nevill postures

68 NCCR, 1: 825-28.
69 Gleach, Powhatan's World, 51; Percy, "True Relation," 265.
is more difficult. Stockings torn down, petticoats pulled up, a woman’s coif crammed onto her husband’s head—all gender inversions that suggest sexual insult. Nearby, women were discovered sprawled on their floors with stakes run up their bodies or infants ripped from pregnant bellies. These acts suggest an attack on female settlers’ reproductive abilities. The gingerly arranged rosemary, and the careful positioning of Mrs. Nevill’s obscene genuflection may have implied contempt towards European religion. Overall, an atmosphere of mock tenderness and respect at odds with the violence of the moment pervades—an aesthetic not entirely unlike that employed during Indian torture ceremonies where captors spoke in terms of “caressing” their victims with sharp knives and “warming” their bodies with hot coals. The object of such acts was to humiliate the victims, to demonstrate their relative weakness and to establish the victor’s superiority.

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70 Nancy Shoemaker writes that, “Whether ‘women’ or ‘eunuchs’ was the insult of choice, one nation declared power over another by making military conquest akin to sexual conquest.” Nancy Shoemaker, “An Alliance between Men: Gender Metaphors in Eighteenth-Century American Indian Diplomacy East of the Mississippi,” *Ethnohistory* 46, no. 2 (Spring, 1999): 239-63.


72 Gleach, *Powhatan’s World*, 154
Even as the Indians left a mosaic of the dead in their wake, they also herded captives—mostly women and children—back to their towns. A few days after the attack, Graffenried reported the heartbreak of watching Swiss, German, and English women and children streaming into Catechna, first from the Pamlico settlements, and soon afterwards from those around the Neuse and Trent rivers. Quizzing one boy he recognized, Graffenried listened as the child wept and related that “his father, mother, brother, yes the whole family had been massacred.” Mrs. Pierce entered captivity with five of her children; also prisoner in the same camp was the eight-year-old daughter of Mr. Taylor. Early rumors in Virginia estimated that the number of captives to be twenty or thirty. Barnwell later learned of at least thirty-four white

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74 Graffenried, Account, 270.

75 Barnwell, “Journal,” 46.

76 NCCR, 1: 815.
captives in one Tuscarora fort, besides twenty-four black slaves who may have been captives or runaways.\textsuperscript{77}

In the same way that during the attack Indians had been able to manipulate and mutilate the bodies of dead settlers as a demonstration of their authority, Lower Alliance townspeople could do the same with the living. Prisoners arrived to the sounds of the women singing and dancing while twirling black rings around white wands. Priests stood “cursing the enemy in the most horrible motions” and congratulating the warriors.\textsuperscript{78} As the most visible trophies of war, the captives allowed the entire community to vicariously experience victory. Torture was one option. Graffenried described another: “the priest and the leading women seized the poor prisoners, compelled them to go into the dance, and if they did not wish to dance they caught them under the arms and dragged them up and down, as a sign that these Christians were now dancing to their music and were subject to them.”\textsuperscript{79} Taking captives reduced enemy numbers and simultaneously increased the community’s own strength. Many Indian societies adopted captives in the place of recently deceased family members. The Tuscaroras had recently suffered from smallpox and perhaps

\textsuperscript{77} Barnwell, “Journal,” 47. It seems probable that a high proportion of these slaves were runaways, considering that Barnwell was able to retrieve 24 white captives but only 2 black captives. Presumably captive whites wanted to return, but runaway slaves did not—and for good reason. Barnwell ordered one of the two slaves, “being a notorious Rogue . . . cutt to pieces immediately.” Barnwell, “Journal,” 53.

\textsuperscript{78} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 277

\textsuperscript{79} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 277
mourning families eyed these women and children as potential adoptees. From a pragmatic standpoint, as hostages, the captives would later prove to be a valuable bargaining chip in negotiations with colonial authorities. With captives in their midst and casualties in their wake, the Lower Alliance could conclude that in the opening days of the war they had won back a measure of authority and influence.

North Carolina’s First Response

“There reigns such stupidity and Dissention in that Governm’t of No. Carolina, that it can neither concert any measures nor perform any Engagements for its own Security.”

--Spotswood to Commissioners of Trade, February 11, 1713

As a knockout punch, the Lower Alliance’s first blow nearly succeeded. Already weakened by political and religious divisiveness, North Carolina staggered helplessly for nearly two years. Several times its settlers struck out wildly against the Lower Alliance; at other times they nearly succumbed to confusion and despair, accusing one another of conspiracy and cowardice. Internal divisions that left the colony vulnerable to attack afterwards prevented the colony from mounting an effective response—a result that benefited the Tuscaroras and their allies militarily.

80 For smallpox, see Thomas C. Parramore, "The Tuscarora Ascendancy," NCHR 59, no. 4 (1982): 324. No examples, however, survive of Europeans becoming fully adopted during the Tuscarora War.

81 Spotswood, Letters, 2: 11.
And yet, the Lower Alliance had gone to war in response to chaotic and violent Indian relations that had been fostered in part by colonial divisiveness. So even as the Lower Alliance gained militarily from splits that remained or even widened within the colony, if native strategists thought that their attack was going to change the underlying dynamic in the colony's Indian relations, they were mistaken. By essentially paralyzing North Carolina, the Lower Alliance found itself not in a better position to deal with that colony, but ultimately fighting for its life against the efforts of two other colonies who carried into the conflict their own sets of ambitions.

It was not until mid-October, several weeks after the initial attack, that settlers launched their first disorganized counter-raid. William Brice, who had gathered English and Palatine survivors into an impromptu garrison at his fortified home on the Trent River, assembled a makeshift army of fifty or sixty men, and stormed towards the Indian towns along Catechna Creek.82 Another 150 soldiers at Bath promised to rendezvous with him, but never came.83 Near Catechna, Graffenried, who was still captive, witnessed Indian runners breathlessly informing Hancock of the approaching force.84 The Tuscarora leader calmly sent Graffenried with the women, children, and old men to hide in a swampy refuge, and took three hundred warriors to confront the invaders. The result was a three-day running battle that sent the settlers abandoning food, hats, boots, coats and horses as they retreated. The Indians, “in far greater

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82 Graffenried, Account, 273; NCCR, 1: 826.
83 Graffenried, Account, 240.
84 Graffenried, Account, 274.
number, good shots, and well provided with everything, drove away that poor set of Carolinians, like a gang of wolves does a herd of sheep,” mourned Graffenried.85 Indians returned to Catechna in “triumph” and celebrated around “great fires of rejoicing.”86

Simultaneously, while most of Brice’s troops were gone, another group of Indians launched an unsuccessful attack on his garrison. The settlers “cut to pieces” nine Indian men and enslaved thirty-nine native women and children being held inside the garrison who tried to escape during the attack—a dubious victory considering these captives had probably been friendly or neutral.87 With the exception of one other small raid, historian Herbert Paschal concluded, “not a single large-scale expedition was put in the field by North Carolina” until the arrival of relief forces from South Carolina the next year.88

Nonetheless, Hancock released Graffenried, sending him stumbling alone towards the remnants of the Neuse River settlements. When the baron finally lurched

85 NCCR, 1: 949. Christopher Gale recorded 15 Indian casualties and 2 captives; he did not specify European loses. Graffenried reports that settlers were “mostly wounded and one Englishman was shot to death.” (NCCR 1: 826; Graffenried, Account, 274.  

86 Graffenried, Account, 274.  

87 Gale records that the members “of a certain nation, which we do not know, whether they were friends or enemies.” It seems unlikely that Indians privy to the plans of the Lower Alliance would have allowed women and children to be among the settlers and easily caught at the outset of the war. NCCR. 1: 826.  

into view, lame and hobbling on two makeshift crutches, and "black and looking like an Indian," the Palatines at first mistook him for an Indian spy who had donned their leader's blue coat.  

His confused reception served as a gloomy prelude to troubles to come. Although many settlers celebrated his safe delivery, others continued to wonder that maybe he had changed his colors and thrown in his lot with the Indians. Why had he returned when so many friends and family had not? A month was a long time to be absent during war. Much had changed and not everyone welcomed him back. Indeed, Graffenried later wrote that "what happened to me after my arrival among the Christians was almost more dangerous and vexatious than when I was among the heathens." More important, Graffenried's personal struggles exposed broader splits among the white inhabitants of North Carolina that prevented any sort of coordinated, effective response to the Lower Alliance's attack. Quite the opposite, the vicissitudes of war allowed dissent to take new forms and follow new avenues. From its beginning in the stormy days of the Cary revolt, the Swiss and German settlement of New Bern had struggled to stay afloat in the turbulent waters of North Carolina where allegiances and lines of authority were unclear. These power struggles gained new strength at the beginning of the Tuscarora War, as factional leaders took advantage of the fluid, changing conditions.

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89 For attention to the possibilities of cross-cultural dressing and the anger it could provoke, see Ann M. Little, ""Shoot That Rogue, for He Hath an Englishman's Coat On!": Cultural Cross-Dressing on the New England Frontier, 1620-1760," New England Quarterly 74, no. 2 (June, 2001): 238-73.

90 Graffenried, Account, 235.
On his return, Graffenried expected once again to take up the mantle of leadership over the Palatine settlers. As the highest-ranking inhabitant of the region, he also probably planned to organize the defense of nearby English settlers. It was not to be. Instead came the angry shock of discovering that approximately half of “his” people—the German and Swiss settlers he had guided from Europe—had sought the leadership of William Brice, leader of the flubbed counter-offensive. They did not come flocking back. Perhaps they abandoned Graffenried because they blamed him for the sickness and hunger many had experienced upon arriving in North Carolina. Perhaps they disliked Graffenried’s often high-handed approach to leadership. He frequently bemoaned the poor and lawless nature of some of his settlers in writing and probably did not shy from expressing the same sentiments in person. Cultural tensions between Germans and the Swiss *Landsassen* probably also contributed to the unraveling. Besides, Graffenried had been missing. Some Palatines preferred Brice’s quick militant response, or sought safety in numbers among English friends and neighbors.

Whatever the reasons for their abandonment, Graffenried considered Brice, who had once listed his occupation as “butcher,” to be an upstart—“a common man, who because of his audacity had been chosen captain.” With the same brush he

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91 Brice’s wartime guidance of the Palatines extended beyond military affairs. In 1713 he was the one Englishman appointed to a board of appraisers of the estates of Palatine orphans. The other three members were Swiss or German. (Dill, “Eighteenth Century New Bern,” 461; Craven Court Minutes, October 1713)

tarred the other English refugees who sheltered with Brice as "rough, jealous, and morose planters or inhabitants."\(^9\) Brice's fortified home, according to Graffenried, was no more than "a garrison composed of rowdies collected together and of disloyal palatines."\(^9\) Unfortunately, no records survive of their views towards Graffenried and his adherents. Some of these tensions were throwbacks to estrangement from the Cary revolt only a few months before. Rather than uniting against a common threat, the Indian war pushed factious settlers into separate, armed camps where every disagreement could be read as treachery.

A power struggle emerged as Brice and Graffenried wrangled over manpower, authority, and slim resources. The two camps on either side of the Trent River worried as much about each other as the Indians who stalked the ruins of their plantations. Brice accumulated a fighting force of at least thirty or forty Englishmen and about twenty Palatine men, in addition to members of their families.\(^9\) Graffenried lamented that he was left with "a number of women and children" and no more than forty armed men. Neither side had adequate provisions. What made things worse, from Graffenried's perspective, was that the very presence of Brice's camp as an alternative challenged his own authority. Every day, Graffenried feared that Brice's "promises and cunning" would lure more settlers away.


\(^9\) Graffenried, *Account*, 236.

Exemplifying all of these fears was a long train of events that began after Graffenried sentenced a Palatine blacksmith to community service sawing logs as punishment for theft and disobedience.\textsuperscript{96} Instead, the rebellious smith fled to Brice—a devastating loss for a camp desperate to keep its guns in fighting order. But the smith had left behind his tools. It was not long before Brice plotted to storm Graffenried’s camp, seize the tools, and arrest Graffenried as a traitor. Alerted by an eavesdropping youngster, Graffenried ordered the drums beat, called ragged soldier-settlers to stations, and locked the gates just as Brice’s men wheeled into view. What, demanded an approaching English captain, could prompt such a reception? “Wild Indians and the Wild Christians,” came a Swiss corporal’s reply.\textsuperscript{97} Parlaying face-to-face, Brice and Graffenried each accused the other of weakening the settlements in the face of the Indian threat. Then, stalemated, they withdrew to their separate fiefs to glower at one another across the waters of the Trent.

Inevitably, mutual animosities crept into separate responses to the Indian uprising. For his part, Graffenried hoped to expand upon the treaty he had negotiated during his captivity. In the short run, he thought it would keep his own people safe. Doing otherwise, in the opinion of a supporter, would “be madness to expose his handful of people to the fury of the Indians.”\textsuperscript{98} More pointedly, Graffenried intended to delay paying his “ransom” until the Lower Alliance released its fifteen Palatine

\textsuperscript{96} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 235, 381.

\textsuperscript{97} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 237.

\textsuperscript{98} Spotswood, \textit{Letters}, 1: 142.
prisoners. By broadening the agreement's scope to include the rest of the colony at least temporarily, he also hoped to give North Carolina breathing room to gather its resources and strengthen its position. Governor Spotswood in Virginia agreed, concluding that the "people of Carolina receive very great advantage by this Neutrality, for by that means the Baron has an opportunity of discovering and communicating to them all the designs of the Indians, tho' he runs the Risque of paying dear for it if they ever come to know it." 

But little breeds contempt in war like neutrality, and these negotiations opened Graffenried to accusations of commiseration. As a result of his not breaking with the Indians, other settlers would "afford him neither provisions of War or Victuals nor Assistance." A whispering campaign threatened to coalesce into a lynch mob when Graffenried refused to execute an Indian messenger. More formally, twenty anonymous articles surfaced against Graffenried. First in the colonial council, and then in the assembly, the baron used his prestige in failed attempts to browbeat his unnamed accusers. William Brice was there, and presumably some of Graffenried's

99 Graffenried, Account, 237.
100 Graffenried, Account, 237.
101 Spotswood, Letters, 1: 142.
102 Spotswood, Letters, 1: 142.
103 Graffenried, Account, 235.
104 Graffenried, Account, 236.
old enemies from the Cary rebellion, but they kept low profiles and the baron’s counter-charges sailed harmlessly overhead.  

Nor did Graffenried have a monopoly on negotiations with the Lower Alliance. Even as he fended off accusations of commiseration, some of his enemies met the same Indian messengers. Graffenried wrote that the troublesome blacksmith conversed privately with Indians from the Lower Alliance and “made them very suspicious of me, as though my promise was of no value, as though I was deceiving them.” Maybe, hinted his enemies, Graffenried was secretly supplying arms and ammunition to other North Carolinians. These contradictory negotiations reveal how extensive contacts were between local settlers and Indians even after the outbreak of war. But these same contacts, with each encounter driven by separate agendas, only further confused issues and intensified violence.

Already weakened by a whirlwind of contradictory signals, the shaky neutrality between New Bern and the Lower Alliance ultimately collapsed after a second raid by Brice’s men against the Indians. During the midst of Graffenried’s negotiations, Brice’s garrison attacked a band of Bay River Indians who had been wavering between war and peace, and “roasted” the chief at the stake—proof that members of the Lower Alliance did not hold a monopoly on military brutality. Graffenried blamed later Indian atrocities as retaliation for this incident—an overstated charge considering pre-

105 Graffenried, Account, 382-83.
106 Graffenried, Account, 235.
107 Graffenried, Account, 235.
existing patterns of violence. However, such attacks did make it virtually impossible for any Indians living within range of the settlements to refrain from war. More broadly, Brice’s attacks helped put an end to talks between Graffenried and his former captors, broadening the war and limiting whatever hopes there had been of peace.

Any chance that the treaty negotiated in the wake of Lawson’s death could sprout into a broader agreement withered. Abandoning Graffenried’s treaty, warriors of the Lower Alliance ignored marks emblazoned on Palatine doors and renewed their attacks with less discrimination: burning, destroying, or taking what furniture and goods the Palatines had so far been able to stash away, and killing nearly the last of the cattle. The Lower Alliance had initially thought that they could partition the colony, concentrating attacks on some sections, while avoiding confrontation with others. Late in 1711, however, this pattern dissolved into general hostility. Openings for negotiations between Indians and settlers around the Pamlico Sound and even in Albemarle County closed. Future bargaining would take place between Indians and colonists in Virginia, further removed from the epicenter of violence.

In many ways the divisions experienced by the English and Palatine settlers along the lower Neuse exemplified in fierce microcosm the discord throughout the colony. Such rifts had contributed to the widespread notion among the Indians that the settlers and traders along the Neuse and Pamlico rivers “were only a few vagabond persons, that had run away out of other governments, and had settled hear of their own head, without any authority, so that, if they cut them off, there would be none to

108 Graffenried, Account, 238.
help them."109 After war began, government of North Carolina did try to help its southern settlers, but its efforts were hindered by internal fractures along with practical obstacles created by poverty and geography. Nearly a year after the first attack, Pollock summed up the colony’s unenviable position: “a barbarous enemy to deal with; a scarcity of provisions, being scare able to supply our garrisons and what small forces have out; and worst of all, a divided ungovernable people.”110

One weakness stemmed from unhealed wounds left by the Cary revolt. Following the Proprietors’ instructions, Governor Hyde issued a general pardon (excepting a handful of the hottest firebrands), but for much of the war members of his council complained that “some few evil disposed persons [were] still blowing up the coals of dissension . . . to the great hindrance of carrying on the wars against the Indian Enemies.”111 When Hyde called the assembly in November following the attack, its members tried to install several leaders of the opposition. Instead, Hyde dissolved the body before war plans could be made.112 Only after Hyde died of yellow fever in the autumn of 1712 and control fell to Thomas Pollock, a powerful Albemarle planter and president of the council, did the colony’s elites gradually begin to show a united front in governing.

109 NCCR, 2: 40.

110 NCCR 1: 869; Spotswood, Letters, 2: 12.

111 NCCR 1: 833, 873.

A major element of dissent in the assembly came from members who were either Quakers or elected from precincts with high numbers of Quakers. Unfortunately, their proposals for handling the Tuscarora War do not survive and what we do know comes via the bitter writings of opponents. Quaker fears of persecution by Anglicans had been at the heart of the Cary Revolt. During the Tuscarora War, Quakers in Virginia and North Carolina faced scorn because they "would not work themselves, or suffer any of their Servants to be employed in the Fortifications, but affirm that their Consciences will not permit them to contribute in any manner of way to the defense of the Country even so much as trusting the Government with provisions to support those that do work." In some cases, non-Quakers, moved less by an inner light than by opposition to taxes and levies, followed the Quakers' example. On the other hand, a few Quakers like Ephram Overman of Pasquotank, did take up arms. Afterwards he had to face a tongue-lashing from fellow believers at his monthly meeting to answer for his break from pacifist principles.

113 NCCR, 1: 885; 876.

114 A persistent accusation was that the Quakers had participated as combatants in the Cary revolt but later refused during the Tuscarora War (NCCR, 1: 814, 877). McIlvenna expands upon such accusations to argue that many North Carolina colonists refrained from assisting in the Tuscarora War as part of a long-running effort to resist "the imposition of a stratified plantation society" that had manifested earlier in the Culpepper and Cary revolts. McIlvenna, "Olivers Days," 235.

115 Spotswood, Letters, 1: 120; Members of the monthly meeting at Pasquotank agreed to keep personal tallies of the sums they suffered on account of not bearing arms or paying parish levies (NCCR, 2: 37)

116 Spotswood, Letters, 2: 12.

117 NCCR, 1: 813.
Problems in governance only contributed to a more general problem of mustering limited resources and manpower from a poor, thinly populated colony. A “great drought” during the summer before the Indian uprising had already threatened a hungry winter.\textsuperscript{118} Later, with so many settlers driven from their farms, provisions were even more scarce.\textsuperscript{119} Settlers in Albemarle had to feed their southern neighbors even as they looked to their own defense. With little grain or pork for export and the deerskin trade stopped, trade suffered, debts mounted, and clothes wore thin.\textsuperscript{120} North Carolina’s government tried to impose a “corn tax” and to limit exports of grain and meat, but the region’s rich tradition of smuggling continued.\textsuperscript{121} Hard pressed for cash, in the winter of 1712 North Carolina’s assembly voted to issue L4000; in 1713 they issued another L8000—but these grants were of newly issued paper currency, not actual revenue that the colony had been able to collect and spend.\textsuperscript{122} Nor could the colonial government, as a proprietary colony only indirectly subject to the crown, successfully petition the queen to pay its wartime expenses.\textsuperscript{123}

\textsuperscript{118} NCCR, 1: 899.
\textsuperscript{119} NCCR, 1: 869.
\textsuperscript{120} NCCR, 1: 874.
\textsuperscript{121} NCCR, 1: 899; Graffenried, Account, 239, 242; Styrna, “Winds,” 250, 256.
\textsuperscript{122} NCCR 1: 838, 839; 3: 145; 4: 576. These funds were primarily issued in response to the arrival of South Carolina forces. Backing the paper currency continued to cause problems for North Carolina’s government into the 1730s (NCCR, 3: 484).
\textsuperscript{123} Graffenried, Account, 243.
"The inhabitants of Albemarle County," complained Graffenried, sat "with folded arms . . . [watching] how their nearest brothers are frightfully murdered."\textsuperscript{124} Part of the hesitation owed to political divisions between the regions, but geography also directly conspired against a unified response. Supplies, arms, and food were primarily in the Albemarle region which felt the war only indirectly; stranded settlers and later armies were along the Pamlico and Neuse rivers. Bringing one to the other meant either an overland route blocked by swamps, marshes, and the threat of Indian ambush, or a water route hindered by unmarked shoals and a shortage of vessels. A supply ship hired by Graffenried exploded in a gunpowder accident.\textsuperscript{125} During the rest of the war, logistics hardly improved.\textsuperscript{126}

In the midst of such disorder, many settlers preferred to manage their own defense rather than place their lives and possessions in the hands of a stumbling government. But this democratization of the war effort only complicated the task of assembling a fighting force. "Instead of drawing together into one or two bodies of well ordered soldiery in order to drive the enemy from the boundaries of the settlements," groused Graffenried, "every one wanted to save his own house and defend himself."\textsuperscript{127} In the summer of 1712 a law passed demanding that every able-

\textsuperscript{124} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 263.

\textsuperscript{125} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 241.

\textsuperscript{126} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 878-79, 899. The inability of North Carolina to supply the two expeditions from South Carolina would later have a major affect on those campaigns.

\textsuperscript{127} Graffenried, \textit{Account}, 239.
bodied male between the ages of sixteen and sixty years should enter military service or forfeit L5. But the government could hardly find volunteers to enforce the law, much less follow it. By 1713, settlers were taking up arms against the government to protect themselves from impressments or having to pay fines. When the provost marshal attempted to confiscate L5 worth of goods each from six settlers in Pasquotank, the angry men seized the officer and did “by force and arms rescue and take from him” their property. At times private citizens competed with the government for scarce manpower: a court convicted Thomas Cox and William Stafford of Corretuck because they “did in a Mutinous manner Seduce and draw aside divers men who had Enlisted in the Service of this Government.” The government found itself lacking supplies as well as men, requisitioning equipment as minor as a handsaw.

During the Tuscarora War, North Carolina could never muster even three hundred ill-armed troops—this compared with a fighting force among the Lower Alliance of perhaps five hundred warriors. With so many of North Carolina’s men divided into small isolated garrisons, or holed up in fortified homes with a few

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128 NCCR, 1: 874, 877.
129 NCCR, 2: 59.
130 NCCR, 1: 870, 872.
131 NCCR, 2: 66.
132 Graffenried, Account, 243.
neighbors, the Lower Alliance “overpowered one plantation after another.” Unable to carry out its own defense, North Carolina’s government sent appeals to Virginia, South Carolina, and beyond. The Tuscaroras were about to face a very different set of enemies.

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133 Graffenried, Account, 239.
CHAPTER FOUR

EFFORTS AT DIPLOMACY:

VIRGINIA AND THE UPPER TOWNS

"Your Lord'ps will not judge me an idle Spectator of the miserys of my Fellow Subjects"

—Spotswood to Council of Trade, July 26, 1712

Compared to in North Carolinia, war dawned gently upon Virginia. Shortly after a breakfast on a fair October 7, William Byrd received an express notifying him that "60 people had been killed by the Indians at Neuse and about as many at Pamlico in North Carolina." As a member of Virginia's executive council, his presence was demanded at Major Nathaniel Harrison's to meet the governor and other councilors.  

But Byrd delayed; he entertained guests that evening and went to bed in "good health, good thoughts, and good humor, thank God Almighty." The next morning, Byrd finally arrived at Harrison's where Governor Spotswood and several council members


2 The meeting was held at the house of Major Nathaniel Harrison, a frequent agent to Indians on Virginia's Southside who later gained a position on the council. In 1711, his father, Benjamin Harrison, was a member of the council.
were waiting, but hardly in such good humor. They reproached Byrd for tardiness and
set to work devising a plan, one that reflected the particular concerns of their colony.³

As Spotswood, Byrd, and the other councilors sat around Harrison’s table
sifting through reports, they focused on three details: first, the attack; second,
Graffenried’s captivity; third and perhaps of greatest interest, the fact that not all of
the Tuscarora towns had participated. Indeed, over the next several months,
Virginia’s policies focused as much upon anticipating and influencing the actions of
these neutral Tuscarora communities as inflicting retribution upon warring members of
the Lower Alliance. A former officer under the Duke of Marlborough, Alexander
Spotswood had only recently come to office in Virginia in June 1710, but almost
immediately he had turned his energies to expanding the reach of his government into
the backcountry.⁴ The importance of the Indians in any such policies did not escape

B. Wright and Marion Tinling (Richmond, Va.: The Dietz Press, 1941), 417-18; EJCCV, 3: 284-85.

⁴ Warren R. Hofstra, "The Extiction of His Majesties Dominions`: The Virginia
Backcountry and the Reconfiguration of Imperial Frontiers," Journal of American
History 84, no. 4 (March, 1998): 1281-312; Alison M.Olson, Making the Empire
Work: London and American Interest Groups, 1690-1790 (Cambridge, Mass.:
Harvard University Press, 1997), describes how Spotswood was desperate to develop
avenues of interests and patronage in Virginia as a counterweight to a homogeneous
Anglican tobacco planter aristocracy. He attempted to use his Indian policies—which
the governor could closely control—as one remedy. For Spotswood, see also Walter
Havighurst, Alexander Spotswood; Portrait of a Governor (Williamsburg: Colonial
Williamsburg, 1967); Jack P. Greene, “The Opposition to Lieutenant Governor
Alexander Spotswood, 1718,” VMHB 70, no. 1 (1962): 35-42; Gwenda Morgan,
“Spotswood, Alexander (1676–1740),” in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,
ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004),
him. Therefore, rather than coming as a catastrophic blow, the Tuscarora War, Spotswood soon realized, could be turned into a diplomatic opportunity to refine Virginia's relations with Indians in the region, particularly Virginia's tributaries and any Tuscaroras who might remain neutral. Here was a chance for Virginia to rein in and confirm Indian allies, not unleash the dogs of war. Subsequent histories have sometimes painted Virginia in a poor light for its limited military participation in the Tuscarora War. Unlike South Carolina, no Virginia armies came crashing through the swamps and forests to North Carolina's rescue. But such martial policies would have run counter to Spotswood's diplomatic objectives of securing existing relations with tributary Indians and expanding this sphere to include as many Tuscaroras as possible.

These plans, however, depended upon the willingness of neutral Tuscaroras, who often did not oblige. Unlike Spotswood who sent numerous dispatches explaining his motives, these Tuscaroras never fully outlined their objectives. Nonetheless, the towns that remained neutral had particular reasons to seek a continued peace with Virginia. In the years before the Tuscarora War, they had enjoyed a unique position in trade and diplomacy on the edges of Virginia's tributary network. Whereas Spotswood hoped to entangle their towns within new bonds of alliance, these Tuscaroras had reasons to conserve the status quo in their relations with that colony. Therefore, the war years saw Virginia and the so-called "Upper Towns" of the Tuscaroras engaged in an awkward diplomatic dance, with each partner stubbornly attempting to seize the lead. As often as not, the result was missteps, confusion, and painful stumbles.
Tuscarora communities seeking to avoid war and negotiate chose to direct their efforts towards Virginia because they had little other choice. During the war's early years, North Carolina's government considered every Tuscarora suspect and more deserving of death than negotiation. Christopher Gale worried that "upon strict inquiry, it would be found that the whole nation of the Tuscaroras (though some of them may not yet be actors) was knowing and consenting to what was done" and soon may "join with them in carrying on these bloody designs."\(^5\) South Carolina's government hardly needed such encouragement. When armies from that colony arrived in Tuscarora country at North Carolina's request, they tended to shoot first, and ask questions later (if at all). Several supposedly "neutral" Tuscarora towns found themselves the unwitting targets of South Carolina attacks.\(^6\) Lack of alternatives aside, long-standing relationships with Virginia's government, settlers, and tributaries further contributed to the Upper Towns' willingness to negotiate with Virginia.

Geography and economics were added incentives for these communities to negotiate with Virginia.\(^7\) Often referred to as "Upper Towns" in contemporary sources, these communities clustered principally on the Tar River (the name for the upper Pamlico River) and on the uppermost tributaries of the Neuse and Catechna

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\(^5\) *NCCR*, 1: 828.


\(^7\) In particular, see Douglas W. Boyce, "Did a Tuscarora Confederacy Exist?" *Indian Historian* 6, no. 3 (1973): 36-39.
water system. Earlier, some may have occupied locations along the Roanoke River.\textsuperscript{8} Graffenried described these Upper Towns as “seven villages . . . somewhat farther distant, more beyond [i.e. closer to] Virginia.”\textsuperscript{9} This geographic position put them closer to Virginia (and the Albemarle region of North Carolina) where they visited to trade and hunt, and further from settlements on North Carolina’s lower Pamlico and Neuse Rivers. Initially at least, many Tuscaroras from the Upper Towns may have viewed the storm brewing on their southeastern horizon as an isolated squall, of little local concern.

These trade ties created a powerful reason for both the Upper Tuscaroras and Virginians to avoid war without first attempting negotiations. Shielded from settler abuses by their lower neighbors, these Upper Town Tuscaroras also enjoyed the greatest fruits of trade from a position closest to the “Tuscaroro trading path” also called “Weecacana.”\textsuperscript{10} This trade route wound south from Virginia across the Meherrin River and over the Roanoke River into upper Tuscarora communities, and served as a principal route for Virginia’s traders to other southern Indian nations. These communities had only recently recovered from the trade embargo imposed in the aftermath of the Pate murder. All-out war could only be worse. Tuscaroras had


\textsuperscript{9} Graffenried, Account, 276. In other cases, 8 towns are mentioned.

\textsuperscript{10} Boyce, "Tuscarora Confederacy," 38; \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 296; Alexander Spotswood [?], "Examination of Indians, 1713 (?)"," \textit{VMHB} 19, no. 3 (July, 1911): 274.
largely weathered the previous stoppage by trading with North Carolinians—but that backdoor closed after the September attack. Graffenried felt that the Upper Towns, were “loyal yet, keeping their loyalty on the account of trade.”\(^{11}\) Having watched their blankets and beads sit moldering in warehouses during the Pate embargo, Virginian traders were equally hesitant to abandon their customers.

Beyond the goods they carried, traders played an important role as diplomatic go-betweens. A Virginia trader named Peter Poythress had been present in the Upper Town of Tasky during Graffenried’s captivity and had been among the first to bring news of the attack to Virginia.\(^{12}\) In the next several months, he traveled several times back and forth as trader, messenger, interpreter, and spy. On another occasion William Byrd learned the latest news of the conflict from “Capt Evans and another Indian trader [who] were come from Carolina and had brought [an] abundance of skins.”\(^{13}\) Throughout subsequent negotiations, Spotswood attempted to carefully regulate trade: alternatively restricting it and then, when alliances seemed to be ailing, sending a dose of goods southward as a diplomatic booster shot.\(^{14}\)

Trade alone does not explain connections between Spotswood and Upper Towns. Traders were never entirely under government control. Throughout the war, Virginia officials struggled against smugglers, isolated backcountry settlers, and

\(^{11}\) Graffenried, *Account*, 276.


\(^{14}\) *EJCCV*, 3: 285, 318.
disobedient tributaries who conducted illicit trade with the Tuscaroras. Moreover, Upper Towns were not unique among Tuscaroras in the desire for trade. Hancock’s treaty with Graffenried revealed that the warriors of Catechna and other members of the Lower Alliance likewise strove towards a peaceful, evenhanded trade. Desires voiced by Upper Town deputies in talks with Virginia for “a free trade again opened between this Colony and their towns” would have met nods of approval in the Lower Alliance, who had forced Graffenried to promise goods at “a just price.”

The Tuscaroras’ various Indian neighbors also played a role in influencing differing attitudes towards Virginia and North Carolina. Farther south, in Tuscarora towns like Catechna, Tuscaroras felt the rhetoric of angry neighbors such as Coree Tom. Similarly, in the Upper Towns, Tuscaroras felt the opposite pull of Nottoways, Meherrins, Saponies, Nansemonds, and others—all Virginia tributaries. These Virginia tributaries knew the stigma of defeat from past colonial wars and enjoyed a modicum of security and access to avenues of reconciliation almost entirely absent in North Carolina. Because of such interactions, many Tuscaroras—especially inhabitants of the Upper Towns—hesitated to break openly with Virginia.

The Tuscaroras’ relationships with Virginia’s tributaries also figured in Spotswood’s approach to the war. The Tuscaroras’ presence—unofficial, unregulated, but frequent—among Virginia’s outer settlements and tributaries had long bothered officials. Recent attempts to prosecute the murderers of Jeremiah Pate had quickly escalated into something more, a struggle over the Tuscaroras’ place

15 *EJCCV*, 3: 293-5.
within Virginia’s tributary network. After the murder, a few towns had expressed some openness to Virginia’s demands. Unfortunately no records of these communities’ names or locations survive, but it is likely that they numbered among the Upper Towns. Nonetheless, for Virginia, the Pate crises had ended in debacle. In many ways, the Tuscarora War acted as an avenue for Virginia officials to revisit the same issues. Again, the Executive Council quickly moved beyond a mere desire to punish the guilty to using the imbroglio as a moment to establish broad new authority over the Tuscaroras. Spotswood mainly strove not for the destruction of Catechna and other members of the Lower Alliance, but to transform the neutral Upper Towns who had abstained from the war into tributaries.

The goal, stated most clearly in 1714, was that these Upper Tuscaroras “and their posterity shall from henceforth become tributaries to her Majesty of Great Britain and her Successors, under the Subjection of the Government of Virginia; and shall submit to such form of Government and be obedient to such Rules as the Governor of Virginia shall appoint.” The power grab did not stop there. Even while reaching towards Tuscaroras Spotswood also sought to strengthen his grip on existing tributaries. The governor realized that fear and uncertainty from the war in North

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16 *EJCCV*, 3: 171.


Carolina created a moment of flux in which new demands could be placed not only on Tuscaroras but on tributaries as well.

This plan to secure the tributaries and absorb Tuscaroras reached full flower over several years, but the arrangement's first seeds germinated during the council at Harrison's house that Byrd had reached so tardily. There "some of the Tributaries," recorded Byrd, arrived and "promised to be very faithful to us."¹⁹ Seeking more concrete assurance, the council soon dusted off old treaty provisions for issuing copper badges to tributary Indians "to the end that if any disorders be committed by any Indians having such badges, the Nation to which they belong many be made accountable."²⁰ Wary of a repeat of the Lower Alliance's tactic of "coming amongst the Inhabitants as friends" before launching their attack, steps were taken to ensure that these badges did not slip into the hands of non-tributary Indians. Similarly, the tributaries were to be reminded of their long-standing agreements to report any "foreign Indians" ranging nearby.²¹ The council called in a spokesperson for the Pamunkey and Chickahominy Indians to find out if "Strange Indians"—presumably Tuscaroras or Iroquois allies—were responsible for the recent murder of a settler near the head of the Pamunkey River.²²

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²² The officials also took the time to get detailed lists of "of all the men Women and Children of their respective Towns." *EJCCV*, 3: 287-88.
Also during that October 8 meeting, Spotswood ordered notices to be posted at courthouses, churches, and chapels forbidding all "trade or traffique with the said Tuscaroro or any other Indians for any Sort of Commodity untill further order." Far from wanting to cut off all communications, however, the council ordered the trader Peter Poythress to return to the Tuscarora towns with several messages. The first promised death and destruction, sparing neither men, women, nor children if Graffenried were harmed—a message that sent ripples of alarm among the baron’s captors who had not imagined that Virginia would interfere.

The second part of Poythress’s message launched a plan to deepen splits between the Upper Tuscaroras and Lower Alliance, and to move those “neuter” Tuscaroras closer to Virginia’s sphere. Poythress demanded that ambassadors from the Upper Towns come to the Nottoway town where the governor would be waiting with the assembled militias of three counties. “The making of a shew of some part of the Strength and force of this Colony may be very necessary to awe the said Tuscaruro Indians not only to continue in peace with us but also to joine in the Destruction of those Assassines,” recorded the Virginia council’s official minutes.

Late in the afternoon on October 19 five Tuscarora leaders (their names and towns are not recorded) arrived at Nottoway Town to a spectacle that had been in

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23 EJCCV, 3: 284-5.

24 Graffenried, Account, 282.

rehearsal for a day and a half—the drilling of 600 militia and 30 cavalry. They arrived very opportunely," recounted a delighted Spotswood, "just at the time I had brought the Militia under some discipline, and were not a little surprized to find there a great body of men in such good order." The troops gamely wheeled through a few simple maneuvers and then Spotswood urged the frightened Tuscarora spectators to walk the lines of troops—an impression perhaps painfully reminiscent of the sensation they would have felt as captives hauled before the gauntlet at enemy Iroquois or Susquehannock communities. It was powerful political theater.

Having set the stage, Spotswood negotiated according to script. First came the matter of the current war. Standing before the Virginia troops, the envoys, Spotswood later remembered, were "very desirous to continue in peace" with Virginia and North Carolina. They showed less enthusiasm, however, for taking arms against fellow Tuscaroras, even though Spotswood optimistically opined they were "well enough inclined." As an inducement, Virginia offered six striped blankets "for the head of each man," and "the usual price of Slaves" for each Woman and Child brought in as captives. Spotswood also demanded two hostages from each town "for the

26 Byrd, Secret Diary, 423.
27 Spotswood, Letters, 1: 121.
29 EJCCV, 3: 287.
better assuring us of their future good behavior." But Spotswood had more in mind than their steadfastness in the current war. The chance to muster troops and pretend outrage presented an opportunity to forever reframe future Tuscarora-Virginia relations. He confided to the Council of Trade that:

> delivering their Children as Hostages will not only prove the most
effectual Security for their fidelity, but may be a good step towards the
Conversion of that whole Nation to the Christian faith, and I could not
hope for a more favorable Conjuncture to make this demand than now,
when they are under great apprehensions of our Resentment for the late
barbaritys committed in Carolina, and the impressions made on them by
the appearance of so great a force as I then showed them.

The final act, however, would have to wait. Faced with such demands, the five envoys protested that "they had no authority to conclude anything without the concurrence of the rest of their Nation." They promised to return in a month.

The Nottoway, Meherrin, Nansemond, Saponi, (and perhaps Pamunkey and Chickahomin) headmen in attendance served as more than mere props in Spotswood’s spectacle. They too, found themselves confronted by the governor’s desires to alter their relationship with Virginia, beginning with demands for hostages instead of a tribute of skins and hides. The modest economic loss to Spotswood and

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32 Spotswood, *Letters*, 1:122
future governors incurred by abandoning old hidebound diplomacy would be more than compensated by political capital rooted in new religious and cultural ties. The children would enter into tutelage at the College of William and Mary alongside Indian upper-classmates already purchased as slaves from more remote Indians. Spotswood hoped the sight of “how well these Indian Children are treated,” would win over current headmen. Simultaneously these sons, presumably the leaders of the future, would be “brought up to Learning and Christianity”— double bonds in English thinking, sure to repel savage heathenism and French Catholicism. All the while, no one could forget that as hostages, these children would be the first to pay the price for parental disloyalty. With an army drilling in their midst, tributary headmen had little choice but to acquiesce.

Such concessions might give the impression that Spotswood had perfectly managed these events. The governor delighted in recording the “awe” that disciplined troops and forceful diplomacy imposed on the Upper Tuscarora and tributary Indians. But the “secret” diaries of William Byrd, who was also there, recorded the far from orderly escapades of young Virginia gentlemen, who made an equal—if far different—


35 Spotswood, Letters, 1: 122.
impression. The Nottoway king probably hardly contained his bemusement as Byrd and other councilors, dressed in fine morning gowns, lay together, tossing and turning on mats in the king's cabin, hardly able to see or breath because of the smoke. After reveille, the Virginians spent the morning nosing into cabins and chasing after Indian women. That afternoon, after drills and the arrival of the Tuscarora delegates, the Virginians watched Indian boys shoot, "girls run for a prize," a "war dance" by the men, and a "love dance" by women. Festivities progressed out of hand, with the Virginians' evening spent groping Nottoway women. Jenny, "an Indian girl," "got drunk and made us good sport," noted Byrd. Finally, several of the councilors themselves got so drunk that the guard prevented their re-entry; Virginia's finest spent the rest of the night close to the chief's cabin, dancing and hollering, trying to disturb the governor's rest. Elsewhere Byrd noted without irony the wars Europeans sparked among Carolina Indians "by abusing their women and evil entreating their men." Spotswood had hoped to impress his audience with a show of authority and discipline, to calm Indian frustrations at abuse, and to launch a program whereby Indian children would be force-fed the graces of "civilized" society; perceptive Indian observers read a far less coherent message.

36 Byrd, Secret Diary, 422.

37 Account and quotations from Byrd, Secret Diary, 422-25.

Moreover, even while Spotswood tried to use the Tuscarora War to tighten tributary bonds, several tributary groups sought to carve out their own advantage. In particular, the Pamunkeys and Chickahominies—tidewater groups descended in part from the old Powhatan empire—attempted to curtail their rapidly declining influence. Within days of the Nottoway conference, Pamunkey and Chickahominy leaders appeared in Williamsburg and obediently presented "a List of all the men Women and Children of their respective towns." With loyalty at a premium, they made their own requests. Yes, they would patrol adjacent territories for strange Indians, but jealous of their own rights, they accused the Nottoways of cooperating with Tuscaroras and negotiated a reaffirmation of their exclusive hunting grounds.39 Upset at the outflow of their people who found employment among settlers "against the Will of the Queen and the Great Men," and at masters who trapped such Indians in confining indentures, they had Spotswood implement the colonial equivalent of a temporary work visa program.40 Finally, the Pamunkey queen, supposedly "so desirous" of gaining the "the benefite of Learning" for her people, enrolled an extra child as a servant to her son, necessitating a quick bureaucratic scramble to fund the extra slot.41 Not long afterwards, a delegation of Saponi, Occaneechee, and Stukanox Indians, hoping to cut

in on the suspended Tuscarora trade, came to Williamsburg seeking permission to relocate onto a tract closer to the Tuscarora trading path.\footnote{EJCCV, 3: 296.}

Despite a promising start, Tuscaroras from the Upper Towns proved even less malleable. November 20, the date set for resumption of negotiations, passed with the Tuscarora delegates nowhere in sight. Finally, after tense waiting amid renewed discussions of war, three deputies arrived on December 8 claiming authority from eight towns.\footnote{EJCCV, 3: 293-95; The delegates were Chongkerarise, Rouiatthie, and Rouiattatt represented the towns of Raroucaithue, Kinquenarant, Taughoushie, Chounanitz, Taughoutnith, Kinthaigh, Touhairoukha, and Unaghnarara.} Spotswood and his council, with several representatives from the House of Burgesses in attendance, received these Tuscaroras in opulent council chambers. Brass candlesticks and sconces holding large myrtle wax candles gently illuminated rows of law books and a portrait of the queen shrouded in a calico curtain—a far cry from the parade ground at Nottoway town, but nonetheless another stage upon which to show authority.\footnote{EJCCV, 3: 365-66.} On the surface, the ensuing negotiations looked like a success. The Upper Tuscarora deputies again proclaimed they “desire nothing more than to continue in peace with this Government” and were willing to join Virginia in war.

Close consideration, however, reveals tepidity lurking behind the Upper Tuscaroras’ proclaimed ardor. The small number of deputies—even if illness did stop one en route—from the eight communities may hint at a lack of consensus.\footnote{EJCCV, 3: 293-95.} Often
during important Anglo-Indian treaty negotiations, virtual tent cities appeared overnight, filled by Indians who sought to signify approval and partake of diplomatic gift-giving. The deputies *said* they had considered a nighttime rescue raid to release the captives among the Lower Alliance, but did nothing. They said they were willing to deliver hostages, but did not, blaming “an accident” and recent killings by strange Indians that left parents terrified to part with their children. At the earliest, they claimed, these hostages might come in late March. The envoys said they were considering diplomatic gestures to other tribes, but did nothing until Virginia agreed to pick up the expense of gifts and even then continued to hesitate. In short, promises and offers abounded, actions did not.

Moreover, the Tuscarora deputies accomplished a quiet diplomatic coup by shifting the terms of debate. They signified that they would be “willing to make War upon and cutt off all the Indians concerned in the late Massacre, even those of the town of Caughteghnah [Catechna] tho they are part of their own nation.” Carefully parsed, the language of this apparent concession actually limited blame among Tuscaroras. By implication most of the “Indians concerned” were non-Tuscaroras. The only “part of their own nation” that did participate, came from the lone town of Catechna. Any discussion of the very real possibility that individuals from their own towns might be implicated was squelched. Moreover, rather than agreeing to a grinding war of attrition, the language tied Upper Tuscarora signers to a police action that would last only “untill sufficient Reparation be made for the murders and

\[46\] *EJCCV*, 3: 293.
hostilities by them committed."\(^{47}\) Over time Upper Tuscaroras would even further attempt to limit the scope of their involvement to actions against a few individuals from Catechna and non-Tuscarora coastal tribes.

These limited military aims suited Spotswood’s greater goal of incorporating a majority of Tuscaroras within Virginia’s sphere. But he struggled to defend this, and indeed his entire agenda, from a “violent humour” in the House of Burgesses “for extirpating all the Indians, without distinction of Friends or Enemys.”\(^{48}\) The assembly hesitated to fund his plans to enroll Indian hostages at the College of William and Mary. The executive council found it necessary to send messages to the militant-minded assembly informing that body that “it would be Incongruous to pass an Act which . . . seems directed against that whole Nation in general when at the Same time the most considerable part of ‘em are Engaged in a Strict Allyance with this Government.”\(^{49}\) Nonetheless, the burgesses prepared for a broad war by voting to raise twenty thousand pounds from new taxes against imports from Britain and other colonies—a measure that may have been directed as much against unpopular merchants as enemy Indians. Spotswood rejected it. When the burgesses attempted conciliation by thanking the government, Spotswood “answered them that he would thank them when he saw them act with as little self interest as he had done.”\(^{50}\)

\(^{47}\) EJCCV, 3: 293-95.

\(^{48}\) Spotswood, Letters, 1: 129-33; JHBV, 1702-1712, 331-33. At times the council also agreed with this approach. Byrd, Secret Diary, 444.

\(^{49}\) JHBV, 1702-1712, 331-33.

\(^{50}\) Byrd, Secret Diary, 441.
Circumventing the troublesome body, he secured a loan of five hundred pounds from William Byrd.\textsuperscript{51}

Despite stiff resolve, the governor found himself working even harder to put a confident spin on events. In mid-winter, starving English settlers along the Neuse River, desperate after their own colony's inaction and inability, directly petitioned Virginia's government in a frantic plea for aid, appealing to Spotswood's "paternal Tenderness" for a "Considerable forse of men, armes and ammunition."\textsuperscript{52} Instead, Spotswood sent only "a copy of the said Treaty" so that the desperate North Carolinians "may see what care this Government hath already taken for their Relief"—small succor for hungry bellies.\textsuperscript{53} Members of the Lower Alliance had gambled that their enemies could be picked off in isolation; in this case they were right.

Although Virginia's official response hid all trace of doubt, the council again dispatched Peter Poythress into Tuscarora country. Leading a horse laden with trading goods (arms and ammunition excepted), he operated under orders "to make the strictest Examination he can into the designs" of the Upper Towns. How many English captives had been redeemed? How many enemies' heads had been taken? None, returned both answers.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{EJCCV} 3: 299-300.

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 819-20.

\textsuperscript{53} \textit{EJCCV} 3: 300-301; Byrd, \textit{Secret Diary}, 488.

\textsuperscript{54} \textit{EJCCV} 3: 300-03.
In mid-March several envoys from the Upper Towns journeyed to Virginia. If they hoped to reassure Spotswood, they failed. Again, they brought no children as hostages, instead offering only “some trifling excuses.” Again, they had admitted that they had undertaken no campaigns against the Lower Alliance. Spotswood’s patience snapped. A witness recorded that the “Governor received the Tuscaroras very cold and ordered them to go and help the people of Carolina and cut off Hancock Town.” But nobody expected them to do so. Faced with nearly half a year of inaction, Spotswood and his advisors abandoned all hope of peace. “The Tuscaroro Indians have failed in the performance of every Article of their Treaty,” concluded the executive council. In April, after the Tuscarora envoys departed, Virginia’s government began planning for war.

Why, after so much effort, had the alliance between Spotswood and the Upper Towns collapsed? Spotswood suspected that the towns had purposefully dragged their feet, making promises they never intended to keep as a strategy to delay Virginia’s entry into the war. Spotswood’s own obvious desire to bring them in as tributaries of Virginia would only have made him an even easier mark. If there was such a scheme, it worked.

But had the envoys from the Upper Towns purposefully deluded the governor? It seems that the Upper Towns’ non-compliance resulted just as much from extreme

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56 *EJCCV* 3: 301-3.

57 *EJCCV* 3: 299-303.
incongruence between what Spotswood sought and what the envoys could deliver. Inaction was the result, not the intent. At the heart of the difficulties was the fact that the “Upper Towns” described a loose association of similar communities, not a distinct organized polity. Similarly, any sharp division suggested by the terms “Upper Towns” and “Lower Alliance” should not be overemphasized. Numerous bonds of kin, trade, intermarriage, and friendship obscured differences created by their different paths in the war. Even though Graffenried and other contemporaries tended to treat the Upper and Lower Towns as separate geographic entities, there was little consensus on the exact location of boundaries, if they existed at all. Contemporary lists of the towns in each group were inconsistent and occasionally overlapped.58 Within towns, attitudes may have been similarly hazy. The same winter that Spotswood met members of the Upper Towns, South Carolina military expeditions turned up scalps and booty in supposedly neutral Upper Towns. Such discoveries might have meant that some Tuscaroras from those towns had participated in the attacks. Alternatively, scalps could have served as diplomatic gifts meant to sway Upper Town kin into the conflict. Either way, the bloody trophies indicate that any division between the two sets of towns was more malleable and permeable than Virginia officials liked to imagine.59


59 Parramore, “With Tuscarora Jack,” Barnwell, “Journal,” 125; 396, 400. At times during the war, Tuscaroras from the Upper Town promised to act covertly on behalf of Virginia among the members of the Lower Alliance. These plans rested upon the fact that Tuscaroras from the different communities continued to interact and visit during the war (i.e., the attempt to rescue the captives, and especially an attempt to assassinate Hancock).
Not only did the Upper Towns lack any clear cohesion, they lacked lines of authority that would have been necessary to fulfill the treaties with Virginia. One of the keys to Virginia's past successes in dealing with Indians such as the Nottoways, Pamunkeys and other tributaries was that colony's long history of confining groups to distinct reservations and then propping up favored leaders. The leaders of the Upper Towns simply lacked the clout to enforce Virginia's provisions. The opening days of the Tuscarora War, had strained existing lines of authority in Catechna and other Tuscarora towns of the Lower Alliance. The Upper Towns probably also witnessed similar internal tensions. Rather than being a concerted policy, what was perceived as "neutrality" by outside observers, may have actually represented a closely balanced division of interests within communities, with some Tuscaroras favoring war, others favoring flight, some outright neutrality, and still others seeking accommodation with Europeans.60

The deputies who agreed to Spotswood's provisions probably represented an anglophile faction, or perhaps more specifically, a Virginia-phile faction; getting the rest of their communities to agree was another matter. Moreover, Tuscarora communities often acted in consultation with one another, seeking opinions, and consensus, but had little or no ability to force other towns to do anything. The October meeting at Nottoway town had concluded with the five Upper Town envoys admitting that "they had no authority to conclude anything without the concurrence of

60 Barnwell, "Journal," 397.
the rest of their Nation.”

61 They had departed promising to “consult with their respective Towns.”

62 But had they? In December, three envoys came to Williamsburg and claimed to have “full power” to “treat and agree” with Virginia on behalf of eight towns. Moreover, they claimed that the proposals “were well liked by all their Towns.”

63 Such claims may have been inflated, however. Some of their townspeople later countered “what engagements were heretofore entered into by the persons who came hither last December was without any authority from their Rulers and never communicated to them.”

64 Before the Upper Towns could make meaningful agreements with Virginia or any other colonial power, leaders would have to emerge with the authority to enforce decisions on their own people. In April 1712, that had not happened . . . yet.

The April decision for military action took into account more than mistrust of the Upper Towns or even persistent pleas from North Carolina. Compounding Spotswood’s worries about the Upper Towns were misgivings about the loyalty of Virginia’s own traders and tributaries. An investigation into “whether any persons within this Government have traded with the said Tuscaroras for arms and ammunition

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61 Spotswood, Letter, 1: 121.

62 EJCCV, 3: 287.

63 EJCCV, 3: 294.

64 EJCCV, 3: 320.
since the Massacre” turned up several names.65 Nathaniel Mallone of Surrey County, and William Parham and James Grasham of Prince George’s County found themselves hauled by the sheriff before the council to answer for a “considerable quantity of powder” that they may have sold to the Tuscaroras.66 Concern focused on more than a few individuals. Convinced that the entire region south of the Meherrin River was a nest of smugglers, the government demanded that the head of every household in the area submit a substantial bond of ten pounds sterling, promising not to trade “Arms ammunition or other Commoditys” with any Tuscarora or hostile Indian.67 Refusal meant immediate eviction.68

Tributaries seemed even less trustworthy. Increasingly, in spring of 1712 Spotswood worried that despite his efforts, the “Tuscaruros have been endeavouring to seduce” the Nottoway and Meherrin Indians “to joine with them against her Majesty’s Subjects of this Colony, and that there is great reason to suspect some sudden blow.”69 No such blow came; nor did any tributary tribe officially break with Virginia and join the warring Tuscaroras en masse. But just as the Tuscaroras suffered

65 *EJCCV*, 3: 301-3; Spotswood later admitted that Virginia traders, for the most part “indigent persons (who had no other way of living)” traded with the Tuscaroras, “not withstanding the repeated orders of the Government against furnishing these Indians with stores of war.” (Spotswood, *Letters*, 2: 147).


67 *EJCCV*, 3: 324.

68 This policy matched Virginia’s long-standing efforts to limit settlement in the area until its contested boundaries with North Carolina could be drawn definitively.

internal divisions during the war, similar splits lurked among groups supposedly loyal to Virginia.\textsuperscript{70} Rumors repeatedly surfaced that individuals among the Meherrins “supply them [the Tuscaroras] wth what ammunition they use and cary what news they know of.”\textsuperscript{71} As early as November 1711, letters from Governor Hyde of North Carolina and a settler in Nansemond County reported sightings of Meherrins dressed in what looked suspiciously like Palatine clothes.\textsuperscript{72} Militia combed through Nansemond, Nottoway, and Meherrin homes, empowered to arrest entire communities if they found “suspected goods.” The Indians carefully hid the contraband—if it actually existed—and the troops returned empty-handed.\textsuperscript{73} Afterwards the council decreed that the “Tributary Indians be forthwith strictly charged to keep within the Inhabitants and to hold no Correspondence with or give Entertainment to any of the Tuscaruro or other Southern Indians on pain of being treated as Enemys.”\textsuperscript{74}

Despite restrictions, contacts, often of ambiguous nature and revealing of splits within the tributaries, continued. Exemplifying the confusion that existed throughout the war, in October 1713 several Meherrin headmen surrendered one of their own people, named “Mister Thomas,” on the grounds that he had been illegally

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\footnote{71} For a list of Meherrin breaches see Dawdy, “Meherrins Secret History,” 405-7; See also \textit{NCCR}, 1: 893-94; \textit{EJCCV} 3: 352.

\footnote{72} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 291.

\footnote{73} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 291.

\footnote{74} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 293.
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“corresponding with the Tuscaruros.”\textsuperscript{75} This may not have been the whole story, however, for Thomas retorted that he had been “taken and carryed prisoner” by the Tuscaroras against his will. Unsure whom among his tributaries to believe, Spotswood ordered Thomas to be kept under house arrest in his own community. In the meantime, Thomas’s sons had to prove their father’s and their own loyalty by accompanying a Virginia official traveling to the mountains to meet with several Tuscarora leaders.\textsuperscript{76}

In the case of the Meherrins, any involvement by individuals on the side of insurgent Tuscaroras probably stemmed from long-standing animosity towards encroachment by North Carolina settlers on the Chowan and Meherrin Rivers. Graffenried later swore that “one Nick Major in Particular being one of the present Meherrin Indians Satt with the Tuscarooroes at his Tryall and was among them when Mr. Lawson the Surv[eyor] Gen[era]l was killed by them.”\textsuperscript{77} It was an odd reunion, since only months earlier Lawson, acting as surveyor, had met the old Meherrin and taken his deposition while investigating North Carolina’s claims to the lands around Major’s home.\textsuperscript{78} That Nick Major had found common cause with Coree Tom and

\textsuperscript{75} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 352.

\textsuperscript{76} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 352.

\textsuperscript{77} \textit{NCCR}, 2: 644.

Hancock who faced similar difficulties along the Neuse and Pamlico Rivers came as no coincidence.

Troubles were not confined to the Meherrins. In late December 1711, only days after members of the Upper Towns had signed Spotswood’s treaty at Williamsburg, a “Christian Slave” named John Philips revealed that a Nottoway named Treweeks had “discovered to him that the said Nottoway Indians together with the Senecas and Tuscaruros designed to cutt off the Inhabitants of this colony on the Southside of James River.” Why Treweeks had confided in the slave, and why Philips broke that trust remains unanswered, but the confession hints at the uncertain lines of affinity among tributaries, slaves, masters, Tuscaroras, and Iroquois in the region. Again investigations revealed little and the blow never came.

But as months passed and spring approached, distrust towards the tributaries and the Upper Towns grew. Suspicions surfaced that the Upper Town delegates who had come in late March, ostensibly to treat with Spotswood, had detoured for secret talks with the tributaries. The council commissioned Harrison to investigate. Within days, “several examinations of Indians” revealed that “that our Indians knew of the design of the Tuscaroras” and continued to commiserate. While the councilors mulled over this news and prepared for war, in Williamsburg the young Nottoway, Nansemond, and Meherrin hostages, perhaps catching wind of the shift and fearing for

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80 *EJCCV*, 3: 303.
their own safety, ran away—an act that only escalated fears among Virginians.\textsuperscript{82} Desperate, the councilors seized several Indian leaders in their stead until the boys were recaptured near Nottoway Town.\textsuperscript{83} Convinced that Upper Towns could not be trusted, and that tributary Indians “are too much affected to the Tuscaruros and keep a secret Correspondence with the Indian Enemy,” Spotswood determined to break the bonds.\textsuperscript{84} Therefore, in addition to commissioning a hundred colonial troops, Spotswood planned to enact old treaty provisions to call up a equal number of Virginia Indian warriors. His intent: by “engaging them in this War, the Correspondence and Amity they have hitherto had with the Indian Enemy may be broke.”\textsuperscript{85}

But then preparations for war suddenly stopped. The day after securing resolutions to raise troops for war, Spotswood met with Governor Hyde of North Carolina to make arrangements. The conference resulted in yet another reversal of Virginia policy. North Carolina would not (and realistically could not) reimburse the expedition. Improbably, however, North Carolina even threatened to enforce import duties on provisions that Virginia troops brought for themselves! But other news provided the real reason for aborting the mission. Already Virginia officials had heard rumors of an army of nearly a thousand South Carolina Indians accompanied by a

\textsuperscript{82} Byrd, *Secret Diary*, 516.


\textsuperscript{84} *EJCCV*, 3: 302.

\textsuperscript{85} *EJCCV*, 3: 302.
much smaller force of South Carolina whites attacking Tuscaroras in North Carolina.

Great battles had been fought. That day, Spotswood learned that the leader of this
force had signed his own treaty with the Tuscaroras without consulting Virginia or
North Carolina.\textsuperscript{86} Spotswood had hoped to harness the conflict in North Carolina to
restructure Indian relations to his liking and failed; meanwhile another colony had
seized the reins.

\textsuperscript{86} EJCCV, 3: 313; Spotswood, Letters, 1: 170.
Spotswood did not hide his displeasure at South Carolina’s entry into the fray. Ostensibly, he had blown up during his meeting with Hyde because Col. John Barnwell of South Carolina had negotiated with the Tuscaroras without consulting or considering Virginia. But tensions between the colonies ran deeper. Since South Carolina’s founding in 1670, when the earliest Virginia traders were tentatively crossing into and through the southern piedmont, the two colonies had been at odds.

Before rice, plantations, and African slaves, South Carolina built itself on the trade of deerskins and Indian slaves. Positioned where its agents and traders could trek around the southern flank of the Appalachians, the colony did more than any other English settlement to extend Britain’s reach among Indians into an interior where only the traders and missionaries of France and Spain had mingled before.¹ To a lesser extent, the colony also set its sights upon North Carolina.² During his travels, Lawson had


² Technically, North Carolina was a political sub-region of South Carolina. Both colonies answered to the same set of proprietors. In practice, however, the two operated as separate entities. Moreover, the fact that early settlement had come principally from Virginia into the adjoining Albemarle region meant that North Carolina also had strong economic and cultural ties to that colony.
followed the well-trodden routes of South Carolina traders. These men principally pld their wares among the numerous Siouan villages of the North Carolina piedmont, but either directly or through native middlemen, some undoubtedly counted Tuscaroras among their customers.

A few agents of the crown tried to direct South Carolina's trade and slaving expeditions for the glory of a greater British Empire, but in a colony cleaved among hardnosed businessmen, more often the reverse prevailed, with colonial policies being directed for the sake of slaves and trade. One of the few points of agreement among South Carolina's traders and politicians was that Virginia traders were interlopers, not allies. Therefore, during the Tuscarora War, meaningful cooperation between the colonies would be strained at best, and often openly bitter. But harmony was never the objective. Unlike Spotswood who schemed to extend Virginia's reach among

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3 The route went inland from Charleston between the Ashley and Cooper Rivers to the Santee River; up the Santee River to the Congaree opposite present-day Columbia. The route then crossed the Congaree and went up the west bank of the Wateree River to the Waxaws near present-day Charlotte. The course bent east across the Pedee River (also called the Yadkin) and into North Carolina across the Saxapahaw River (Cape Fear River), and from there the area where the Eno River became the Neuse. The route could continue northeast to Virginia, or southeast to the area around New Bern. This route would later be followed by the second South Carolina expedition. Joseph Barnwell, "The Second Tuscarora Expedition," *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 10 (Jan., 1909): 34-35.


5 Crane contends that the lone breaks in this animosity occurred "when Indian wars in 1711 and 1715 prompted some mutual aid." (Crane, *Southern Frontier*, 154) I believe that tension between the colonies shaped their wartime policies.
Tuscaroras through diplomacy, South Carolina’s government leapt into the fray, ultimately sending two armies through Tuscarora territory. These expeditions could profit South Carolina slave traders and strengthen ties to Indian allies—all at the expense of Tuscaroras and Virginia. South Carolina’s involvement replaced Spotswood’s diplomatic quill with a military hammer. Neither the Tuscaroras of the Upper Towns nor the Lower Alliance were prepared for the blows to come.

A History of Violence

Over a decade before the Tuscarora War, South Carolina and Virginia began to employ a bevy of tactical tricks in their competition for Indian clients. Appealing to higher authority, Virginia’s officials wrote to the Board of Trade touting their colony’s precedence and royal status compared to South Carolina, whom they painted as proprietary upstarts. Moreover, claimed Spotswood, with a little training in practical geometry and a proper sextant, Virginia traders could prove that Cherokees, Creeks, and other clients lived within the bounds of Virginia’s sea-to-sea charter. Even he admitted, however, that en route, Virginia’s traders were “barely passing through” South Carolina. Taking advantage of the trespass, politicians in Charleston took legislative actions to cork the bottleneck. Twice, in 1698 and in 1701, South Carolina’s assembly resolved that “Virginians be Prohibited from Tradeing in this

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Province” and provided for the confiscation of goods. Only the failure of the larger Indian bills, of which these resolves were part, prevented their passage. Another 1701 bill took a more roundabout route to hobble Virginia’s pack trains by making it illegal for horses to be brought overland into South Carolina from the north.

South Carolina escalated the multiyear dispute in 1707. Under the guise of collecting duties on deerskin exports, its agents began seizing Virginia traders’ cargo. That year Robert Hix and several other Virginia traders found their storehouse among the Shuterees empty, its cache of nearly fifteen hundred deerskins confiscated by South Carolina agents, who also took the occasion to convince the Shuterees to rob Hix of his clothes and remaining goods. During the years leading up to the Tuscarora War, flurries of letters crisscrossed the Atlantic as officials from both colonies continued to plead their case in England, but the matter remained unresolved.

Continuing confiscations doubly hurt Virginia’s trade, since they occurred nearly simultaneously with Virginia’s self-imposed embargo in the wake of the Pate murder. Virginia’s traders, prohibited from trading with the Tuscaroras and tributary


Indians, could not easily skirt these tribes and trade farther south and west without the risk of losing their goods to South Carolina agents. The twin blows of being cut off from trade with its Tuscarora partners, and being hindered from trade in South Carolina proved disastrous for Virginia’s skin trade. In 1706 Virginia exported 24,400 deerskins; in 1707 that number approximately halved to 12,000. A year later exports plummeted further, to about 2,350, a total decrease of roughly 90 per cent.\textsuperscript{12}

For similar reasons, South Carolina stood to gain an advantage over Virginia several years later during the Tuscarora War. South Carolina’s traders could continue unobstructed with their largest trading partners to the southwest while slow-moving, vulnerable Virginia pack trains had to detour hundreds of miles to skirt the conflict.\textsuperscript{13} Even Virginia’s requirements that their traders “go out in such a body that they may be able to defend themselves against any stragling Indians of the Tuscaruro Nation” did not guarantee safety.\textsuperscript{14} In 1713 the unlucky Robert Hix, at the head of a huge, eighty-horse caravan on the shores of the Eno River found himself again set upon, this time by Iroquois sympathetic to the Tuscaroras. They killed one of Hix’s men, “shot most of their Horses and made Booty of all the Goods” (valued at £1000), declaring “their

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\item[\textsuperscript{12}] Crane, \textit{Southern Frontier}, appendix A, table I.
\item[\textsuperscript{14}] \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 316; For an example of such a bond signed by a trader, see \textit{CVSP}, 1: 155. Spotswood in turn issued passes to such traders that “her Majesty’s Subjects of the sevl Colonys and plantations through wch you may have occasion to pass” allow the traders to “freely and quietly pass and repass with your goods and Merchandizes, without Lett, hindrance, or Molestation, on pretence of any Dutys Or Impositions” (\textit{CVSP}, 1: 155-56).
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reason for so doing was because they did not carry their Ammunition to the Tuscaroras\(^{15}\)

A desire to minimize such losses had entered into Spotswood's calculations as he structured Virginia's policies to preserve ties with at least some of the Tuscaroras. On the other hand, by taking a different approach and sending troops to war, South Carolina would be able to march under the twin banners of altruism towards its North Carolina neighbors and self-preservation against its Virginia competitors. Throughout 1711, South Carolina's assembly had been considering further measures against Virginia intruders.\(^{16}\) In August, South Carolina's Indian commissioners renewed a bounty against intruding Virginia traders: anyone who intended to "export any Indian Slave or Slaves, Skins, or Furs by Land to Virginia" would first have to "come down to Charles Town to enter the same and pay the Duty."\(^{17}\)

Word of the Tuscarora attack reached South Carolina in the midst of passing these measures.\(^{18}\) Quickly, South Carolina moved towards a military solution.\(^{19}\) On

\(^{15}\) MPCP, 3: 82-89; Spotswood, Letters, 2: 25; Robert Livingston, The Livingston Indian Records, 1666-1723, ed. Lawrence H. Leder (Gettysburg: Pennsylvania Historical Association, 1956), 222-3; NYCD, 5: 491.


\(^{17}\) McDowell, Journals 1710-1718, 14, 16.

\(^{18}\) NCCR, 1: 820-24.
November 11, 1711, South Carolina’s assembly sent a “humble address” to its Lord Proprietors with two headings: the first outlined an “intended expedition” against the Tuscaroras; the second described “the great mischief and danger to this Province by the intrusions and approachments of the Virginia Traders Trading with the Indians living within the limits of and in amity with this Government.”

At the same time that South Carolina had been experimenting with ways to exclude Virginia, its traders and agents were also seeking to enrich themselves and strengthen their colony’s bonds with native partners through slavery. South Carolina had been founded later than Virginia, at a time when the existence of slavery in British North America was no longer a matter of doubt. Its founding generations had come not from Europe but indirectly through Barbados, and carried with them the mentality and slave codes of that Caribbean slave society. In addition to a continued trade in enslaved Africans, South Carolinians had enthusiastically embraced the Indian slave trade. They had learned that marching alongside Indians in war, especially when providing the guns, powder, and shot in return for captured slaves, formed strong ties. South Carolina used these methods to wean numerous native groups from the French

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in Louisiana and the Spanish in Florida, in the process wreaking havoc on those other
Europeans' alliance networks. In the first decade of the 1700s, South Carolina
began to pay particular attention to bolstering its ties to the numerous Siouan groups
on the Carolina piedmont. A moment of opportunity and necessity arose in 1707-1708
when Savannah Indians (with whom Virginia frequently traded) began raiding these
Siouan groups. South Carolina rushed fifty guns, a thousand flints, powder, and shot
along with a few troops to the Catawbas and other Indians; together they defeated the
Savannahs. A majority fled to territories claimed by Pennsylvania (where they came to be referred to as Shawnees), seeking protection under that government and falling under an uncertain supervision by the Iroquois Confederacy. These events—the attack on a troublesome native group to secure ties with the Catawbas and their neighbors, strategic war that undermined Virginia, the defeated Savannahs' subsequent flight north that spawned a population stream out of the Carolinas—all foreshadowed aspects of the Tuscarora War.


23 For an account of this Savannah conflict, see Gallay, Indian Slave Trade, 210-12; Chapman James Milling, Red Carolinians, 2d ed. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1969), 85-89; Merrell, Indians' New World, 56-57.

24 During the Tuscarora War, New York officials had difficulties distinguishing between Savannahs who arrived on their borders in 1712, and Tuscarora refugees who were beginning to arrive in the same region (NY, Council Minutes, 115-16 in IDH, Reel 7, 1712/07/03).
Slavery as practiced by Europeans did not exist among the Tuscaroras before European contact. But among Southeastern native societies there did exist a status of servitude and degradation that Europeans often termed "slavery." Unlike chattel slavery, this bondage was not formed at the intersection of economics and race. Instead, it can best be understood in the broader context of grief, kinship, spiritual power, and warfare. Although this "mourning warfare" complex has been best described for the peoples of the Northeast woodlands, especially the Iroquois, one authority writes that "archaeological, linguistic, and folkloric evidence indicates that almost everywhere in eastern North America and long before contact with Europeans, warfare had involved the taking of captives, at least some of whom were either adopted or enslaved by their victors." Among these participants were the Tuscaroras. Any death rent a society's ties of kinship and spiritual force and depleted

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the community's labor. In response, young warriors gained glory by raiding enemies for captives or, as a more portable spiritual substitute, scalps. Some captives, especially women and children who were considered more tractable, were adopted into families, bolstering populations and spiritually filling the place of the deceased. Others, particularly dangerous warriors, were tortured and executed, allowing captors to spiritually absorb the victims' power.

Somewhere in the hazy realm between life and death dwelt a third group of captives, those people who Europeans called slaves. Neither adopted into society nor killed, they inhabited an uncertain existence. Not dead, they had no right to live. Alive, they occupied no place in local kinship networks or clans—which in native minds was a contradiction in terms. To be truly human meant being linked through a series of reciprocal relations to one's community and kin. Among the Cherokees, occupiers of this status were called the atsi nahsa'i: people who "had no legal rights or protection because these stemmed from kinship and the blood vengeance which


29 Analysis of skulls recovered from Early to Late Woodland sites reveals that male skulls differed between regions, whereas a broader array of skull types were recovered on sites with little regional variation. Such differences may reflect the widespread adoption of captive females. Rountree, *Powhatan Foreign Relations*, 74.

30 This argument has been put forward generally for slavery in Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984). Starna and Watkins, "Northern Iroquoian Slavery" apply it specifically to the case of Indian slaves.
clans practiced.” They were an “anomaly because they had a human form but could not lead a normal human existence.” These may have corresponded with the “black boys” described among Virginia Indians by Robert Beverley: they were a “people of a rank inferior . . ., a sort of servants among them” who were “attendant upon the gentry” and performed “their servile offices.” Almost all faced torture that marked them with scars as lifelong reminders of their status. Some of these unfortunates might eventually be adopted into families, or fate could swing the other way and they could be killed. Even adoptees, who could normally expect a lifetime of acceptance and social respectability among their new families might revert if they rebelled against their newly imposed identities. Only the children of the captives, born into the captors’ societies, permanently escaped this liminal existence. In addition to serving as living reminders of the importance of kinship ties, these bondspeople labored at menial tasks, served as prestige symbols for their masters, and could be exchanged in trade or diplomacy.

31 Perdue, Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 16. Much of Perdue’s evidence for slavery among the Cherokees comes from the writings of Lawson and Brickell, which actually have much more direct relevance to Tuscarora society.

32 Robert Beverley, The History of Virginia, in Four Parts (1720; reprint, Richmond, Va.: J.W. Randolph, 1855), 179. The description of them as “black” suggests an adoption of Virginian racial ideology.


34 Braund, "Creek Indians, Blacks, and Slavery," 603.
Language provides further clues to understanding this bondage. Western Algonquian speakers such as the Ojibwas, Ottawas, and Crees referred to their captives as *awahkan*, which also means "animals kept as pets."\(^{35}\) In the Iroquoian Mohawk and Onondaga languages, similarly, *enaskwa* meant both "captive" and "domesticated animal."\(^{36}\) Captives among the Tuscaroras carried similar verbal markers. Looking in vain for parallels to a social hierarchy of titles and ranks parallel to European society, Lawson concluded:

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\text{as for Servant, they have no such thing, except Slave, and their Dogs, Cats, tame or domestick Beasts, and Birds are call'd by the same Name: For the Indian Word for Slave includes them all. So when an Indian tells you he has got a Slave for you, it may (in general Terms, as they use) be a young Eagle, a Dog, Otter, or any other thing of that Nature, which is obsequiously to depend on the Master for its Sustenance.}^{37}
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Europeans coming to the new world carried their own complex and mutable notions of bound labor that ultimately culminated in chattel slavery. Almost from the beginning, Virginia's planners had hoped to include Indians—both bound and free—

\(^{35}\) Rushforth, "A Little Flesh," 783.


within their labor force. For many decades, the small number of African slaves coinciding with a heavy use of white indentured servants gave that region's labor system a flexibility in both practice and its supporting legal statutes that would later disappear. Within this inchoate system, some Indian servants appeared in the records as if they had indentures—albeit for longer periods than typically experienced by whites. Others appeared as slaves. In 1649, 1655, and 1658 the Virginia assembly had to pass laws asserting that Indian children who had been hired out by their parents as servants to settlers were not slaves. The 1670s witnessed a rapid shift away from white indentured servitude and greater reliance on African slavery. At almost the same time, during Bacon's Rebellion, the enslavement of Indians captured during wartime was formally legalized. Later, laws intending to protect Virginia's tributary Indians meant that the main supply of Indian slaves would come from trade or war with Indians beyond that colony's borders, from Indians like the Tuscaroras.

Therefore, slavery and bondage cast a long shadow over early Tuscarora-European relations. Initially, Tuscaroras held the upper hand. Some of the earliest English colonists abandoned at Roanoke may have ended their days involuntarily

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40 Hening, *Statutes*, 3: 69. Laws allowing Indian Slaves to be brought into Virginia were later repealed, but the trade continued nonetheless. Lauber, *Indian Slavery*, 185-86.
experiencing bondage as laborers at Ocanahowan. A half-century later, the situation reversed. In 1650, when Bland ventured into the same area he found the Tuscaroras hesitant to trade with Virginians because of a reputed penchant for kidnapping Indians. A mid-seventeenth century attempt at settlement by New Englanders along the Cape Fear River quickly collapsed in part because of Indian retaliation against the settlers' "irregular practices" of capturing native children under the "Pretence of instructing 'em in Learning and the Principles of the Christian Religion." Nonetheless, as trade and settlement extended into North Carolina, pretense fell aside and the exchange of Indian slaves became regular practice, with Europeans typically avoiding direct confrontation by purchasing Indians who had been captured by other Indians. Even before guns had become common, Machapungas were able to find English buyers for Coree prisoners they had snared in an ambush.


42 Bland, Discovery, 119.


44 CRNC, 3: 350-51 for an Albemarle County trader's expectation to purchase Indian slaves along with buckskins, "Doo skins," beaver, and otter in 1699.

45 *Lawson, New Voyage*, 209.
At the start of the eighteenth century, when Lawson arrived in the Tuscarora borderlands, the explorer could frequently spot native slaves among Europeans and Indians. Eno Will (who himself owned a slave captured from the Saxapahaws) served as Lawson's guide. Indian and European practices both overlapped and existed side by side, making it almost impossible to draw distinct lines between forms of bondage. Young men preparing for war still sang about how “they will kill, roast, sculp, beat, and make Captive, such and such Numbers of” Enemies. Tortures and executions continued, although now armed with iron manacles and the option of selling male captives to Europeans, more men may have survived into slavery. Some of these captives ended their days toiling among the colonists where Lawson noted they learn “Handicraft-Trades very well and speedily” in addition to the drudgery they undoubtedly performed. Others labored in Indian towns preparing skins for market—the sort of menial labor they probably would have performed a century earlier, but now feeding European markets. When at a great man’s funeral, native orators enumerated “his Guns, Slaves and almost every thing he was possess’d of

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46 Lawson, New Voyage, 64.

47 Lawson, New Voyage, 177.

48 Considering how often female slaves were mentioned in contemporary sources, Gallay notes a higher than expected proportion of male Indian slaves in colonial South Carolina perhaps owing to such factors (Indian Slave Trade, 200); William Robert Snell, "Indian Slavery in Colonial North Carolina, 1671-1795" (Ph.D. diss., Dept. of History, U. of Alabama, 1972), 98.

49 Lawson, New Voyage, 175; For court records involving Indian slaves in early North Carolina, see CRNC, 3: 267, 350-51; 2NCCR, 4: 36, 149, 204-5.

50 Lawson, New Voyage, 217.
when living," speakers were simultaneously extolling the dead man’s valor and prowess in war, and his wealth as measured in the emerging market.51

Tuscaroras inhabited this universe on two simultaneous planes, as slavers and enslaved. In 1708 a naked and hungry Indian appeared at the home of Richard Clark in King and Queen County, Virginia.52 Throwing himself at the Virginians’ mercy, he “shed tears and Shewed them how his hands were galled and Swelled by being tyed before.” With the help of a Tuscarora Indian who served as interpreter, Col. John Walker recorded his story. The Indian’s name was Lamhatty. He was a Towesa, from one of nine towns on the Gulf of Mexico. Nine months earlier Tuscaroras (probably alongside Creeks) had attacked: “the first time the Tuscaroras made warr, they swept off 3 of their nations [towns] clear and the next time 4 more, and the other three run away.” As a captive of these raids, Lamhatty spent the next several months being traded and sold among eight different Indian communities and several different tribes. In one they “made him worke in the Ground between 3 and 4 months;” the family of another community employed him as a burdener hunting on the upper Rappahannock River for six weeks before he had narrowly escaped. Lamhatty’s odyssey was

51 Lawson, New Voyage, 187.

remarkable, but he was not the only Towesa Indian in Virginia: others had arrived in
Virginia not as escapees, but as slaves via Indian trade networks that probably
included Tuscaroras.\textsuperscript{53}

Participation as slavers, however, offered Tuscaroras little immunity from
themselves being enslaved. Tuscaroras caught stealing found themselves being sold to
Europeans by members of their own community.\textsuperscript{54} More often it was Europeans or
other Indians who ensnared hapless Tuscaroras. In 1691 Daniel Pugh of Nansemond
County, Virginia seized several Tuscaroras and sold them onto ships bound for sugar
plantations in the Caribbean—an act that had Tuscarora leaders threatening revenge or
even war.\textsuperscript{55} For help, fuming Tuscarora leaders sought the intervention of William
Duckenfield of North Carolina, a man with whom they may have shared their own past
of cooperating in the Indian slave trade.\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{53} Initially, Lamhatty’s hosts treated him kindly; but after the discovery that he was not
a novelty the sorrowful Towesa began to be “ill used.” For months he “became verry
meloncholly often fasting and crying Several days together Sometimes using little
Conjurations and when Warme weather came he went away and was never more heard

\textsuperscript{54} Selling thieves to Europeans appears to be an extension of the practice of enslaving
thieves until they repay their crime. See \textit{Lawson, New Voyage}, 212, 225.
Unfortunately, sales of slaves by Tuscaroras were rarely recorded because they rarely
took place within eyeshot of colonial officials who would tax such transactions. For
example, Governor Pollock complained about a slave trader named Roach who slipped
his sloop into the Neuse River “and there trades for slaves and other goods.” If the
collector did approach, Roach plied the “simple man” with threats and drink until the
official cleared his vessel. \textit{NCCR} 2: 46.

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{EJCCV}, 1: 147, 157-58.

\textsuperscript{56} \textit{EJCCV}, 1: 147, 157-58. For Duckenfield’s participation in the Indian slave trade,
see \textit{CRNC}, 4: 204-05
The same fears of Tuscarora retaliation that spurred a frightened Duckenfield to rush to Virginia’s council, coupled with those Indians’ value as trade partners, prevented the wholesale systematic enslavement of Tuscaroras before 1711. Nonetheless, those instances that did occur, coupled with raids by Iroquois and other northern Indians upon Tuscaroras for captives, certainly added to the Tuscaroras’ sense that they were under siege. Even when Tuscaroras were not the clear victims, they felt uneasy at the sacrifice of cultural and economic independence that accompanied the sale of slaves to Europeans.\textsuperscript{57}

For all these reasons, it should not be surprising that slavery colored the Tuscarora War from its beginning. The white captives Graffenried had watched pathetically dance for their Tuscarora captors might have inhabited one end of a spectrum of captivity and enslavement. Tuscaroras from the Lower Alliance likewise sold or surrendered Indians suspected of treachery to Iroquois allies to be taken to distant lands.\textsuperscript{58} Virginians and North Carolinians also took part. In North Carolina, Captain Brice had immediately seized and sold Indian women and children when hostilities broke out.\textsuperscript{59} Virginia officials approached the subject with nonchalance, offering to buy women and children taken captive by erstwhile Upper Town allies for the “usual price of slaves.”\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{57} Barnwell, “Tuscarora Expedition,” 397; Gallay, \textit{Indian Slave Trade}, 265.

\textsuperscript{58} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 352.

\textsuperscript{59} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 826.

\textsuperscript{60} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 287-88.
Such offers, however, were but the dabbling of neophytes in a process that South Carolina had long since perfected into a gruesome art. A minister working among the colonists, slaves, and Indians of South Carolina complained of the "perpetual warrs" promoted by South Carolinians "amongst the Indians for the onely reason of making slaves to pay for their trading goods."\textsuperscript{61} Coming on the heels of a decade of successful slave wars against Spanish mission Indians in Florida, French-allied Indians in Louisiana, and Savannah Indians closer to home, South Carolina's government quickly turned its sights towards the Tuscaroras in response to North Carolina's plea for aid.

\textbf{The First Invasion and a Peace Betrayed}

To head the mission, South Carolina's assembly appointed John Barnwell, an Irish-born military officer and South Carolina assembly member, who would soon earn the nickname "Tuscarora Jack" for his role in the Tuscarora War.\textsuperscript{62} Through mid-January, Barnwell recruited a motley crew of Indians. From Charleston he marched inland along the Santee River to the Congaree Indian town, then northwest along the Occaneechee Path to the Waterees and then to the Waxesaws. Turning east along the


Sara Path towards the Pee Dee River he paused at Sara and Pedee towns. When he finally turned north overland towards North Carolina, Barnwell led an army of 528 troops. In addition to thirty-three whites, this force included three companies of Indians loosely assembled by region and ethnicity.

A “Yamasee Company” comprised of 158 Yamases, Hog Logees, Apalachees, and Corasboys contained Indians from South Carolina’s low country and refugees from Florida. Captain Jack, a Catawba war captain led an “Essaw Company” of 155 Waterees, Sugarees, Catawbas, Shuterees, Waxesaws, Congarees, and Sattees—these Indians inhabited the piedmont and were collectively referred to by South Carolinians as the colony’s “northern Indians.” Also from the piedmont but farther northeast came another company of 117 Waterees, Pedees, Winyaws, Cape Fear Indians, Hoopengs, and Wareperes led by a warrior named Captain Bull. To this last company Barnwell also added 182 Saras and Saxapahaws who had recently fled to South Carolina from North Carolina after Tuscaroras had attacked and killed several for refusing to join the uprising. Barnwell recommended the Saxapahaws to the governor’s protection as “brave men and good.”

As was the case with all of his native troops, Barnwell hoped that including the

63 Herbert Richard Paschal, "The Tuscarora Indians in North Carolina" (M.A. Thesis, Dept. of History, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1953), 73; This route is reconstructed on a ca. 1716 map of North and South Carolina showing the paths of military expeditions during the Tuscarora and Yamasee Wars. (CO/700-Carolina 4) from the Public Record Office, Kew, Surry, England reproduced in Thomas C. Parramore, "With Tuscarora Jack on the Back Path to Bath," NCHR 64, no. 2 (1987): 126-27. Parramore and Gallay provide the best secondary accounts of Barnwell’s invasion.

64 Gallay, Indian Slave Trade, 267-68.

65 Barnwell, “Journal,” 393-94; Gallay, Indian Slave Trade, 267-68
Saxapahaws in the expedition would cement these refugees’ allegiance to South Carolina in addition to bringing slave profit.66

These Indians had their own reasons to join Barnwell. In the months before the war, South Carolina’s Indian commissioners listened to stories of run-away debt among many of their Indian trading partners. One South Carolina Indian official in 1711 estimated that “the Indians in our friendship” owed debts valued at 100,000 deerskins, or about 250 skins per man.67 In August 1711, the commissioners sent instructions to the Yamasees assuring that they would not hold these Indians accountable for debts arising from buying rum, but unscrupulous traders continued to exploit loopholes to ensure that liquor tabs were paid.68 Scant months before the war, headmen among the Yamasees, Waxhaws, Esaws, and Catawbas—the same groups who formed a bulk of Barnwell’s expedition—conferred in Savannah Town to discuss their debt.69 Rumors abounded among the Yamasees that their lands would be taken

66 Barnwell, “Journal,” 394; South Carolina’s governor later met with some of these Saxapahaws, “who came to desire the protection of this Government and to have liberty to settle themselves amongst our Northern Indians. They have brought me a present of sixty odd skins . . . [and] some Scalps they have brought from the Enemies.” (April 9, 1712, S.C. Commons House Journals, Green Transcripts, SCDAH, (1712-1716): 19). South Carolina’s general assembly also extended relations to other Indians during the conflict by sending messages “to our Northern Indians the Esaws and Wacksaws to assure them of our protection and that we will take the best methods we can to keep them from the insults of their Enemies and encourage to plant good quantities of corn to supply our forces in case we shall have occasion to send any that way,” (April 4, 1712, S.C. Commons House Journals, Green Transcripts, SCDAH, [1712-1716]: 8).

67 Gallay, Indian Slave Trade, 249.

68 McDowell, Journals 1710-1718, 14.

69 McDowell, Journals 1710-1718, 14.
from them because of their debts.70 With Indian slaves in high demand, valued at about two hundred deerskins per adult captive, war appeared to offer a way out of the deepening fiscal hole.71 In the same breath as he described the Tuscarora War, missionary Francis Le Jau, suspected "there is no other Necessity" for South Carolina's Indian partners "to Warr against their Neighbours but that of making slaves to pay for the goods the traders Sell them, for the Skins trade do's not flourish as formerly."72 The fate of the Westos and Savannahs, who had been killed, captured as slaves, or expelled after falling out of favor with South Carolina, stood as a grim warning: enslave or become slaves.

Participation, however, required a tremendous gamble. Many of these Indians inhabited the same ambivalent relationship with slavery as did the Tuscaroras. After illegally harboring an escaped Indian slave, one Waxhaw Indian fled the law and his creditors by joining the expedition; he died in North Carolina.73 In April 1712, the Indian commissioners learned about another Indian, a slave who had already paid half of his manumission had gone "to Warr to gett the remayning Part of his Freedom."74 In seeking his own freedom, he sought to enslave others. No record tells if he


74 Such participation was technically illegal, but in this case an exception was made because it was a *fait accompli*. McDowell, *Journals 1710-1718*, 23, 33.
succeeded. Whatever their individual motives, the makeup of this army meant that the Tuscarora War would become a conflict fought primarily by Indians against Indians.

For the Tuscaroras, the arrival of this mostly Indian army at the Neuse River on January 28, 1712 began a fortnight of destruction. Barnwell’s force marched northwest to the southern reaches of Nahunta Swamp and through the neighborhood of open farmland native homes known to Tuscaroras as Torhunta. In response, Tuscaroras scattered into forests or huddled into numerous newly constructed forts. On January 30, Barnwell’s men sacked a fort known as Narhontes in a desperate brawl that killed most of the defenders, including a cadre of defiant women who fought to the death armed with bows and makeshift weapons. Barnwell worried about his own losses of 32 wounded and 7 killed including the Wateree king, but was satisfied to see that the Tuscaroras, “terrified at the quick work made here, quitted all their forts, and left a fine Country open full of provisions.”

Hindered by rain that flooded streams and swamps and lacking a guide (until he coerced a Tuscarora captive), Barnwell nonetheless followed Catechna Creek downstream, methodically laying waste to the towns of Kenta, Tonarooka

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76 Barnwell counted 52 scalps, another 10 killed, and “about 30 slaves.” (Barnwell, “Journal,” 396).

77 Barnwell, “Journal,” 396.
(Nohoroka), Innennits, and Caunookehoe.\textsuperscript{78} “Everywhere,” he saw “marks” of the Tuscaroras’ raids against the colonists that turned the towns into “a world of plunder.”\textsuperscript{79}

Reaching a fork in the road, Barnwell chose the one most traveled: it led though the heart of Tuscarora towns and open farmland where soldiers on horseback could be put to good use, rather than wandering into tangled forests where a straggling army would be easy prey to Tuscarora ambushes.\textsuperscript{80} Nonetheless, Tuscaroras launched several counterattacks. Men from Kenta harassed the force with gunfire from a distance before melting away (but not before members of Captain Jack’s company took nine scalps, and two prisoners). Several times at difficult river crossings, Tuscaroras attacked Barnwell’s exposed rear.\textsuperscript{81} Barnwell recorded that early one dawn, as he warmed by the campfire, Tuscaroras “poured a volley at us, and I had reason to believe most of the shott was directed at me for it made strange work with my things and several shott plunged the tree I leaned against.”\textsuperscript{82} Seeking a conclusive battle, Barnwell railed against these “skulking dogs,” who repeatedly led his Indians on goose chases and often slipped away unharmed.\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{78} Byrd, "Rediscovery," 41-46.

\textsuperscript{79} Barnwell, “Journal,” 396, 400.

\textsuperscript{80} Barnwell, “Journal,” 400.

\textsuperscript{81} Barnwell, “Journal,” 398, 401.

\textsuperscript{82} Barnwell, “Journal,” 402.

By February 10, Barnwell had crossed northward overland to the Neuse River; turning downstream he passed through the “well ruined” remains of English plantations and emerged to the “incredible wonder and amazement of the poor distressed wretches” at Bath. These colonists’ suffering, however, could be matched by a backwards glance at the damage he left among Tuscaroras in his wake. By his own estimate, he burned 374 houses and no fewer than 2,000 bushels of corn. Even while destroying, he scanned Tuscaroras’ fruited plains and fields of grain with an eye towards future European settlement, ordering “the Fruit trees w’ch are plenty both of Apples and peaches and Quinces to be preserved.”\(^8^4\) Barnwell’s journal mentioned killing 78 Tuscaroras and enslaving 38 more, although because Barnwell did not carefully account for those taken by his Indians, the actual number was probably much higher. Moreover, the aftershocks of the march meant that harm ran deeper. Towns came apart. Hunger arrived. Captives described how “old men women and children” had fled north towards Virginia’s hill country and “dispersed into small parcells because they had no provisions but must gather hickory nutts.”\(^8^5\)

Beyond the physical distress, historian Thomas Parramore noted that the raid also disrupted political debate among the Tuscaroras on what course to take in the war.\(^8^6\) Barnwell’s men spent two hours torching the “great town called Innennits.”\(^8^7\)

\(^8^4\) Barnwell, “Journal,” 396.

\(^8^5\) Barnwell, “Journal,” 400.

\(^8^6\) Parramore, "With Tuscarora Jack," 122-28; Spotswood, Letters, 1: 170

\(^8^7\) Barnwell, “Journal,” 400.
Two months earlier, deputies from this Upper Town had signed articles of peace with Spotswood.88 Similarly, occupants of Torhunta, site of Barnwell’s bloody victory over the fort, also appeared as a signatory in Williamsburg.89 For Tuscaroras weighing which course to take, the appearance of several dozen white South Carolinians alongside hundreds of Indian invaders further confused an already chaotic situation. In March 1712, when Spotswood finally lost patience with the Upper Towns, their deputies argued that they could have easily cut off the intruders, “but that they saw some English among them which hindered them.” They wanted to know “whether they might defend themselves in case they’re attacked.”90 The result was the same inaction that Spotswood decried as treachery. The attacks widened splits within Tuscarora communities. Whereas some Tuscaroras fled deeper into the backcountry, prisoners speculated to Barnwell that “most of the men belonging to the towns destroyed will fly” to Hancock.91 If Barnwell’s invasion had meant to end the Tuscarora War, it also widened it.

Whatever the effects on Virginia’s negotiations, Barnwell did not care. As a South Carolina agent accustomed to competing with Virginia traders, he scanned for

88 EJCCV, 3: 293-95. It appears in this record as “Chounanitz.”
89 EJCCV, 3: 293-95. Torhunta appears as Taughoutnith in this record.
90 Byrd, Secret Diary, 499.
evidence that the Virginians had incited the uprising, or at least profited from it.\textsuperscript{92} He scoffed at Spotswood's conference at Nottoway town, bragging sarcastically that:

> to the immortal Glory of South Carolina [his own army's march] has struck the Dominion of Virginia into amazement and wonder, who a month before with 1,500 men in arms believed (to their great shame) they had obtained a glorious victory, when by the dreadful terror of their troops they begged a most ignominious neutrality of those cowardly miscreants, which they were so gracious to grant upon Condition to have goods at a cheaper rate and their children brought up at the College.\textsuperscript{93}

Not surprisingly, Virginia's council considered the journal of Barnwell's expedition a "scurrilous paper" full of "false and unjust reflections on this Government."\textsuperscript{94} For these clashing colonies who had embarked on contradictory schemes, the Tuscarora War was not big enough for the two of them.

Barnwell preferred a more straightforward policy of punishing the Tuscaroras by killing or enslaving any he encountered. But an Indian army bent on slaving did not always prove compatible with goals of broader retribution, or even tractable to his direction. His allies' style of warfare made them well-suited to "making excursions

\textsuperscript{92} Barnwell, "Journal," 398, 43-44, 52.

\textsuperscript{93} Barnwell, "Journal," 400. Barnwell repeatedly interrogated his prisoners seeking evidence that Virginia's traders could be blamed for instigating the massacre, or supplying the Tuscarora combatants after it began (see "Journal," 398, 52, 53).

\textsuperscript{94} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 318.
and destroying the Country” (396). Barnwell estimated that his allies “outdo . . . [the Tuscaroras] very much either at bush or Swamp” and were limited only by the Tuscaroras’ greater familiarity with the countryside. This martial aptitude as scouts and rangers, however, left the Indians cold to the task of costly frontal assaults. Some of the Yamasees had pushed for the storming of Narhontes, but as casualties mounted, their ardor diminished. Despite Indian participation and casualties, whites bore the brunt of the attack. Indians, “will never of themselves attempt the taking of any fort,” Barnwell later advised.

Moreover, the quest for slaves could prove a deadly distraction. At Narhontes, some of Barnwell’s Indians had begun plundering and securing prisoners even before the fighting had finished, “which proved the destruction of several.” Not that Barnwell did not covet his own share of captives: “while we were putting the men to the sword,” rued Barnwell, “our Indians got all the slaves and plunder, only one girl we gott.” As soon as they rounded up as many hapless Tuscaroras as they could safely handle, these Catawbas, Waxhaws, Pedees, and the rest expected to quickly return home, their bravery proven and wealth (or at least temporary freedom from debt)

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95 Barnwell, “Journal,” 397.
assured. Desertions more than halved Barnwell’s force. Captain Bull’s force left, as did most of the Esaw Company except Captain Jack and twenty-three others. Their commander’s vain pleas only earned pledges that “when they had secured their plunder . . . and their Slaves [to South Carolina], they would return.” Only the Yamasee Company remained largely intact. Therefore, despite fiery talk of a conclusive battle, Barnwell had steered a course to Bath that avoided the Lower Alliance forces who gathered at King Hancock’s recently constructed fort at Catechna.

Barnwell came to Bath expecting reinforcements and supplies from North Carolina. Indeed, Barnwell had arranged to meet Gale when South Carolina’s forces first reached the Neuse, but a French privateer had captured the North Carolina envoy as he sailed home and the rendezvous never happened. For the same reason, North Carolina’s officials knew nothing of Barnwell’s expedition. No preparations had been made; no supplies awaited, only “300 widows and orphans that are here without provision or clothing and ill used” who expressed “mad joy” at the army’s sudden arrival and then pondered the question of how to feed it. A divided and disordered North Carolina government tried to rouse itself by calling a session of the assembly and passing several provisioning laws but its members provided little real aid, instead

99 Not all captives were channeled into the slave trade. South Carolina Indians “cooked and ate the flesh” of a Coree Indian, (Graffenried, Account, 243).


101 NCCR, 2: 234-35.

getting drunk and dancing “stark naked” in celebration of Barnwell’s arrival and then drifting back into stupor and discord.  

Barnwell, who in South Carolina had opposed efforts to exclude dissenters from government, did himself few favors by joining into party politics alongside Quakers and Cary-ites in the assembly against Gov. Hyde. Eventually, sixty-seven North Carolinians joined Barnwell’s force, but Barnwell considered them a “country cowardly crew” for whom he could scarcely scrounge even ten shots per man. Finally, on February 27, the army set out against Catechna, driven as much by hunger and hopes to plunder stores of corn they expected to find among the Indians as in pursuit of Hancock.

As he approached Catechna, Barnwell crowed that he would end the war in a “stroke” with all the “principle murderers” from among Hancock’s allied Tuscaroras, Corees, Bear Rivers, Pamlicos, and Neusioks confined to “a pen.” But Catechna was far more than a flimsy cage. Rumors of the fort’s strength did little to prepare Barnwell for the intimidating sight that soon confronted him through his spyglass. Approximately twenty-four African slaves had absconded to, or been captured by the

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103 Barnwell, “Journal,” 49. Resolutions were passed to collect corn, but proved ineffectual; similarly, the government issued bills of credit valued at £4,000, but were able to channel little of this to Barnwell before his departure, Paschal, “Tuscarora Indians,” 77-79.

104 NCCR, 2: 20, 46.


106 Barnwell, “Journal,” 43, 50

107 Barnwell, “Journal,” 45; Graffenried, Account, 244.
Lower Alliance. Among them was one named Harry who had belonged to a South Carolinian before being sold into Virginia "for roguery;" afterwards he "fled to the Tuscaroras." Somewhere in his travels Harry had acquired a knowledge of fortifications. Combining Indian, European, and perhaps African styles, he helped the Tuscaroras engineer a substantial fort complete with surrounding trenches, timber walls fireproofed by an earthen outer layer, two tiers of port holes, and four round flankers to allow enfilading fire. Abati of sharpened tree limbs and reeds promised to entangle and trip up any charge. Careful placement of the fort in a river bend provided further protection. The fact that many of the Tuscarora women and children hid elsewhere in a swamp while 130 men guarded its walls suggests that the Lower Alliance intended the edifice to serve as much as an offensive fighting platform as a bastion of last defense.

Successful pitched battles at the fort resulted in stalemate. The first night, Barnwell's men charged through the rain, screened behind large wooden shields until the defenders' furious fire put them to flight and according to a frustrated Barnwell, "deservedly shott sevll of them in their arses." Shifting tactics, Barnwell spent

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110 Barnwell, "Journal," 45.
several days throwing up breastworks that overlooked the riverbanks, forcing trapped
defenders to send European hostages into the crossfire to fetch water. Overwhelmed
with their own wounded, short on food and ammunition, and distraught from the
screams of hostage children whom the Lower Alliance began to torture and kill, on
March 7 Barnwell agreed to an armistice that effected the immediate release of twelve
captives and set the stage for a treaty to be negotiated eleven days later. But deputies
from the Lower Alliance did not arrive at the appointed meeting place and the fighting
resumed.\textsuperscript{111} Nineteenth-century oral histories among the Tuscaroras also remembered
the short ceasefire:

\begin{quote}
[a Tuscarora woman] went out and followed the soldiers. When she
c caught up with them she said, “You nearly conquered us that time.”
When she had finished speaking they knocked her on the head and
killed her. They returned and fought again . . . \textsuperscript{112}
\end{quote}

Barnwell had used the intervening time to muster additional troops and several
small artillery pieces; the Lower Alliance in turn had expanded Catechna’s palisade and

\textsuperscript{111} Suspicions of Barnwell’s motives for a trip to New Bern during this time may have
caused the Lower Alliance leader not to attend (Parramore, "With Tuscaora Jack," 130.) Alternately, disease gripped Barnwell and a number of his Indian allies at the
time, forcing Barnwell to send deputies in his stead; it may have similarly crippled
negotiators from the Lower Alliance.

\textsuperscript{112} "Tuscaroras Leave N.C." Gatschet after Adam Williams, 44, Tusc., ca. 16 Sept.
1885. Free Rendering by A. F. C. Wallace, BAE Box 372b in Extracts BAE
Tuscarora Collection, F. R. Johnson Papers, NCSA, Raleigh. The account states that
this occurred at Neohoroka (site of a siege a year later, described below) but the
mention of the cease-fire seems to better match events at Catechna. It would have
been easy to conflate the two incidents.
A ten-day siege began April 7, which “for variety of action, sallies, attempts to be relieved from without, can’t I believe be paralleled agst Indians,” marveled Barnwell. As Barnwell’s men sought to mine ever closer to the walls, the Tuscaroras dug counter trenches and made sorties against what Barnwell estimated to be forty-to-one odds. Despite terrible casualties among the Tuscaroras, cramped hand-to-hand combat in the pits “flinted the edge of those Raw [North Carolina] soldiers.” It was too much. Ten days of combat for fifteen feet of ground left both sides willing to negotiate. Outside the walls of Catechna, with wounds still fresh and the sound of battle only having just stilled, Barnwell and the defenders of Catechna signed a provisional treaty.

This was the “clapt up” peace that Spotswood denounced so heartily. Governor Hyde of North Carolina added his voice to the condemnations, objecting to battlefield negotiations conducted without his own supervision. A year later, Hyde’s successor even hinted that Barnwell (whom some thought aspired to become governor of the colony) had aimed to “blacken Governor Hyde’s administration” by negotiating

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113 Graffenried, Account, 244. Barnwell recorded that he had 153 white men and 128 Indians in his force during this battle (Barnwell, “Journal,” 51).

114 Contemplating high casualties among the Tuscaroras that resulting from their furious sallies, Barnwell wondered that it was “inconcievable what they meant by it, for we had 40 to one when they entangled themselves in our trenches,” (Barnwell, “Journal,” 52).


a flawed peace. At the heart of these complaints were feelings by officials that Barnwell had prematurely ended his siege and then granted too light of terms. The treaty would "no doubt render . . . [the Tuscaroras] more insolent when they perceive how weakly they have hitherto been attacked and how easily they can obtain a peace after all the barbaritys they have committed," judged Spotswood. Likewise, Hyde complained that Barnwell attacked Catechna twice and had "not taken it [which] hath much encouraged them." Even Barnwell admitted that hunger and news that the Tuscaroras had received fresh shipments of ammunition (possibly from Virginia traders) forced him to the bargaining table early, preventing a "glorious end of the war" and leaving "above 100 murderers unpunished."

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117 NCCR, 2: 20, 46. Hyde and Barnwell may also have shared ill will because they both aspired to the same tract of land on the former site of Core Town (which Graffenried also openly coveted) (NCCR, 1: 878).


119 NCCR, 1: 899-901. The harshest such accusation came from the Swiss colonel Mitchell who commanded some North Carolina troops during the attack. He claimed that the besieging army had drawn "the trenches within eleven yards of their fort, being only palisades and had raised a battery very near, and had planted two great guns, had got great quantities of lightwood and combustible faggots to fill all up between the end of the trenches and the palisades so that the Indians within the forts . . . would have surrendered on any terms" (NCCR, 1: 875). For Barnwell's response to Mitchell, see December 11, 1712, S.C. Commons House Journals, Green Transcripts, SCDAH, (1712-1716): 158-60. The president of North Carolina's council claimed that "the taking of this fort (where most of our Enemy Indians were) would have discouraged the rest so much that they would have either complied on our terms, or left the country, and would have encouraged our people much in taking so many slaves," (NCCR, 1: 875).

120 Barnwell, "Journal," 52; Gallay, Indian Slave Trade, 273.
In other words, even though Barnwell had hoped for a military solution, stalwart defense by the Lower Alliance reopened the door for diplomacy. The position of the Tuscaroras—neither victorious nor wholly defeated—meant that any treaty discussion in the spring of 1712 had not only to take into account the goals of Barnwell, but to be at least somewhat acceptable to the warring Tuscaroras and their allies. If some of the provisions, according to Spotswood, were “very odd and unaccountable,” it was because the Tuscaroras, who still commanded their Catechna stronghold, ensured they would be that way.\(^{121}\) The result was a mishmash of provisions, fulfilled to varying extents.

Several treaty points roared for immediate acts of restitution but proved to be toothless paper tigers. Barnwell recorded some of these in his official journal:

\textit{point 1}: “deliver up all the white captives and negroes immediately that are in the Fort the rest in 10 days”

\textit{response—partial}: “24 Captives children were delivered and 2 negroes one of wch being a notorious Rogue was cutt to pieces immediately”

(probably Harry) \textit{Where were the twenty-two other former African slaves?}

\textit{point 2}: “... deliver up K. Hancock and 3 notorious murderers...”

\(^{121}\) Spotswood, \textit{Letters}, 1: 150. Parramore, "With Tuscarora Jack," 132 takes an opposite view, that the acceptance of a treaty by the Tuscaroras suggests that Hancock’s people “were in extremities worse than those of the attackers.”
response—nothing: “King Hancock was gone to Virginia and they will deliver him and 3 others [later].” They did not.

point 3: “deliver up all the horses, skins & plunder”

response—almost nothing: “Most of the horses skins and plunder they sold the Virginia Traders, the remainder which but little they delivered.”

point 6: “furnish me with all the corn in the Fort for the departure of my Indians”

response—partial: “This was the hardest article, . . . I got as much as furnished 40 Indians Essaws and Palachees [Apalachees] and sent them away.”

Not all of the treaty met such a stony response from the Tuscaroras. Several points attempted to order previously ad hoc Indian relations in North Carolina by having the Indians agree to negotiate future provisions with Governor Hyde, pay a yearly tribute, and channel complaints “regularly to Magistrates upon any quarrel.” Here, the Tuscaroras agreed. They had gone to war to end abuses, not end contacts. These were concessions to be sure, but some provisions would need to be made to enable peace to succeed. Moreover, at the war’s outset Tuscaroras themselves had

insisted upon similar provisions in the treaty they forced upon Graffenried. During a pause in the fighting at Catechna, Tuscaroras had called out from the riverbanks at canoes bearing Barnwell’s wounded men, speaking “kindly to them, and told them they hoped before long to be good friends.”

Further points demanded land concessions, limiting the Lower Alliance to hunting, planting, and fishing along the upper Neuse and its tributaries, including Catechna Creek. The area below Catechna Creek would be open to white settlement. Barnwell rewarded his Indian allies by granting them the territory between the Neuse and Cape Fear Rivers. These concessions were “Intirely agreed to by the Tuscaruro Indians,” probably because they were hardly concessions at all. The Tuscaroras who had participated in the war retained the bulk of their lands. The only Tuscaroras who lived outside this block along the Neuse occupied several Upper Towns to the north that had been distancing themselves politically from the Lower Alliance. The signers even could have interpreted the provision to mean that lands inside these bounds would be protected from future white encroachment.

The final provision dictated that the Tuscaroras break down a wall of their fort and allow Barnwell’s force to march through, colors flying and men huzza-ing. Even then victory was not complete. The colonel’s military eye noted that a continued siege

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123 Graffenried, Account, 281.

124 Barnwell, “Journal,” 47.

125 Compare this to point 3 of Graffenried’s treaty, which ensured that settlers will “take no more territory, up toward them,” (Graffenried, Account, 281).
would have required "a good many . . . be killed before it could be taken." 126 The Indians inside, awash in the stench and gore of their sick, wounded, and dead, prostrated themselves before Barnwell. Nonetheless, Barnwell noted, the men still "hid all their arms." 127 So armed, even seventy warriors, Barnwell estimated, would be enough to continue war and interfere with the colonists' spring planting. Barnwell had probably squeezed as many concessions as he could.

But provisions that were innocuous or at least acceptable for the Tuscarora defenders would be disastrous for other Indians from the Lower Alliance. In particular, provisions limiting lands and directing complaints through white magistrates angered the Corees. More than the Tuscaroras, the Corees had reasons to resent European encroachment. With a swipe of the pen, the agreement would cross out any claim to their former lands along the coast and lower Neuse, eliminating the uneasy mixture of native and European settlements that had existed for over a decade. 128 The Indian cabins that Graffenried sketched amid Swiss farms and mills in his early map of New Bern would either collapse into disrepair or be replaced. Greater first hand experience with day-to-day contacts with settlers also made Corees less willing to place their trust in neighboring magistrates. Therefore, arrangements agreed to by Tuscaroras were "gruntted at by the Coves [Corees] upon which they quarrelled."129

128 Paschal, "Tuscarora Indians," 84.
From an outsider's perspective, the Lower Alliance seemed to be coming apart.

Barnwell speculated that if he only had a few days more food, that he could contrive "the matter so well that in that time I could oblige the Tuscaroras to have delivered all the Corees for slaves." The prospect was tempting.

Indeed, in the following weeks, somebody attacked the Corees, although the identity of the perpetrators is a matter of dispute. Graffenried, Governor Hyde, and Governor Spotswood cast the blame on Barnwell—he had, after all, confessed to the temptation. It was no secret that Barnwell, who had lost five horses and personally spent over £100 on supplies during the campaign, felt disenchanted that he had not received just compensation, or even due "honor and kindness" from North Carolina.

Adding to his woes, South Carolina Indians had seized most of the captives. According to his detractors, Barnwell sought to settle debts by using the fiction of further peace talks to meet with a "goodly number" of Corees, Bare River, Neuse, and Machapunga Indians who considered themselves "equally concerned" in the Tuscarora treaty. Instead, supposedly Barnwell's men sprung a trap, killing forty to fifty, and capturing nearly two hundred women and children, whom they led home as

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130 Barnwell, "Journal," 54.

131 Gallay, Indian Slave Trade, 274-75.


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“living plunder.” If this was the case, here was clear evidence of how the compulsion to capture slaves could overcome and subvert other war aims, even to the point of restarting the war. However, Barnwell never admitted to the act. Taking up his defense, several historians think that Barnwell, who had sustained an accidental gunshot wound in his leg, had already boarded a sloop bound for South Carolina. Any attack, according to this theory, must have been committed by vengeful North Carolinians who were already on record decrying any peaceful settlement with the Lower Alliance.

A final possibility, not fully considered by other historians, was that South Carolina Indians outside of Barnwell’s direct supervision committed the betrayal. At least forty Esaws and Apalachees journeyed home separately. Barnwell learned the limits of his authority over these former charges when one of his slaves ran away with the departing Indians. Throughout the campaign, these Indians had showed off a particular penchant for procuring prisoners. Indeed, even Graffenried, who blamed Barnwell, admitted that the South Carolina Indians were “entirely inclined because they hoped to get a considerable sum from each prisoner.” Elsewhere Graffenried described an attack on Coree Town—perhaps the same attack, for there are

133 Graffenried, Account, 244-45; NCCR, 1: 875, 900-01; Spotswood, Letters, 1: 170-71; NCCR, 1: 843; Parramore, "With Tuscarora Jack," 134.

134 Hugh Talmage Lefler, and William Stevens Powell, Colonial North Carolina: A History (New York: Charles Scribner, 1973), 78; Gallay, Indian Slave Trade, 274-75 points out reasons for distrusting Graffenried, Spotswood, and Hyde when discussing Barnwell, because they were all hostile towards him.

135 Graffenried, Account, 244-45.
indications that the trap was sprung there—in which South Carolina Indians “got into such a frenzy . . . that they cooked and ate the flesh of one of the Carolina Indians that had been shot down.” 136 If true, the act suggests that European slave markets had not entirely soured tastes for other rituals of incorporation; the two coexisted. Together they beckoned Barnwell’s native allies into acts of violence that he did not or could not control. Coupled with revenge, the desire for captives proved a powerful motive for mobilizing troops; the same temptations made it equally difficult to break off a war. Treaties, peace, and accommodation offered scant rewards for Europeans and Indians who went to war in pursuit of slaves.

Regardless of the perpetrators’ identity, any belief that the Corees and other smaller groups from the Lower Alliance could be picked off without incurring retaliation from recently pacified Tuscaroras was mistaken. 137 The splits Barnwell imagined did not run so deep. Tuscaroras and other Indians of the Lower Alliance instead learned the exact lesson that Barnwell had expressed a hope to avoid, namely that “there could be no dependence in our promises.” 138 The door of diplomacy again slammed shut.

Hancock had presented one diplomatic plan to Graffenried in the autumn of 1711—it failed. Again, in the spring of 1712 when body counts climbed on both sides of the ramparts at Catechna, Tuscaroras from the Lower Alliance returned to the

136 Graffenried, Account, 243.
137 NCCR, 1: 875.
bargaining table, even at the cost of alienating Coree allies; this treaty also failed. Thereafter, no longer would they be fighting to create a middle ground with terms upon which they could coexist with European neighbors. As opportunities for negotiation evaporated within the Lower Alliance, splits with the Upper Towns and other Tuscaroras willing to negotiate with Europeans became more evident, opening new opportunities for leaders to consolidate control over particular factions. In the summer and fall of 1712, new leaders would emerge among the Upper Towns willing to take unprecedented steps to negotiate a peace with colonists. On the other hand, members of Lower Alliance found themselves backed in a corner, fighting a war where increasingly destruction or expulsion could be the only outcome.

The Second Invasion

In the wake of betrayal and with Barnwell’s native army departed, members of the Lower Alliance again rose up in new attacks, which in Graffenried’s opinion were worse than the earlier assaults.139 Again they struck at settlers along the Neuse. “It is likely they will not stop there,” Spotswood accurately surmised.140 In late summer approximately two hundred attacked Reading’s Fort on the Pamlico, killing one defender and burning a sloop anchored there, before being beaten back with a loss of five warriors. Other raids burnt houses on plantations near the mouth of the Pamlico

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139 Graffenried, Account, 245. During this time, however, shortages of ammunition began to be apparent among the Tuscaroras (NCCR, 1: 879).

140 Spotswood, Letters, 1: 169.
River.\textsuperscript{141} Less expected, they also directed efforts farther north, killing several black
slaves near the Roanoke River.\textsuperscript{142}

If the Lower Alliance sought to strike fear in their enemies, they succeeded. In
late July 1712, the missionary John Rainsford wrote to his superiors:

Most families of Pamlico hourly feeling the effects of their Cruelty nor
truly can the Govr promise himself one hours safety being continually
alarmed by the Tuskarora spies in his own Quarters . . . . They sculk so
in parties in the Woods that common prudence obliges the inhabitants
(as the surest method of preservation) to keep to their plantations and
several of them told me that when they lie down in their beds (they are
so often invaded) that they cant say they shall rise morning.\textsuperscript{143}

Barnwell’s predictions that such roving parties could prevent planting proved correct.

Fields lay untended; pork and grain exports stopped; refugees ate up remaining stores;
impoverished settlers could not pay quitrents to the proprietors.\textsuperscript{144} The colony sank
into further debt.\textsuperscript{145} By the end of the summer, a North Carolina official reported that
along the Neuse and Pamlico, settlers had “most of their houses and household goods

\textsuperscript{141} NCCR, 1: 882.
\textsuperscript{142} August 6, 1712, S.C. Commons House Journals, Green Transcripts, SCDAH,
\textsuperscript{143} NCCR, 1: 857–60.
\textsuperscript{144} NCCR, 1: 857–60; 873–76
\textsuperscript{145} NCCR, 1: 857–60; 873–76
burnt, their stocks of Cattle, hogs, horses, etc killed, and carried away and their plantations ruined.” Settlers farther north fared a little better, but even those in Albemarle County cowered in forts and fortified homes.\textsuperscript{146}

The same familiar difficulties in recruiting troops and gathering supplies hindered efforts by North Carolina’s government to meet the threat. Leaders complained of men who were “poor, dispirited, undisciplined, timorous, divided, and generally disobedient”—understandable behavior considering they lacked arms, pay, or even sufficient clothing.\textsuperscript{147} Defeats added to the woes. Rainsford reported that one party marched forth, but the leader, Colonel Boyd, was “unfortunately shot though the head and few of his men came home but what shared in his fate.”\textsuperscript{148} Under the command of several veterans from the Barnwell expedition, Governor Hyde managed to assemble 130 to 140 men along the Neuse—a number that even his supporters admitted was “too few in number to conquer the Tuscaroras.” Hyde vowed to join the troops and personally lead them to “British Glory,” even if it meant “the hazarding of my life for them.” Yellow fever and poor diet conquered the erstwhile commander first.\textsuperscript{149} After Hyde’s death, the president of the council, Colonel Pollock, assumed the post of governor and helped issue in a new period of diplomacy with several Tuscarora leaders, but hopes of a military victory again rested with South Carolina.

\textsuperscript{146} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 873-76; 882.

\textsuperscript{147} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 874.

\textsuperscript{148} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 857-60.

\textsuperscript{149} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 874; \textit{NCHGR}, 1: 438.
Shortly after Barnwell's departure, North Carolina's government again sent an agent, John Foster, to South Carolina to petition for aid, with one caveat—that Barnwell not lead a second expedition. After listening to Foster's excuses for the lack of supplies and scarcity of troops that had met the first South Carolina force, the government decided to put aside past failings. Choosing to "act upon nobler principles" and the "secret pleasure of doing good," South Carolina agreed to send another army to aid its northern neighbors. But it was no secret that baser temptations were also at work. Foster regaled the assembly with "the great advantage...[that] may be made of slaves there being many hundreds of them women and children may we believe 3 or 4 thousand." The mixture of motives was clear to missionary Le Jau: "[in order] to bring those Murderers to due punishment we think to destroy the whole Nation, that is kill the Men and make the women and children Slaves, this is the way of our Warrs upon the like provocations." Whereas Virginia's determination to gain tributaries through the conflict had encouraged its officials to tirelessly work to differentiate enemies from allies, South Carolina's dependence on slavery encouraged a cruder view of the war.

The assembly voted to use unexpended money from Barnwell's first expedition to supply arms to the second and to create a scalp bounty. The main reward,

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150 Barnwell, "Second Tuscarora Expedition," 41.


153 NCCR, 1: 901.
however, would be slaves, which the assembly assumed would be "sufficient encouragement" for white traders to join "without any further gratification from the Publick." Linking a public war to private gain entailed some risk. When Governor Craven visited the rendezvous point at the Congarees, he discovered that some traders among the Creeks and Cherokees had dissuaded their customers from participating. These traders—subsequently brought up on charges before the government—feared a disruption in trade or hoped to direct their own wars where "they thought fitt." 

South Carolina finally settled on Col. James Moore, son of a former governor who had made a reputation as a slave raider against Indians in Florida, to head the expedition. The force was comprised of thirty-three white men and nearly nine hundred Cherokees, Catawbas and Yamasees. Leaving South Carolina in early autumn, the Indian army initially bent a slightly more western course than Barnwell’s expedition, first passing through the Occaneechee settlements in the upper reaches of the Saxapahaw River before turning east through the Catechna Creek towns. But in


158 Barnwell, "Second Tuscarora Expedition," map opp. 32.
other ways, Moore clearly walked in his predecessor's footsteps. Tuscaroras also had learned lessons from the first invasion. Again, the Tuscaroras took to their forts, one of which Moore's Indians besieged for three days before quitting because of a shortage of food and of the picks and shovels necessary to dig in for a longer siege. Like Barnwell, Moore found it difficult to encourage native allies questing for slaves to endure a wearisome blockade. Unable to continue the attack, Moore's force retreated to the rendezvous point at Fort Barnwell, where he found the expected supplies entirely consumed by the small garrison there. Therefore they marched farther north to Albemarle, but found the situation little better.

The Yamasees, Cherokees, and Creeks found themselves quartered among a population that bore little love for Indians and possessed few supplies to offer. Hungry warriors quickly ate through scarce provisions and disbursed "without orders" to rove and forage, eating "all the Cattle wherever they have come." Pollock missed a military summit with Spotswood in Virginia because he needed to be on hand "fearing every hour of hearing of differences and quarrels between our people and the Indians." "Several people ... [were in] such a ferment that they were more ready to Fall upon the South Carolina Indians, than march out against the enemy," apologized Pollock to the snubbed Virginia governor. Spotswood in turn stoked fears against

159 *NCCR*, 1: 893. This fort was probably Neoheroka (*NCCR*, 2: 4).

160 *NCCR*, 2: 19.

161 *NCCR*, 2: 4, 6-7.

162 *NCCR*, 2: 6-7.
South Carolina rivals by warning that "a body of Men, peic’d up of so many nations of Savages" should fall apart "after being once baffled." If Moore's army met trouble, speculated the Virginia governor, they would immediately disperse, and such a disorderly multitude, let loose among the Inhabitants, would prove as destructive as the Enemy; Since experience has already show’d how little of discipline or Rule there is among them, and that even Colo. Moore’s presence and authority Could not restrain them from such ravages among the stocks of y’r People.  

Slave-war tactics suitable for use against distant Indians allied to the French around Mobile or the Spanish around Fort Augustine proved troublesome closer to English settlements. Even victories, Pollock worried, might bring the same undesirable outcome. Such an army might win a battle, but then having "got Slaves or other Booty may desert,” thereby losing the war.  

Fearing reprisals from the populace, these Indians, accompanied by Moore, the small cadre of South Carolina traders, and about seventy North Carolinians, embarked again for the Catechna basin in late January. Owing to unusually deep snows, they did not reach the Tuscaroras until the end of February or the beginning of March.  

Passing the shattered hulk of fort Catechna, the army marched several miles further to

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163 Spotswood, Letters 2: 5.  
164 NCCR, 1: 893.  
165 NCCR, 2: 4; Paschal, "Tuscarora Indians," 104.
a new fortification the Tuscaroras had constructed called Neoheroka. There would be the battle.

Moore afterwards reported that the ensuing struggle was “as hard an engagement as ever was amongst Indians, since the settling of the English.”166 Barnwell had made similar boasts, but the fight in 1713 surpassed the earlier siege in ferocity and scope in part because both sides had taken to heart lessons from the previous year. Tuscaroras had learned that a properly designed, adequately supplied fort could hold off poorly provided attackers, bringing stalemate or victory. Therefore, in addition to the blockhouses, loopholes, and sturdy palisade present at Catechna, Neoheroka boasted several additional preparations and improvements. Shortages in food and the difficulties of retrieving water had hindered the Tuscaroras at Catechna. At Neoheroka, archeologists have found storage pits with the charred remains of thousands of peach pits, in addition to corn, beans, and other food stores.167 To solve the problem of a drinking supply, this fort included a strongly fortified passageway for defenders safely to reach the adjoining creek.

Barnwell had only managed to fire a few rounds from damaged artillery pieces; nonetheless, these had contributed to the Lower Alliance’s surrender in 1712. Therefore, at Neoheroka the Tuscaroras built what puzzled European attackers referred to as “Caves”—underground bunkers constructed by digging large holes,

166 NCCR, 2: 37.

covering each with a roof of sturdy timber, and then piling a mound of earth over the
timber roof. At least four of these were connected by tunnels. Among American
Indians, these were virtually a unique solution to European artillery and were made
possible largely because of the iron hoes and shovels Tuscaroras had acquired through
trade. Some of these bunkers included even deeper levels, constructed to shelter the
very old and the very young who could not fight.

Moore also applied lessons. He came better prepared with tools and a supply
line of food in order to methodically engage in a lengthy siege. His predecessor had
learned the disciplinary costs of allowing his Indian allies to win small skirmishes and
then depart home with slaves in tow, or of engaging in a costly battle that concluded
with too few captives. Moore felt that victory would have to be decisive. Twice
during Barnwell’s campaign, Tuscaroras and their attackers had attempted to break off
hostilities and impose a peace. But in the end, both the Tuscaroras and their enemies
had felt betrayed. This time, at Neoheroka, negotiation was never an option.

Over several weeks, Moore’s men fortified themselves in three “batteries.” One manned by 310 Cherokees and 10 white men peered from across the branch of
Catechna Creek that looped behind the fort. Another was erected behind rows of
graves in a Tuscarora cemetery. A third Yamasee battery directly faced the front of

\[\text{168 For a summary and analysis of archeological finds associated with the fort and}
\text{particularly the bunkers, see Heath and Phelps, “Architecture of a Tuscarora Fortress.”}\]

\[\text{169 The primary source for details from this battle come from an anonymous map and}
\text{an attached lengthy commentary probably written by one of Moore’s officers. This is}
\text{reproduced and transcribed in Barnwell, "Second Tuscarora Expedition."}\]
the fort. From this last battery, men with picks and shovels dug a network of trenches and mines towards the fort walls. At ten in the morning on March 20, Moore’s men fired a store of gunpowder underneath one fort wall, but the plan nearly fizzled, the “powder being damnified.” Nonetheless the assault continued from every side. By the end of the first day, Moore’s Indian and white troops had been able to set fire to the fort walls. Some defenders, who “made verry great resistance,” perished in the flames. Even with the fort breached, fighting continued for two more days. Some Tuscarorras made a stand at the fortified watering place which they had hurriedly reinforced even as the main walls burned. Others holed up in their underground bunkers and “did verry much mischief.” Even these offered no final refuge. Archeologists have been able to determine the orientation of some of these bunkers’ entrances from the numerous bullets buried in the opposite walls—silent evidence of the relentless musket fire that attackers poured in upon the Tuscarorras during the final hours.170

The final numbers, estimated by Moore in a terse note hurried off after the battle, were terrible:

the enemies destroyed is as follows—prisoners 392, scolps 192, out of the sd fort—and att Least 200 kill’d and Burnt in the fort—and 166 kill’d and taken out of the fort on the Scout.

Moore’s army had suffered 35 Indians killed and another 58 wounded. There had been a loss of 22 white men killed and 24 wounded.171 Some Tuscarora survivors,

170 Heath and Phelps, "Architecture of a Tuscarora Fortress."

171 NCCR, 2: 27.
according to nineteenth-century Tuscarora memories, crossed the river on rafts, killed a ferryman, and gave a final defiant shout before fleeing. According to a captive, other Tuscaroras, who had gathered in a fort called Cohunke, upon hearing of the loss “all scattered, and left their fort;” most fled towards the foothills around the head of the Roanoke River. This time there was no disputing the victor.

“It has fallen out, as I conjectured,” reported Pollock, “that Col. Moore’s Indians, upon taking the Fort and getting some slaves, would march, the most part of them, home with their booty, so that they have now all gone home, only 180 that stay with him about Neuse River.” These captives joined the flow of other Tuscaroras and members of the Lower Alliance who fell captive during the war. Breaking down the numbers, Gallay estimates a low range of 1,000 to 1,200 and a high range of 1,800 to 2,000 Tuscaroras and allies captured. These comprised a poignant part of a big picture that counted between 24,000 and 51,000 southern Indians who were sold into South Carolina’s slave trade between 1670 and 1715. If one speaks of a diaspora of Tuscaroras from North Carolina at the conclusion of the Tuscarora war, the first group to consider is the numerous captives snatched from their homes and transported

172 “Tuscaroras Leave N.C.” Gatschet after Adam Williams, 44, Tusc., ca. 16 Sept. 1885. Free Rendering by A. F. C. Wallace, BAE Box 372b in Extracts BAE Tuscarora Collection, F. R. Johnson Papers, NCSA.


175 Gallay, Indian Slave Trade, 298-99.
across the British Atlantic world. Unfortunately, these are also some of the hardest to trace.

Many Tuscarora captives reached South Carolina, where they occasionally surfaced in court and legal records as slaves. One of the largest single transactions of Indian slaves in the South Carolina records, a sale in 1714 by John Wright of thirty-two captives, thirteen of whom were women, included one slave listed as “Tuscarora Betty.” Presumably other kin stood alongside her on the block that day.\(^\text{176}\) A great number of these Tuscaroras first came to the region on foot, leashed behind Indian captors walking to native villages. There they would enter into Indian networks of bondage and trade or be met by eager South Carolina traders. As a partial stopgap against fraud and the illegal enslavement of friendly Indians and to allow Indian sellers time to find fair bargains, South Carolina had rules mandating that traders wait three days before purchasing slaves or skins from Indians recently returned to their villages. John Jones jumped the gun and found himself facing charges for “buying two Tuscarora Slaves from a Coweta Indian” at the Apalachee town “before they had been three Dayes in their Townes.” He also “bought a Slave Girl o f a Chatahooche Indian coming from the Tuscarora War att the Toomela Town.”\(^\text{177}\)

So many Tuscaroras fell captive, however, that leading them by foot became a troublesome and potentially dangerous task. Moreover, officers grew frustrated watching their Indian allies suddenly depart to personally escort captives, leaving a

\(^{176}\) Snell, "Indian Slavery,” 87.

\(^{177}\) McDowell, *Journals 1710-1718*, 15, 57
weakened, emptied army. North Carolina’s council took the step of hiring a sloop (referred to in records as the “Yamasee Galley” or “Yamasee Transport”) belonging to Alexander Mackey, one of Moore’s officers, “to carry off what slaves the Indians have here.” However, it, or its officers, provided less than reliable service. Theophilus Hastings, another of Moore’s officers, convinced the “Coosata King” to shuttle seven captives from North Carolina to South Carolina on the vessel. Forgoing native networks entirely, slaves from this abbreviated middle passage were to be delivered to a lawyer named John Stanyarn in Charleston. But, complained the Cherokee leader to South Carolina’s Indian commissioners, the valuable captives disappeared and he could “hear Nothing of them.” The court agreed, and ruled that Hastings must “pay to the Coosata King . . . two hundred Skins for Each of the five Slaves and sixty Skins for Each of the two small Ones.” Another Indian warrior named “Egabugga” similarly complained that “Capt. Mackey gott a Slave from him and has not paid him.” Despite Barnwell’s complaints that Indian allies captured most of the Tuscaroras, South Carolina traders did their part to siphon some of the profits.

Whether arriving by land or by sea, many Tuscaroras undoubtedly ended their days as slaves in South Carolina. A greater number of captives faced re-export. Gallay has pointed out that as much as Charleston served as an Ellis Island for African

178 NCCR, 2: 44-47, 59-60, 62. North Carolina also commissioned another sloop belonging to a Mr. Lahorn (NCCR, 2: 45).

179 McDowell, Journals 1710-1718, 53; Milling, Red Carolinians, 138.

180 McDowell, Journals 1710-1718, 57.
slaves arriving to the American mainland, before 1715 even greater numbers of Indian
slaves passed through its docks in the other direction as exports.\textsuperscript{181} Estimates of
Indians sold are difficult to verify since most transactions were kept off the books to
avoid duties, but if correct, such numbers overturn old assumptions that Indians,
unaccustomed to plantation-style labor and prone to disease made inferior—and
therefore unprofitable—slaves.\textsuperscript{182} South Carolinians sold Indian slaves to Barbados,
Jamaica, and Nevis. Facing lower shipping costs, fewer disruptions from blockades
during Queen Anne's War, and no imperial taxes, importers of slaves from South
Carolina had advantages over competitors bringing slaves from Africa.\textsuperscript{183}

Other captives were loaded into shallow coasting vessels whose smaller cargo
size and shorter sailing distances enabled traders to exploit niche markets like New
England and Virginia's "upper district of York," where larger vessels coming from
Africa only rarely frequented.\textsuperscript{184} So many Tuscaroras and other "Carolina Indians"
arrived in New England, who according to the pre-amble to one Massachusetts law
were "malicious, surly, and revengeful," that Massachusetts and Connecticut soon
passed anti-import bills so that they would not import and inherit North Carolina's

\textsuperscript{181} Gallay, \textit{Indian Slave Trade}, 298-99.

\textsuperscript{182} For a statement to this effect, see Richard S. Dunn, \textit{Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of
the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713} (New York: Norton, 1973),
74. I would like to thank Brett Rushforth for calling my attention to this passage.

\textsuperscript{183} Gallay, \textit{Indian Slave Trade}, 301.

\textsuperscript{184} Gallay, \textit{Indian Slave Trade}, 305; Snell, "Indian Slavery," 87; Elizabeth Donnan,
\textit{Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America}, 4 vols. (reprint,
enemies. Nonetheless, large numbers of "Carolina Indians" began to appear for sale in Boston. In South Carolina, profits were used to purchase African slaves who, far from their native lands, could be more safely exploited. In this sense, Indian slavery helped pay for the creation of South Carolina's black plantation society.

Not all captives from the Tuscaroras and Lower Alliance channeled through South Carolina. The North Carolina-Virginia borderlands, which had a well-established but modest Indian slave trade, experienced its own sudden glut of captives in the wake of South Carolina's victories. In such an atmosphere, disputes about who owned a slave, or even who was a slave, were inevitable. Two Indians captured near the Virginia border were judged to be escaped Coree Indians belonging to soldiers from South Carolina and were delivered up to Moore. On the other hand, in the

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186 See, for example, Boston New Letter, June 9-June 16, 1712; July 14-July 21, 1712; Sept. 1-Sept. 8, 1712; Sept. 22-Sept. 29, 1712; Jan. 12-Jan. 19, 1713; March 2-March 9, 1713; March 16-March 23, 1713; May 4-May 11, 1713; May 11-May 18, 1713; May 25-June 1, 1713; Aug. 17-Aug. 24, 1713; Nov. 23-Nov. 30, 1713; April 12-April 19, 1714; May 24-May 31, 1714; July 5-July 12, 1714; June 27-July 4, 1715; Feb. 13-Feb20, 1716. Unfortunately, while many of these notices describe the Indians as "Carolina Indians," the presence of some who could speak Spanish suggests that some came from other wars or trade. Spanish speaking Indians are excluded from the list above. I would like to thank Brett Rushforth and his students for making this material available.

187 Gallay, Indian Slave Trade.

188 NCCR, 2: 2.
summer of 1713 Bath county officials arrested Richard Jasper for illegally enslaving and selling a “friendly Indian.”\footnote{NCCR, 2: 55.} Plaintiffs brought defendants to court charging failure to deliver captives for whom they had paid.\footnote{NCCR, 2: 95, 97.} Government officials got into the act, either acquiring Tuscarora and Lower Alliance captives as rewards for service to the colony or using their posts to purchase them for a discounted price of £10 apiece, and then re-selling them for profit abroad in the Caribbean.\footnote{NCCR, 2: 1-2, 35, 52.} Other Tuscaroras faced export to the West Indies by unscrupulous smugglers like one named Roach who, it was accused, slipped his sloop into the Neuse River and “there trades for slaves and other goods without entering or clearing with the collector, but gets a simple man by threatening and drink to enter and clear his Vessel, and so is gone without paying the duties.”\footnote{NCCR, 2: 46. These accusations may have been equally influenced by the fact that Roach was out of political favor because he had been a chief supporter of Cary in the late insurrection (NCCR, 1: 873).} By the summer of 1713, with the help of their southern neighbors North Carolinians, had gone from desperately begging for aid to squabbling over the spoils.

A thousand or more of their people enslaved; forts destroyed; towns emptied as thousands more fled as refugees—could the Tuscaroras of the Lower Alliance have envisioned such an outcome? Hancock and his allies had initially planned a limited war. They had thought that they would be able to attack isolated offending parties, exact retribution, and perhaps wrest a settlement that would re-negotiate terms of contact.
Even within the Neuse and Pamlico region, through preemptive treaties with Graffenried, the Lower Alliance had sought to limit the scope of the conflict even while offering a road map to future peace. Briefly, it seemed, Tuscarora strategists had been correct. At first, the war had been limited. North Carolina’s government had been unable to provide meaningful military resistance and settlers in the immediate region were divided. In Virginia, Spotswood had blustered with diplomatic indignity, but in the end his carousing troops never ventured farther than the parade grounds at Nottoway town. South Carolina’s involvement, however, fundamentally transformed the conflict. This owed to the elevated role of slavery.

At the start of the Tuscarora War, slavery had figured among the Lower Alliance’s grievances even as many of its members themselves participated in the trade. It was South Carolina’s entry, however, that transformed the Tuscarora War into a slave war. Slavery served as both a tool and an objective in its own right. South Carolina used the slave trade to muster two expeditions to come to the aid of distressed northern neighbors. The slave trade also turned the war from a moment of distress into a moment of economic opportunity. Altruism alone did not move Indian traders from South Carolina to wade through flooded swamps, plod through Tuscarora fields, and die outside Tuscarora forts. These white mercenaries comprised only a small percentage of the two armies when compared to the overwhelming numbers of Cherokees, Catawbas, Yamasees, Saxapahaws, Waterees, Pedees, Winyaws, and others. The slave trade helped ensure that most of the fighting in the Tuscarora war would be accomplished by Indians against Indians. Taking captives had
long been a vital part of Indian warfare. The consumption of bits of cooked Coree flesh suggests that South Carolina’s Indian allies continued to view captive taking within broader patterns of incorporation. The exchange and gift of captives had long been an integral part of diplomacy among Indians, and between Indians and Europeans. These functions continued. But with warriors venturing forth to relieve their own bonds of debt, with captives being smuggled onto ships for direct export to Caribbean sugar factories or Charleston lawyers, with slaves’ prices being haggled in colonial courts, meanings changed.

For Tuscaroras the result was a war whose scope and ferocity could not have been anticipated. South Carolina’s agents and traders could congratulate themselves: they had broadened military, political, and economic ties with nearby Indians; Virginia’s trade connections in the region were in shambles; they had broken the main military strength of the Tuscaroras. The Tuscarora War, it seemed, had been won.

But could there be peace?

Several hostile bands from the Lower Alliance remained. Isolated guerrilla attacks continued.193 At the end of March 1713, Pollock reported “some Matamaskit Indians disturbing the people at Mathepungo” and “some Cores about Mackayes.”194 Two days later, Pollock received further bad news: “the matamuskeet Indians have killed and carried away about twenty persons at Roanoke Island and at Croatan, and two Tuscaroras have killed a man upon this shore, about twelve miles distant from

193 Gallay, Indian Slave Trade, 286.

194 NCCR, 2: 29.
where I live.\textsuperscript{195} The bad news continued: about fifty Machapungas combined with
Corees and Tuscaroras from Catechna, learned Pollock, had "fallen on the inhabitants of
Alligator River and killed or captured between sixteen and twenty settlers before
disappearing by canoe into surrounding quagmires and cane swamps, "one of the
greatest deserts in the world, where it is almost impossible for white men to follow.\textsuperscript{196}"

"A handful of Indians . . . have spilt more innocent blood than all the rest and we
cannot cause our men to go against them nor willingly pay those that will," vented a
frustrated settler. Maybe the remaining few South Carolina Indians could flush them
out, or perhaps a garrison of white soldiers could "hinder their making of corn, and
make some discovery where they keep their wives and children"—but neither option
seemed promising.\textsuperscript{197}

Only the prospect of capturing significant numbers of slaves could keep a large
army in the field. Although Colonel Moore stayed several months longer in North
Carolina, only about 180 Yamasees remained from the once large army; most Indians
had returned home with their living plunder.\textsuperscript{198} Even if a larger army had remained,
the extra mouths would have returned North Carolina to the brink of starvation. The

\textsuperscript{195} NCCR, 2: 31.

\textsuperscript{196} NCCR, 2: 39, 45. Another settler wrote that "a handful of Indians . . . have spilt
more innocent blood than all the rest and we cannot cause our men to go against them
nor willingly pay those that will, they rove from place to place cut of 2 or 3 Families
today and within 2 or 3 days do the like a hundred miles off form the former they are
like deer—there is no finding them" (NCCR, 2: 138).

\textsuperscript{197} NCCR, 2: 39.

\textsuperscript{198} NCCR, 2: 28; Paschal, "Tuscarora Indians," 108.
colony had only about eight hundred bushels of corn, thirty-two barrels of meat, and slender prospects for more.\textsuperscript{199} The colony’s military preparedness quickly dropped. In the early summer of 1713, South Carolina’s Governor Craven had arranged for another expedition to assist North Carolina, but Pollock’s messengers turned them back before they arrived. “Your forces that are coming in can expect no advantage to themselves by slaves, and besides all our corn here . . . is quite spent,” explained Pollock. Fighting continued, but another Indian army, might “cause an insurrection against the government.”\textsuperscript{200}

A war waged for slaves could not solve North Carolina’s problems. The entry of South Carolina into the Tuscarora War had caused hardship for the Tuscaroras and other hostile Indians in North Carolina. But the “laudable custom” of South Carolina had not brought peace.\textsuperscript{201} North Carolina had sent entreaties to South Carolina hoping to bring an “end of this troublesome war by your means.”\textsuperscript{202} But that means did not work. Peace would require some sort of settlement.

\textsuperscript{199} Paschal, "Tuscarora Indians," 108.

\textsuperscript{200} NCCR, 2: 52-53; Gallay, \textit{Indian Slave Trade}, 285.

\textsuperscript{201} “Laudable custom,” in Gallay, \textit{Indian Slave Trade}, 288.

\textsuperscript{202} NCCR, 1: 881.
CHAPTER SIX
RECONSTRUCTION IN THE TUSCARORA BORDERLANDS

Despite twin invasions from South Carolina, diplomacy never entirely ceased. Diplomatic meetings with the neutrality-seeking Upper Towns resumed after Barnwell's failed peace, continued through Moore's invasion, and carried on into the uncertain aftermath of the battle at Neoheroka. The first of these meetings occurred in August 1712 after the collapse of Barnwell's treaty when three Tuscaroras from Taughairouhha (Toherooka) and another from Tastiahk came to Williamsburg to indicate that "the eight upper Towns" were "desirous to reestablish a peace," even offering "to deliver up alive to the Governor the Indian named King Hancock, the Ringleader in the late Massacre." 1 As proof of their sincerity, two Tuscaroras agreed to stay as hostages in Williamsburg where they would alternate turns, one having liberty to walk about the town while the other remained in the prison.2

Similar agreements, however, had already foundered. It would take more than a few stints in jail to throw off the pall of past failed pacts. "What engagements were heretofore entered into by the persons who came hither . . . was without any authority

1 EJCCV, 3: 320-21.

2 One of these hostages escaped the following November; JHBV 1712-1726, 5: 15.

270
from their Rulers and never communicated to them," explained the hostages.\(^3\)

Divisions and unclear leadership among the Upper Towns had meant that colonial authorities could never be certain that they were speaking to delegates whose word carried broad weight. But even an accurate diagnosis did not guarantee an immediate cure. Old symptoms reemerged. When the interpreter read aloud Spotswood's formal articles, which included further demands to "cut off" members of the Lower Alliance, the delegates reacted favorably, but a familiar note of caution crept into their assent: yet again the four Tuscaroras were not "fully empowered to conclude a peace;" they "would not promise further than they had been directed by their Greatmen."\(^4\)

If the Tuscaroras seemed like a slippery diplomatic target, in the minds of Indian negotiators their colonial counterparts seemed just as divided. So far, most Tuscarora negotiations had been directed at Virginia, but that government wielded uncertain influence. The war was being fought primarily in North Carolina but counterattacks emanated from South Carolina. Although Virginia's leaders had been the most diplomatic of the three colonies, they seemed the least able to alter the war. So far, treaties there had accomplished little but mutual frustration. Despite renewed expressions of goodwill, the meeting in August 1712 ended with peace as elusive as ever.

In the following months, however, diplomacy in the Tuscarora borderlands would undergo a radical change. A leader named Tom Blount rose to preeminence

\(^3\) *EJCCV*, 3: 320-21.

among other accommodationist Tuscaroras, initiating a new phase of direct, personal diplomacy. Relations with Virginia continued—indeed they took on renewed importance—but, led by Blount, Tuscaroras also began to deal directly with North Carolina. There, Blount met with Thomas Pollock, who as president of North Carolina’s council had assumed the role of acting governor at Hyde’s death. In a divided and fractious colony with limited military resources, Indian diplomacy served as one avenue of authority for the North Carolina leader.5

In a sense, then, the fates of the two rising political stars were linked. The success of Pollock’s war aims would depend on Blount’s ability to command support among large numbers of Tuscaroras. In succeeding months, Pollock would strive mightily to bolster Blount’s authority. Blount, in turn, attempted to use his unique relationship with the leaders of North Carolina and Virginia to cement his own tenuous grip among Tuscaroras unaccustomed to such influence resting in the hands of one man. Officials in both Virginia and North Carolina both came to think that in Blount they had found an instrument that they could control. Indeed, leaders of the two

5 In November 1713, North Carolina’s council legitimized a role that Pollock had already assumed by granting him authority to “give such instructions and make such agreements or Treatys with the said Coll. Moore or the Indyans in relation to carrying on this warr as he shall think convenient and Enter into such other Articles or agreemt wth Tom Blount or any other of our Neighbouring Indyans as he shall think proper,” (NCCR, 2: 72).
colonies eventually quarreled over who would hold the strings of authority. But, they
discovered, Blount was no puppet.6

"King" of the Tuscaroras

Unlike Tuscarora delegates whose names are mentioned only once, twice, or
not at all, flitting briefly into the beam of documentary evidence before disappearing
back into anonymous gloom, in the late summer of 1712 Blount strode onto the stage
from which he would not depart for two decades. Despite the Tuscarora leader’s
eventual prominence, early evidence is only fragmentary. Graffenried had met Blount
briefly during his captivity and described the Tuscarora as a "king or leader of a
considerable [number of] wild Indians." Blount had argued for the baron’s release.
Graffenried, in return, considered him a man of "very good understanding" and "very
well inclined towards the English."7 Although Blount’s influence would later extend to
other Tuscarora communities, originally he resided at Ucoughnerunt; on maps and
documents this town sometimes later appeared as King Blount’s Town.8 This

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6 Boyce refers to Blount as "the White colonial government’s man"—a view that,
while not inaccurate, I hope to show is too simplistic (Douglas W. Boyce, "Notes on
Tuscarora Political Organization, 1650-1713" [M.A. thesis, Dept. of History, U. of
North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1971], 22.)

7 Graffenried, Account, 276.

8 Boyce, "Tuscarora Political Organization," 258; See, for example, Edward Moseley,
"A New and Correct Map of the Province of North Carolina, 1733," in William P.
Press, 1998), pl. 51; Barnwell-Hammerton, "[Southeastern North America, ca 1721],"
in Cumming, Southeast in Early Maps, pl. 48a.
community had participated in negotiations with Spotswood alongside other Upper Towns during the preceding year. But if Blount had appeared in person at the talks, his presence was not recorded—evidence either that Virginia officials possessed a blind eye for Indian politics or that Blount had initially cut an unremarkable figure.9

Much, perhaps too much, can be made of a name.10 Often this Tuscarora leader’s name appeared spelled “Blunt” in the records, perhaps a punning reference to his brusque manner and tendency to voice complaints.11 Tactful circumspection was not his style. A more likely genesis for the appellation, however, stems from some sort of contact with a settler, trader, or diplomat. An Englishman named Thomas Blount briefly served as an interpreter for Virginia in the 1690s; another Thomas Blount traded with Indians in North Carolina around the same time.12 During the Tuscarora War, a man named Thomas Blount served as a council member in the Chowan precinct.13 Any of these men may have served as namesakes for the Tuscarora leader.

9 See EJCCV, 3: 183-85 for names of negotiators and towns in the December 1711 treaty. He was not present at the meeting in Williamsburg in August 1712, but evidence suggests that delegates there had mentioned him and Spotswood expected to meet with him later. EJCCV, 3: 320-21; NCCR, 1: 880-84.


11 James Merrell, "Minding the Business of the Nation': Hagler as Catawba Leader," Ethnohistory 33, no. 1 (1985): 58, for a similar case of an anglicized name that may have p unned on a personal trait (i.e “King Hagler” was known to haggle.)

12 EJCCV, 2: 22; NCCR, 1: 517.

13 NCHGR, 3: 81-82.
Blount's English moniker may also reflect that he lived geographically and culturally closer to colonial settlements than did other members of the Upper Towns. Among Tuscaroras whose names were recorded, Blount was one of the few leaders among the Upper Towns to have possessed an anglicized name.\textsuperscript{14} His town of Ucouhnerunt, located on the Tar River upstream from Bath, was located closer to North Carolina coastal settlements than other communities among the Upper Towns. Other Upper Towns dealt primarily through trade links with Virginia officials: when the going got rough, their inhabitants tended to flee northwest into that colony out of easy reach of North Carolina. Blount's focus, on the other hand, tended downriver towards the European settlements in coastal North Carolina. Blount played a crucial role in redirecting diplomacy by the Upper Towns to include North Carolina. In an early gesture towards these neighbors, in spring 1712 he personally appeared among settlements near the Chowan River to return a mare.\textsuperscript{15}

In late September 1712, Blount again came to Albemarle and personally met with Pollock, starting years of frequent conferences. Initially, these discussions extended diplomatic threads first spun between the Upper Towns and Virginia. Pollock, too, coordinated strategies through constant letters with his Virginia


\textsuperscript{15} NCHGR, 3: 81-82; NCCR, 1: 852.
counterpart, Spotswood. The result was a series of meetings in North Carolina that on the surface appeared similar to encounters north of the border. Like other Tuscaroras from the Upper Towns, Blount expressed a desire for peace and a resumption of trade. Like Spotswood, Pollock demanded that Blount deliver up Hancock and the scalps of everyone else who "had any hand in killing and robbing the inhabitants here."\(^{16}\)

Pollock repeated habitual demands for hostages as a show of good faith, although he upped the ante to an unprecedented twelve hostages per town.

Unexpectedly, however, stale demands yielded fresh results. As early as October, Blount leaked crucial intelligence on the scarcity of food and ammunition among the Lower Alliance.\(^{17}\) The real break came in late November when Blount arrived in the North Carolina settlements with King Hancock captive and in tow—an accomplishment that Barnwell's invasion and all of Spotswood's negotiations had been unable to achieve. Pausing only long enough to inflict "exquisite tortures," Pollock's men executed the Lower Alliance leader.\(^ {18}\) (Although often considered leader of the Lower Alliance during the Tuscarora War, Hancock only survived its first year.) In the wake of the execution, Pollock and a delegation of Upper Town leaders headed by Blount signed a formal treaty—the first such agreement between North Carolina's government and any members of the Tuscaroras.

\(^{16}\) *NCCR*, 1: 880-84.

\(^{17}\) *NCCR*, 1: 879.

\(^{18}\) *CVSP*, 1: 166-67; *NCCR*, 1: 890-91.
Blount had reached this crossroads by seizing a new role, a willingness to challenge old patterns of political paralysis among the Upper Towns that had previously spawned more words than action. In his first meeting, Blount did not claim to speak for all of the Upper Towns; like others before him, he indicated he would have to consult with townspeople and their leaders. He did, however, claim backing from four of the communities—a hint, perhaps, of expanding claims of influence.

Soon, however, Blount began acting independently. In a second meeting, Blount had arrived with no other negotiators, only “sixteen of his men.” His plan for capturing Hancock used trickery and stealth to accomplish what could not be decided through open consensus among other towns. Blount proposed to join Hancock in feigned friendship while hunting. At an opportune moment, he would summon a band from his own town to overwhelm the Catechna leader. In a single stroke, Blount’s seizure had left behind patterns of consensus that had previously hindered action among the Upper Towns and struck a first blow against the Lower Alliance on behalf of the English. Despite pressure by colonial leaders, previously Tuscaroras had avoided fighting one another. Blount may have hoped the single killing would prevent further fratricide among the Tuscaroras and end fighting against the colonists. That did not happen.

The coup, however, did secure Blount’s privileged position among the English. In the November 1712 treaty negotiated after Hancock’s execution, Blount emerged as the favored spokesperson despite being accompanied by four other “chief men of several of the Tuscarora Towns.” Of these four, two were listed as “absent” during the final signing, leaving Blount and two others to fix their mark on behalf of nine
communities. The treaty itself hardly differed from earlier agreements. The treaty included limitations similar to those negotiated by Barnwell on where Tuscaroras could hunt (only in groups of three or fewer Indians and with permission near settlements) and plant (only on the upper waters of the Pamlico and Neuse Rivers). Prisoners and booty would be returned. The towns would hand over “six of the chiefest women and children” as hostages and pay a symbolic yearly tribute. In return there would be peace, “a free and open trade . . . as existed formerly,” and a commission to investigate future complaints.19 Echoing language from treaties in Virginia, Blount and the other leaders promised to capture nine Lower Alliance leaders and deliver them with “three hoops” under a white flag of peace at the gates of Reading’s Garrison. They pledged to war upon the “towns or nations of Catchny, Cores, Nuse, Bare River and Pamptico,” giving no quarter to men and enslaving boys under the age of fourteen. Within this framework, Pollock bolstered ties with Blount by extending to him the privileges of a favorite. No hostages would have to come from Blount’s town. No boundaries dictated where Blount’s people could travel and hunt. Pollock extended these exemptions to Blount, he explained, out of “the trust that we put in him.”20


20 NCCR, 1: 880-84.
But Pollock could profess such trust as loudly as he wished, and still not drown out suspicion and doubt. Both sides sensed conspiracy. Pollock worried Blount’s that friendliness masked efforts to delay colonial troops until Tuscaroras safely harvested their corn.21 This is why Pollock had refused to negotiate until Blount proved his good faith by capturing Hancock. But Blount’s ambush of the Catechna leader only fueled English suspicions that “there is no dependence on his promises, who will act so treacherously to those of his own nation and his near relations.”22 In almost the same breath, however, Pollock admitted his own prevarication—that he was “forced at present to bear with, and prolong the time with Tom Blount, by reason the forces from Ashley River [are not] yet arrived, and we being open to him.”23

The stalling ended. Only days after the treaty was signed, Moore’s army arrived in Bath. Unexpectedly finding himself backed by an army, Pollock immediately tightened the screws on Blount, threatening to “secure him and the people of his Fort from his [Moore’s] Indians” only on condition of Blount’s people openly attacking the Lower Alliance at once.24 Otherwise colonial forces would “attack him as an enemy.”25 The imprisonment of Blount’s brother and cousin who had been arrested during a diplomatic mission to Virginia added to tensions.26 In December, upon

21 *NCCR*, 1: 873-76.
22 *NCCR*, 1: 883.
23 *NCCR*, 1: 883.
24 *NCCR*, 1: 894.
25 *NCCR*, 2: 5.
26 *NCCR*, 1: 894.
learning that Moore’s troops were to pass near Ucouhnerunt, Blount rushed home.

Parting, the frustrated Tuscarora leader upbraided the North Carolina governor “for
giving him nothing for all he is done only words.”

Officials heard little more of Blount for several months. Bogged down by
heavy snow and scarce supplies, and with Neoheroka’s walls looming large in their
sights, South Carolina forces spared Ucouhnerunt. Nor did Virginia ever answer
Pollock’s call to send troops across the border to pressure the Upper Towns. In early
March, as Neoheroka’s defenders braced for the final onslaught, Blount sensed which
way the winds were blowing. He suddenly approached Pollock to reiterate that “he
was not concerned with the other Tuscaroroes against the English.”

The savvy
leader boosted his credentials by showing a letter from New York and claiming to
have played a role in keeping the Iroquois from spoiling Moore’s siege.

The question of Blount’s role re-exerted itself in the wake of the Lower
Alliance defeat at Neoheroka. Sensing blood in the water, Pollock circled in for the
kill. North Carolina could not survive another inconclusive victory. “This blow ought
to be vigorously followed, until the Indians submit themselves,” Pollock asserted.

But how? Most South Carolina Indians returned home with their captives and
plunder. “There is wanted men, provisions, and ammunition; sufficiency of neither of

27 NCCR, 1: 894.

28 NCCR, 2: 23-25.

29 NCCR, 2: 23-25.

which is to be raised or had in this government." Would Virginia supply these?—inquired Pollock. No, came Spotswood's response. After congratulating Pollock on the victory at Neoheroka, Virginia's governor agreed that "pursuing this blow is the surest way to put an end to the war," but the "difficulties in the execution thereof . . . are too great." Besides, Pollock should well know how "ruinous the continuance of this war" would be for his poor colony.

Spotswood had a different plan. "Where other means are uncertain, it is prudent to make the best use of such as are in ones' own power," philosophized Spotswood. In other words, the "best expedient to free you from yr troubles, and in all probability to quiet the Tuscoruroes for a long time" would be an "honorable peace." The best way to do this would be to "talk high" to Blount. Pretend that troops of Virginia rangers were on the way. Then, "stir up his ambition." Tell him, you are willing to "conclude a peace with him and all the other Indians of the Tuscaroro . . . [and Lower Alliance nations], that will put themselves under his Government." Tell him "you will make him King of all those Indians under the

32 NCCR, 2: 31; CVSP 1: 164.
33 NCCR, 2: 31; CVSP 1: 164.
34 NCCR, 2: 31; CVSP 1: 164.
35 NCCR, 2: 31; CVSP 1: 164.
36 NCCR, 2: 31; CVSP 1: 164.
37 NCCR, 2: 31; CVSP 1: 164.
38 NCCR, 2: 31; CVSP 1: 164.
protection of North Carolina.” This would be the way to “oblige him to be faithful to the English for the future.” As for those troublesome holdouts creating such trouble from their marshy hideouts, Spotswood felt sure that this plan would “engage Blunt to deliver . . . the greater part of the murderers that are yet alive.”

Blount found himself a bind. Despite mass desertions among the South Carolina Indians, enough warriors remained to cause trouble for Tuscarora communities unwilling to flee to swamps or the Appalachian foothills. He could not tell if Virginia troops might finally make an appearance. Potentially hostile Iroquois warriors also operated nearby.

Moreover, Pollock and Spotswood had accurately identified a glowing ember of ambition in Blount that could be nursed into flame. True, other Indians were warning him that the English “only amused him with fair words to keep him from doing them mischief, but when they had destroyed the rest of his nations; he might be sure to be destroyed likewise.” Nonetheless, here was a unique offer for Blount—an opportunity to end the disjointed politics that had existed between and within the Tuscarora towns and to thrust Blount into a position where he could guide his people

39 NCCR, 2: 31; CVSP 1: 164.

40 NCCR, 2: 31; CVSP 1: 164; Spotswood was motivated, in part, by the certainty that Virginia’s assembly could not be “prevailed on to give any fresh Supplys towards the Assistance of the Carolina, considering the present poverty” of Virginia (E/JCCV, 3: 333).

41 NCCR, 2: 38.

42 NCCR, 2: 38.
through a desert of dangerous colonial relations. If the Tuscarora War had largely resulted from a snarl of Tuscarora-colonial encounters, Blount may have hoped he could untangle it. Therefore, in early April Blount signed proposals that acknowledged him "King and Commander in Chief" of Indians in the region. In return he would have to extradite twenty of the chief perpetrators along with any other "of his Indians" that Pollock could later "make appear hath had any hand in the massacre." He would lead his people against holdouts among the Lower Alliance and deliver up two hostages from each town. For the next two decades, Blount would assiduously protect "his" people, the Tuscaroras who submitted to him, and his authority over them.

In Spotswood's opinion, however, Pollock's initial measures exhibited too much eagerness for a crushing victory and not enough consideration for creating tributaries for the peace ahead. Colonial authorities could not risk overturning the king they had just crowned. "Consider how shocking this will be to all the considerable men of that nation, who will without doubt, believe that they themselves will be the persons pointed at," lectured Spotswood; some Tuscaroras would "rather choose to hazard their lives, by the chance of war, than submitt to a certain death." More important would be establishing invaluable new tributaries. Therefore, Pollock

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43 NCCR, 2: 38.
44 NCCR, 2: 38.
45 NCCR, 2: 38.
46 CVSP 1: 166.
should only seek "the delivery of two or three of the Ringleaders" and not venture anything that would make the Indians "averse to this Treaty, and render Blunt, incapable of Executing what engagements he shall make." In other words, securing Blount’s authority should take precedence over prosecuting war crimes. Blount signed final articles several weeks later. These papers have never been found, but it seems that Pollock followed Spotswood’s lead and relaxed the most draconian requirements.

Unlike Virginia, North Carolina never had a strong tradition of relating to Indians as tributaries, but eventually Pollock and his council came to appreciate the worth of Blount and his followers. Earlier, in appeals to South Carolina at the start of the war, North Carolina officials had recognized the value of enlisting other Indians "acquainted in their manner of fighting" to battle the Lower Alliance. However, these officials exhibited little desire to trust any Indians living too close. Presumably Yamasees, Catawbas, and Cherokees were attractive because they would accomplish their mission and go home. After a year of fighting, however, officials began to warm to the idea of permanent tributaries. They sought more permanent guards and invited Saponi warriors to bring their wives and children, who would be “protected and provide for” by North Carolina.

47 CVSP 1: 166.

48 NCCR, 1: 827-29.

49 NCCR, 1: 866. The Saponies, who had become tributaries of Virginia in the aftermath of the Pate crisis, remained in Virginia.
After Pollock’s treaty with Blount, North Carolina’s appreciation of tributaries increased. In the summer of 1713, Pollock expressed “great confidence in King Blount” and cherished his people as the “back-guard of our frontiers.”50 Another settler judged Blount “indefatigable.”51 Although Pollock’s plan called for Blount to cut off “what stragglers may be left” of the Corees, Machapungas, and Hancock’s town of Catechna, Blount personally might have been more selective. He “obliged himself to clear the West Shore of Chowan River”—the precise corner of the conflict region farthest from Tuscarora survivors along Catechna creek.52 In June, Blount delivered eight Lower Alliance combatants to Pollock (who promptly loaded them as slaves on the first ship bound for the Caribbean.)53 By November Blount’s people had brought in thirty scalps.54 In return, Pollock channeled scarce corn supplies to Blount’s warriors and attempted to prevent remaining South Carolina Indians from launching unauthorized strikes against Blount’s town.55 Tuscaroras—at least those under Blount—had begun a new era as tributaries under North Carolina.

Whose Tributary?

50 NCCR, 2: 46; 60, 61-62, 74.
51 NCCR, 2: 54.
52 NCCR, 2: 62.
53 NCCR, 2: 52.
54 NCCR, 2: 74.
55 NCCR, 2: 49-50, 60, 117.
This era of good feelings, however, did not extend into Virginia. Virginia’s executive council complained that the colony had been excluded from the recent treaty between North Carolina and Blount’s Tuscaroras. This exclusion, they concluded, was “highly prejudicial to her Majesty’s Service, very disrespectful to this Country, and ill deserving that Assistance” that Virginia imagined it had provided. Virginia would remain at war—holding prisoners and capturing trespassers—until Blount negotiated a separate peace. It was not just the end of fighting that was a concern; Spotswood wanted to set the terms for future relations with the Tuscaroras and perhaps even enlist them as tributaries of his colony. Troops might be on the lookout for Tuscaroras, but the real tensions were with North Carolina’s government. Both sides wanted to secure Blount and his Tuscaroras as their tributaries. Pollock learned of the resolution and wrote to Spotswood that “we have a report here that you are on some treaty with the Tuscaroras, and that there are intentions of drawing them in under your protection, and settling them in your limits.” The plan, Pollock continued, “seems to me so unjust, and the consequences so apparently destructive to her Majesty’s subjects” that he could hardly believe it. Tensions ran to icy politeness.

“Hon[ore]d Sir,” concluded Pollock’s letter, “I have on my part earnestly endeavoured for a fair and friendly correspondence, which would be most acceptable.”

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56 *EJCCV*, 3: 347; *NCCR*, 2: 57.

57 *NCCR*, 2: 73-75. Spotswood, who already felt insulted, replied that “if hereafter I shall receive any such Letters from you I shall think my honour so far enraged, as not to return an answer to any Letter wch contain such Calumnys,” (*CVSP*, 1: 172).
Bickering over primacy in Tuscarora affairs, however, had long since ceased to be either fair or friendly. Blount had carried on simultaneous negotiations with Virginia and North Carolina since the autumn of 1712, provoking jealous spats between the two colonies. Spotswood felt cheated when Hancock, whom he felt had been promised to him, was delivered into the hands of North Carolina executioners instead. "One who stood more on punctillios than I do would be a little startled at the suddenness of his Execution without my knowledge," Spotswood had whined. "The taking of Hancock was in pursuance of an Engagement entered into with this Govrnt by Blounts people," insisted Spotswood, "he was in effect a prisoner to this Govrnt." 58 Arguing over Hancock's cold body was moot; the real issue was which government would Blount answer to, or as Spotswood later put it, whether or not the Indians were "subject to divided Authorities." 59

The dispute surrounding the Tuscaroras grew heated because it fronted broader tensions over the postwar governance of the disputed borderlands between North Carolina and Virginia. Ancient Tuscarora claims to the region that emerged in depositions among Indians and settlers just before the outbreak of the war ensured that the Tuscaroras would play a role. 60 Debates over ownership of the area with its undefined boundaries raged before the war, dimmed briefly during the fighting, but

58 CVSP, 1: 156.
59 CVSP, 1: 173.
never entirely went away. During the war, in May 1712, Spotswood resumed
complaints about North Carolina underpricing land to attract settlers into the boundary
zone.\textsuperscript{61} In part, Virginia’s council blamed the Tuscarora War on North Carolina’s
practice of encouraging “an abundance of disorderly people going out to settle on
Roanoke River,” who have carried on a constant illegal “Trade and Correspondance
with the Tuscaruros, and made them less inclined [to] an accommodation with the
English.”\textsuperscript{62} As Moore’s force had prepared to embark against Neoheroka, Spotswood
tried to force the issue by offering supplies on condition that North Carolina
“mortgage all the lands of the north side” of the Roanoke River.\textsuperscript{63} These debates
resumed full force in the decade after the war’s conclusion. Pollock’s barely polite
reproach towards Virginia’s Tuscarora policy emerged in a letter disputing the
“controverted bounds” and governance of the Indians there.\textsuperscript{64}

The dispute reached an even more feverish pitch over the Tuscaroras’ northern
neighbors, particularly the Meherrins.\textsuperscript{65} Before the war, North Carolina’s government
had usually directed its efforts towards expelling or confining the Meherrins who
quarreled with settlers. But changing attitudes towards tributaries in the colony
engendered a new response. Success with Blount taught North Carolina to covet

\textsuperscript{61} NCCR, 1: 847-49.

\textsuperscript{62} EJCCV, 3: 367.

\textsuperscript{63} NCCR, 2: 7.

\textsuperscript{64} NCCR, 2: 74-75.

more tributaries. In October 1713 Meherrin leaders complained to Spotswood that Pollock “hath not only demanded Tribute of them, but hath sent his Orders to command their men to assist that Government, as if they were Tributaries thereto.” Pollock defended his actions with a bit of revisionist history, arguing that the Meherrins had long “answered to our Courts, they have submitted themselves to this government, they have paid tribute here; so that they have not always been accounted in your government; but on the contrary, have always here been taken to be in this.” Besides, he continued, with the Meherrins “living in the controverted bounds, [they] are as much in our government as in yours, until the line determines under which they are.”

Spotswood would have none of this. Virginia’s council countered with a declaration that

the said Indians ought not to acknowledge any Subjection to the Government of Carolina, they having been constantly Tributaries to Virginia since the Treaty of Peace made at Middle plantation in the year 1677 [at the end of Bacon’s Rebellion], and living with the bounds claimed by Virginia. And it is ordered, that the said Indians do not obey any Summons sent them by the Government of Carolina, nor furnish any men upon such summons.

66 NCCR, 2: 73-75. In 1726 North Carolina settlers resumed the opposite stance, that “they were never received or became Tributaries of this Government nor ever assisted the English in their warrs against the Indians but were on the contrary very much suspected to have assisted the Tuskarooroes at the massacree,” (NCCR, 2: 643-44).

67 EJCCV, 3: 352.
Spotswood's concerns about Indians in the region extended beyond efforts to shore up claims to contested parcels of land. From the Tuscarora War's beginning, he had planned to extend Virginia's network of tributary Indians. Now at the war's conclusion he pushed ahead his "new project for securing our frontiers" with all the speed and force that an ambitious governor could muster.68 On one hand, Spotswood wanted to build upon the tributaries' tried and true defensive functions. He also sought to incorporate lessons "fatally verified" by the Tuscarora War, perhaps the most important of which was that Indians and colonists could not be suffered to mingle too freely. Contacts were necessary since neither colonies nor Indians could easily survive without the other. But if contacts had to take place, they ought to do so in carefully prepared settings, preferably beyond the edges of main settlement. Indians who too often frequented colonial settlements, who walked unnoticed among homes, and who traded freely at plantations might only lose respect for a colony while learning its weaknesses.69 The question, then, was how to prevent dangerous intermixture while permitting interactions that could transform Indians into loyal, God-fearing English subjects.

The solution Spotswood enacted had several interlocking parts. First, tributaries must relocate to new six-mile square reservations at the western headwaters of Virginia's major rivers. Old reserves had become practically overrun by settlements, transforming them from defensive outposts into potential hot spots around

68 Spotswood, Letters, 2: 51.

69 Spotswood, Letters, 2: 114.
which "Accidental Quarrels" between settlers and Indians could reach critical, explosive mass.\textsuperscript{70} Even worse, the two groups might cooperate (an eventuality that Spotswood considered an unlikely but troubling threat to the governor's monopoly on Indian policy). The new locations would make the reservations "less lyable to differences with the English settlements" and renew the old tributaries' function as sentinels of Virginia's outer bounds.\textsuperscript{71} Indian men could follow the culturally acceptable masculine pursuits of hunting and warring rather than sliding into dangerous boredom and discontent.

Forts, erected and garrisoned at each reservation, enabled contacts with the English to continue, but in a closely guarded setting. Soldiers patrolling alongside Indians, estimated Spotswood, could project imperial power into the outer reaches of Virginia more effectively and at as little as a fifth of the price of colonial rangers alone.\textsuperscript{72} Meanwhile, when white soldiers were not trooping alongside native comrades, they would be snooping "as so many Spyes upon all their [the Indians'] actions."\textsuperscript{73}

Outwardly defensive, these forts were also designed to mount a quiet invasion of Indian culture. Spotswood had already substituted hostage children for old tribute payments; pound of pound, they were worth more than their weight in deerskins as

\textsuperscript{70} Spotswood, \textit{Letters}, 2: 145.

\textsuperscript{71} \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 366-67.

\textsuperscript{72} Spotswood, \textit{Letters}, 2: 57

\textsuperscript{73} Spotswood, \textit{Letters}, 2: 57.
symbols of submission. Rather than having Indian deerskins and furs transformed into saddles, capes, and trim for English markets, Spotswood tried to use the college to transform Indian youth into religious-minded young gentlemen loyal to God and crown. Spotswood continued this program, but realized that parents were hesitant to part with their children, and that re-educating the greater part of the colony’s Indian youth at William and Mary would be impractical. Whereas the cost of bringing students to the school soon overburdened the Boyle fund, bringing the school to the Indians in the form of schoolmasters employed to teach letters and the catechism at the forts could be cheaper. Tender plants could bear the greatest fruit, believed Spotswood: “in a generation or two, [the program could] banish their present savage customs and bind them by the Obligations of Religion to be good subjects and useful neighbours.”

The final crucial cog in this machine was trade. Spotswood reached the same conclusion that had long guided native exchanges: trade and diplomacy were inseparable. But the Tuscarora War had proved to Spotswood that unregulated traders could not be trusted in affairs of state. “Notwithstanding the repeated Orders of the Government against furnishing these Indians with Stores of War,” remembered Spotswood, “it is but too certain they had Supplys, both from the people of Carolina and Virginia.” A relative of Peter Poythress, Virginia’s interpreter to the Tuscaroras,

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74 Spotswood, Letters, 2: 57.

75 Spotswood, Letters 2: 147.
even faced charges of illegal trade.\textsuperscript{76} Tuscaroras had only to raise offers until greed overcame loyalty and some trader decided to sell. Just as often, traders competed for Indian customers by cutting prices or disparaging fellow traders. All of these practices had the effect of "filling the minds of the Indians with Presentments," lowering the Indians' estimation of the colonists, and raising their own.\textsuperscript{77} Spotswood, who always thought that government oversight—more specifically, \textit{his} oversight—provided a solution, proposed an official monopoly. This Virginia Indian Company would have a control over trade for twenty years. Henceforth, all sales would take place at designated market days at reservation forts six times per year under the watchful eyes of the post commander or a magistrate, whereby "all unjust and fraudulent dealing might be discovered."\textsuperscript{78} The freewheeling days of inebriating customers, employing faulty scales, and ignoring embargoes would come to an end; trade would be put to solid diplomatic use. The "trade carryed to their Towns and settled on a just and equal footing," promised Spotswood, "will create in them a liking to our Laws and Governm't and secure a necessary dependence on this colony for supply of all their wants."\textsuperscript{79}

Monetary considerations entered into the equation as well. Allowing established planters (men of "circumstance") farther from the frontier to purchase

\textsuperscript{76} The trader's name was Robert Poythress. \textit{EJCCV}, 3: 366.

\textsuperscript{77} Spotswood, \textit{Letters}, 2: 145.

\textsuperscript{78} Spotswood, \textit{Letters}, 2: 144.

\textsuperscript{79} Spotswood, \textit{Letters}, 2: 57.
shares in the monopoly would invigorate the trade by injecting valuable capital and shift ultimate control away from poorer traders whom Spotswood considered untrustworthy. Gentlemen investors had the added advantage of being better equipped to handle inevitable legal disputes with South Carolina officials eager to ward off competitors. Just as important, the monopoly would free the governor from the fiscal whims of the assembly by independently funding a public gunpowder magazine, warehouses, roads, bridges, forts, and Indian schools.

If this program can be said to have enjoyed success, it did so among the approximately three hundred Saponis, Occaneechee, Stukanox, and Totero Indians, who gathered around Fort Christanna. All of these groups were loosely related Siouan peoples whom Spotswood described as "speaking much the same language, and therefore confederated together, tho' still preserving their different rules." In contemporary records they typically appear together under the "general name" of the Saponis. They had suffered from disease and Iroquois attacks in the previous two decades, shifting locations repeatedly before reappearing in Virginia on the eve of the Tuscarora War during the Pate crisis to request respite from their troubles and a renewal of their old tributary status. Spotswood later settled them in the shadow of Fort Christanna, a massive five-sided palisade raised in 1714 on the banks of the

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80 Spotswood, Letters, 2: 95, 146.
81 Spotswood, Letters, 2: 93-103.
82 Spotswood, Letter, 2: 113-16.
Meherrin River. There the schoolmaster, Charles Griffin, "a person whose inclination, as well as Capacity, renders him very fitt for this Employment" instructed approximately seventy students in October 1715; by the following February he gained another thirty. At the end of the inaugural year, approving observers noted that many could "already say the Lord's Prayer and Creed." John Fontaine, an Irish Huguenot who toured the region gave a more skeptical view, counting only eight boys who seemed fully aware of what they read. But even Fontaine admitted that the "Indians so loved and adored . . . [Griffin] that I have seen them hug him and lift him up in their arms, and fain would have chosen him for a king of the Sapony nation."

Spotswood hoped that others—Indians and white—were watching. He made Fort Christanna a showcase for diplomacy with other Indians where he could sell potential allies on Virginia's military, religious, and economic advantages. Remembering how he had overawed Tuscarora delegates with his militia at Nottoway Town at the beginning of the Tuscarora War, Spotswood endeavored to create conditions at Christanna to have a "like effect" on the minds of Catawbas during the Yamasee War. Later when his policies came under fire, Spotswood touted

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Christanna and its precocious pupils to church and state officials in England as the brightest example of his plan's success.\(^8\)

But Christanna was a brief, shining star in a cold, dark universe. Other Indians who had already established trajectories within Virginia's orbit saw little reason to allow themselves to be shuffled around and suffer further losses of autonomy. Mergers that might be welcomed among Indian groups who had shrunk to a dozen or so adult males could seem onerous to larger groups with their own viable communities. Spotswood proposed merging the Meherrins with the Nottoways, and the Nansemonds with the Saponis—neither combination took place.\(^9\)

A plan to establish a sister fort to Christanna among the Nottoways near the fork of the James River failed because the Nottoways refused to relocate out of fondness for their old reservation and dislike of the new location, a barren patch where, they feared, neither corn nor community would take root.\(^9\) The Nottoways refused another plan to relocate to Fort Christanna, across the Meherrin River from the Saponis. The Nottoways did briefly agreed to move a short distance up the Nottoway River to a place called "Tommahittons" and to send their children into Griffin's care at Christanna, but months later they appeared before the executive council "obstinately

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\(^8\) A coalition of planters and merchants led by William Byrd protested the monopoly and eventually appealed successfully before the Board of Trade to have it disallowed. Jack P. Greene, "The Opposition to Lieutenant Governor Alexander Spotswood, 1718," *VMHB* 70, no. 1 (1962): 35-42.


refusing to do either.”\textsuperscript{91} John Simmons and Edward Goodrich, who Spotswood considered “two little buisy fellows living in their Neighbourhood,” had helped the Nottoways draw up a petition appealing to the general assembly to overrule the governor’s authority—an act that Spotswood considered as “insolent behaviour as was never before seen at the Council Board.”\textsuperscript{92} Determined to “root out of their Heads” the “dangerous notion” that Spotswood was anything less than the colony’s supreme authority, the governor threw the Nottoway headmen into iron shackles for several days and let them reflect on the true meaning of gubernatorial prerogative. Nonetheless, a year later Spotswood ruefully related to his own authorities that the Nottoways “continued (as they do to this day) upon their old land.”\textsuperscript{93} An attempt to move the Meherrins by “seizing their wives and children to be conveyed to Christanna . . . and put[ting them] under the care of the guard there until such time as the said Indians shall Voluntarily remove themselves to the land which shall be assigned them there” met similar rebuffs.\textsuperscript{94}

Most Tuscaroras had even less incentive to enlist in Virginia’s plans for postwar reconstruction. Despite the appearance of being a colonial instrument, Blount’s own ambitions ran counter to the tenor of the project. Spotswood first called attention to the potential use of Blount’s aspirations; he cautioned Pollock against

\textsuperscript{91} EJCCV, 3: 397, 407-8

\textsuperscript{92} Spotswood, Letters, 2: 197.

\textsuperscript{93} Spotswood, Letters 2: 197.

\textsuperscript{94} EJCCV, 3: 396.
pressing Blount with overly vigorous terms. But the Virginia governor failed to recognize that his own plans for pushing and shoving Indian groups around the Virginia landscape into easily monitored pens, for seizing children, and for confining trade to a six-day calendar could feel like bullying. In January 1713 Blount refused persistent demands for hostages, and complained more generally that Virginia authorities "were not good and would scold."\textsuperscript{95}

For the time being, Spotswood persisted in calling Blount "King of the Tuscaroros." But for other Indians, Virginia's council ordered that "the Appellations of King or Queen heretofore used in Treaties . . . be from henceforth discontinued; and that for the future, the sd Chiefs be Treated only with the same denomination which is given them in their own proper Language."\textsuperscript{96} When Virginians later treated with "Hoonskeys" (among Saponies, Toteros, Occaneechees and Stukanox) or "Teerhers" (among Meherrins and Nottoways), they did so not out of a refreshing sense of ethnographic correctness, but a conviction that royal titles were a dangerous aggrandizement for Indian leaders who "every one knows . . . are of no great Consideration among the English, or of much authority among their own People."\textsuperscript{97}

What sort of respect could Blount expect from a governor who perceived among

\textsuperscript{95} The contents of this report (and the fact that it was penned by Pollock) make this report's probable date January 1713, not 1712 as it appears in \textit{CVSP}, 1: 153-54. There is some confusion whether the speaker was actually Blount or "one of the young men" accompanying him.


\textsuperscript{97} Spotswood, \textit{Letters} 2: 200—Iroquoian-speaking Tuscaroras also traditionally used "Teetha" or "Teerher."
Indians no more kingly distinction than "there is between a Corporal and the private Centinels" in the army? For Blount, who was engaged in his own project to innovate authority, the spectacle of shackled Nottoway leaders shuffling the streets of Williamsburg offered little reassurance.

Blount eventually did make a separate peace with Virginia, but signed no formal treaty as a tributary. Instead, the Tuscarora leader chose to remain with his followers in North Carolina. In the arena of face-to-face politics, clashing personalities, not just with the governors but with their agents, may have played a role. Blount expressed a marked preference for North Carolina's interpreter, William Charleton (who also knew Blount's brother and cousin), over the services of Virginia's translator. In North Carolina, continued conflicts with holdouts from the Tuscarora War, the threat of another general conflagration spilling over from the 1714 Yamasee War in South Carolina, and persistent weakness in North Carolina's government gave Blount greater bargaining room for himself and his people. As opposed to in Virginia, where treaties stipulated that all disputes would be resolved according to the "rules of Virginia," a 1715 act in North Carolina enacted to remedy "daily and grievous" depredations by settlers before the Tuscarora war emphasized the settling of disputes by commissions comprised of a magistrate acting jointly with the

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99 EJCCV, 3: 396-98.

100 NCCR, 1: 880-81, 892-3, 895; 2: 4, 295-96

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“ruler or headman” of the Indian community—namely, Blount. Depredations did not stop, but for the next several decades, the prerogative was one that Blount would vigorously defend and employ. Interpreters occasionally visited Blount’s community to spy upon his people’s actions, but no garrison made its home there and no preacher tried to convert Tuscarora children. No Indian company officially monopolized trade. Trade resumed unabated except with injunctions that traders and Indians not defraud, “abuse or injure” each other.

Initially, North Carolina’s peace articles had limited Blount’s community to a tract of land between the Pamlico and Neuse rivers. Continued tensions with Indians from South Carolina compelled Blount to petition for a new tract, farther north, on the north shore of the Roanoke River. The government of North Carolina agreed, citing that “the said Blount and his Ind yans have been very Servicable to this Government and still Continues to be and as a particular mark of favor from this Government they do hereby Give [the requested tract] unto him the said Blount for his futher and better support of himselfe and his Ind yans.”

In North Carolina, when Blount moved, it was his choice. The piece of land, subsequently known as “Indian Woods,” lay exasperatingly close to the Virginia

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102 *NCHGR* 2: 276

103 *NCCR*, 2: 283.
border and Fort Christanna. It would be home to the majority of Tuscaroras in North Carolina for the remainder of the eighteenth century.

A Trail to Virginia?

In the immediate aftermath of the Tuscarora War, however, Blount did not head all, or even a majority, of the Tuscaroras. For a brief period, Spotswood hoped to cull tributaries from other bands. In September 1713, reports began to circulate that "a great number" of Tuscaroras and "other strange Indians" had removed to the upper reaches of the Roanoke River in western Virginia. Rumors of thefts and violence spread; frontier settlers fled east with families and stocks. It seemed, perhaps, that the Tuscarora War had finally metastasized into Virginia. Initially, Spotswood planned to march at the head of an army of two hundred militiamen and tributary Indians, either "to bring the Indians to a secure Peace or to drive them further from our Frontiers." Despite a general "Clamour for some course to be taken to cutt off the Indians," however, Spotswood failed to assemble enough volunteers. Instead, he sent a detachment of fifty tributaries headed by Robert Hix and another trader to meet the Tuscaroras and "sound their Inclinations towards peace." After ten days, Hix's expedition found nearly 1,500 Tuscaroras in a pathetic state, "dispers'd in

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104 EJCCV, 3: 350; Spotswood, Letters, 2: 37.

105 Spotswood, Letters, 2: 37.

small partys upon the head of the Roanoke, and about the Mountains in very miserable condition, without any habitation or provision of Corne for their Subsistence, but living like wild beasts on what the Woods afforded." 107 These were the starved faces of refugees, not an invading army.

In interviews with Hix, the Virginia tributaries, and eventually Spotswood, these Tuscaroras' story emerged: "They say they are some of 5 towns scattered up and down"—intermixed with an "ungovernable multitude of other Towns." 108 Attacks by South Carolina Indians had forced them to flee north, but they denied having fought Moore at Nohoroka or having taken part in the recent war. Instead, spokesmen of these Upper Towns claimed that they had attempted to remain neutral and came to Virginia "with no intention to injure any." 109 These towns had treated with Virginia several times earlier during the war. Virginians could spot familiar countenances among the hunger-pinched faces: Raii-att-att, who had signed a treaty in Williamsburg two years before; Haweesaris, brother of another signer of the December 1711 Treaty; an unnamed Tuscarora who had announced Hancock's capture in Virginia in 1712. Now these same Tuscaroras asserted that they wished "to make peace and make all straight." 110

107 Spotswood, Letters 2: 42.


109 EJCCV, 3: 357

110 Spotswood [?], "Examination of Indians," 273.
Within these sad narrations emerged a subplot of misgivings towards the increasingly exclusive pact being formed between Pollock and Blount in North Carolina. A year earlier, these communities and Blount’s were “all together,” testified two speakers. But they had grown uncomfortable with Blount’s exclusion of other voices from negotiations in North Carolina and so had gone their separate way:

--Question: “Why don’t they then go to Collo. Pollock?”

Tuscarora Answer: “He knows nothing of him for none goes there but Blunt.”

--Question: “Did Blunt never desire them to come in and make peace?”

Tuscarora Answer: “No, Blunt kept the letter that was sent to them, in disdain of the English, for that he would not be their letter Caryer.”

When “King” Blount spoke, he did so as leader of his people; the role of a diplomat or “letter Caryer” was not for him. Nor by 1714 did he depend much upon the voice of his council. These displaced Tuscaroras in Virginia, on the other hand, continued patterns of consensus abandoned by Blount. When Hix presented offers of peace to the scattered refugees, they assembled an impromptu “short consultation with about 160 of their men that could be got together on the sudden” before agreeing to send two deputies to Williamsburg. These two Tuscaroras, Haweesaris (anglicized as Basket) and Naroniackkos (anglicized as George) were careful to tell Spotswood that they had been sent by their towns only “to hear what the Gov’r says or has to

111 Spotswood [?], "Examination of Indians," 273-74.

112 Spotswood [?], "Examination of Indians," 274.
propose." They insisted on having “no other power than only to hear what shall be demanded of them in order to establish a peace.” Months later, “several of the Great men of the Tuscaruro Nation” arrived to negotiate; upon listening to Spotswood’s proposals, they again “desired time”—nearly two months—“to consult with the rest of their Nation.” This conduct suggests that besides being war refugees, these Tuscaroras had come to Virginia to preserve a different, more consensus-driven political system than Blount’s. No single, clear path emerged at the end of the Tuscarora War; choices had to be made.

But every choice had its cost. These Tuscaroras could remain in Virginia, but to do so, they would have to become tributaries. Spotswood had not been successful in wooing Blount to pledge allegiance formally to Virginia. Here was a second chance to secure Tuscaroras in the aftermath of the war. Spotswood envisioned them as a keystone of his emerging postwar reconstruction. Over a series of meetings with their leaders Spotswood laid out his proposals, attempting “to persuade those Indians of the advantages they would receive by this Settlement, such as their having a large tract of land to hunt in, a body of the English to live among them, and to instruct their Children, in Literature and the principles of Christianity, to bring them to a more

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113 Spotswood [?], "Examination of Indians," 274; The name “Baskett” would continue to figure prominently as a surname in Tuscarora deeds throughout the eighteenth century. See, for example, “Record of Deed, July 12, 1766” in Bertie County, Deedbooks, Book L, pp. 56-58 at NCSA, and “Record of Deed, March 28, 1777” in Bertie County Deedbooks, Book M-PP, pp. 315-316 at NCSA.

114 EJCCV, 3: 357; Spotswood, Letters, 2: 42.

115 EJCCV, 3: 363.
civilized and plentiful manner of living, and to establish a constant intercourse of Trade
between them and the Inhabitants of this Colony."\(^{116}\)

These Tuscaroras desired to settle along the Roanoke River, close to the
Weecacana trading path that led to their relations and former lands.\(^{117}\) But Spotswood
insisted on relocating them to a future fort site farther north, between the James and
Rappahannock rivers, "with a design to cut off all Communication between them and
North Carolina."\(^{118}\) Spotswood was through with divided loyalties. On February 27,
1714 three deputies signed a formal treaty by which they agreed to become tributaries,
to surrender hostages, and to remove to their assigned post in seven months.\(^{119}\) Ever
hopeful of expanding tributary numbers, Spotswood included provisions to assimilate
"any other of the Tuscarora Nation" who might happen to arrive, barring only those
"notoriously guilty" in the late war.\(^{120}\)

The Tuscarora signatories probably had no way of realizing that Spotswood
was wary of their numbers and considered it unwise to treat them as "a despicable
Enemy, nor . . . in any way advisable to drive them to despair by too hard terms."\(^{121}\)

\(^{116}\) EJCCV, 3: 363.

\(^{117}\) Spotswood [?], "Examination of Indians," 274; EJCCV, 3: 363.

\(^{118}\) EJCCV, 3: 363; see also Spotswood, Letters, 2: 55-61.

\(^{119}\) EJCCV, 3: 365; "Spotswood's Treaty with Tuscaroras," in Robinson, Virginia
Treaties, 211-16. See also "Treaty Between Virginia and Tuscarora Nation, February
27, 1713" in Fulham Palace Papers Relating to the American Colonies, microfilm, reel
4, volume 11.

\(^{120}\) "Spotswood's Treaty with Tuscaroras," in Robinson, Virginia Treaties, 215

\(^{121}\) Spotswood, Letters, 2: 42.
Instead, Tuscarora deputies had “seem'd willing to submit to any terms.” Their people were starving. Even before signing the treaty, over fifteen hundred men, women, and children had moved closer the frontier settlements to buy, steal, or beg corn. “There's . . . little question to be made of them,” reported Spotswood, “considering the aversion they have to return into Carolina and the impossibility of their subsisting long without Trade.” South Carolina Indians threatened from the south, Iroquois threatened from the north. Finally, it seemed, Virginia would achieve formal political control over at least a portion of the Tuscaroras.

Therefore, it came as a shock and a disappointment to Spotswood when, after several weeks, these Tuscaroras took no steps towards fulfilling the treaty. In late March 1714, Hix reported that almost all of these Tuscaroras had returned to North Carolina. They had hinted at misgivings towards Blount, but Spotswood had made the costs of the alternative, maintaining a separate existence in Virginia, too burdensome. Given the choice between two systems, many chose to join Blount and soon disappeared as recognizable entities. A few remained in Virginia and turned up at the Nottoway town seeking to join that community. The Nottoways reported themselves “very desirous to be incorporated” and “willing to accept such an addition

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125 *EJCCV*, 3: 368; Spotswood claimed that they reported that they were “induced” by North Carolina, but it is not clear what he means by this. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2: 71.
to their people." Whether they remained, becoming indistinguishable from Nottoways in surviving records or soon departed is unclear. In 1720 Robert Beverley wrote that the Nottoways were almost unique among Virginia Indians in that "of late" they had become "a thriving and increasing people"—a clue perhaps that some Tuscaroras removed there. Several temporarily established their own small community nearby on the Nottoway River, but Spotswood later engaged Blount to rebuke them for entering the region without passports. Spotswood's patience for stray bands of Tuscaroras with no formal ties to Virginia had passed.

A Trail to South Carolina?

A trail to South Carolina presented still further options. In 1715 during the Yamasee War, a group of Tuscaroras journeyed to South Carolina and became "settlement Indians," the equivalent of that colony's tributary Indians. Not surprisingly in the case of South Carolina, the Indian slave trade played a role. The rampaging debt that many South Carolina Indians had sought to escape by pursuing slaves in the Tuscarora War continued unabated, or even worsened due to market

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126 EJCCV, 3: 368, 373.


128 EJCCV, 3: 397.

129 See Cooper, SC Statutes, 3: 141 for Tuscaroras at Port Royal as "settlement Indians."
forces that the Indians could not control and did not fully understand. Moreover, the wholesale breakdown in orderly Indian relations that had presaged the Tuscarora War repeated in South Carolina, owing to bitter competition between the colony’s two Indian agents. South Carolina had enlisted nearby tribes in the Tuscarora War in part to strengthen relations with these Indians; instead, the expeditions may have afforded erstwhile allies from different Indian groups an opportunity to forge their own conspiratorial bonds across cultural lines. On Good Friday 1715, a broad coalition, including Yamasees, Catawbas, and others who had cooperated in campaigns against the Tuscaroras, rose against the English, killing South Carolina traders and driving back settlements to the outskirts of Charleston. In a sudden role reversal, South Carolina desperately appealed to its northern neighbors: one hundred white North Carolinians and sixty Tuscaroras and Corees marched to the colony’s assistance.

130 Merrell, Indians’ New World.


132 Aug. 20, 1715, Proprieties,. B.T., Vol. 10, 266 Sainsbury SC Transcripts, 6: 133. They were guided by Maurice Moore (not closely related to James Moore), who had taken a lead role in North Carolina’s frontier defense.
South Carolina had been no friend of the Tuscaroras, but now that colony's enemies included many of the same Indians who had inflicted the bulk of destruction during the Tuscarora War. From a Tuscarora perspective, the Yamasee War was largely a continuation of the Tuscarora War. But revenge and the chance to settle old scores was not the only motive. For Tuscaroras, the Yamasee War also became a war of liberation.

In August 1715 the South Carolina assembly decided to reward the "Tuscarora Indians now come to our assistance" by granting them the "liberty of redeeming what Indians of their nation are now slaves in this Province."\(^\text{133}\) This broad, generalized declaration made in the first flush of gratitude at the Tuscaroras' arrival, however, remained inchoate and off the statute books until March 1716 when "several of the head warriors" came to Charleston and demanded specifics: "they will stay in the service of this Province until fall of this year" and then South Carolina should have "a vessel got ready to send them home." Before departure, they would have "delivered to each of them a gun and a hatchet, and for every slave they shall take [among Yamasees and other enemy Indians], they may have the liberty to exchange the same for a slave here of their own nation whenever they can find one."\(^\text{134}\)


This last phrase—"whenever they can find one"—elicits images of Tuscarora warriors combing through war-ravaged South Carolina settlements in search of specific loved ones and kin. For scattered Tuscaroras, the Yamasee War represented a chance not only at revenge but at reunion. Such investigations discovered "a Tuskaroras woman slave in the possession of one Jones at Wampee who was wife to one of the head warriors now in the country's service." The warrior regained his wife, but in doing so perpetuated cycles of bondage by exchanging "another Indian woman slave now in his possession in lieu of his said wife." 135 Not just any exchange would do. Officials mindful of potential outrage among profit-minded planters inserted clauses that exchanged slaves had to be "of the same size" and value as appraised by a justice of the peace and two freeholders. 136 The deal negotiated by Tuscarora warriors ensured that even death and defeat might bear some triumph: "if any of the said Tuscaroras Indians going on our service shall happen to be killed therein, that then the nation of the Tuskaroras shall have one slave delivered up to them in lieu of such person killed." 137 Death for one might bring freedom for another.


136 March 9, 1716, S.C. Commons House Journals, Green Transcripts, SCDAH, (1716- 1721): 32; Cooper, SC Statutes, 2: 636-37. This in turn raises the morbid possibility of Tuscarora warriors hunting among their enemies for physiological look-alikes (similar weight, age, etc.) of their enslaved kin suitable for trade—in some ways an odd continuation of practices in some native societies of seeking captives to resuscitate deceased loved ones.

These negotiations suggest the efforts of some Tuscaroras to reconstitute community and family in South Carolina in the face of dispersal. The ubiquitous King Blount had joined the Tuscarora expedition to South Carolina.\(^{138}\) He returned home the following year, probably with a majority of the Tuscarora force. Some warriors, however, had come to South Carolina with an eye towards a longer stay, negotiating for “the passages” from North Carolina of those “mens wives who came to serve this Province to be paid by the public.”\(^{139}\) Some of these families remained for close to a decade.

More than a legal curiosity, these South Carolina concessions and the attendant migration among the Tuscaroras call into question paradigms for understanding Indian slavery. Often it has been stated that Indians made poor slaves because of their ability to escape to their people. Even more troublesome, enslavement might provoke war and hostility between the colony and the slave’s compatriots.\(^{140}\) But in this instance, rather than Tuscarora slaves absconding to their kin, numbers of *free* Tuscaroras

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\(^{138}\) He demanded and apparently received a “new coat” in repayment for “a coat and some other things stolen from him” by South Carolina colonists. March 17, 1716, S.C. Commons House Journals, Green Transcripts, SCDAH, (1716- 1721): 47-48. His participation made practical sense on several fronts. Joining would have helped reconstitute ties with Lower Alliance Tuscaroras, who, as the chief victims of the Tuscarora War, would have been most eager to retrieve slaves and inflict revenge on South Carolina Indians. Participation would also secure the support of North Carolina and the gratitude of South Carolina.


moved *closer* to enslaved brethren at South Carolina and became allies of that colony. Slavery became a magnet for attracting allies. Evidence for wholesale Tuscarora releases during the Yamasee War does not exist; presumably some Tuscaroras remained enslaved in South Carolina, living in proximity to free Tuscaroras who had come looking for them.\(^{141}\)

Most free Tuscaroras continued to live as "settlement Indians" around Port Royal, a trading post, port, and ten-gun fort north of the mouth of the Savannah River.\(^ {142}\) During the Yamasee War this had been a staging ground for sorties against the nearby Yamasees and later served as a point of departure against more distant Indians who had retreated to the shadow of Fort Augustine in Spanish Florida.\(^ {143}\) Afterwards a small number of Tuscaroras stayed on at Port Royal as part of the garrison drawing pay of twenty shillings a month.\(^ {144}\) A 1721 report found the fort had become "a good deal neglected," but the community, because of its "excellent


\(^{142}\) For mention of the Tuscaroras at Port Royal see, for example, Cooper, *SC Statutes*, 2: 634-41; 3: 141; W. L McDowell, ed., *Journals of the Commissioners of the Indian Trade, September 20, 1710- August 29, 1718*, *Colonial Records of South Carolina* (Columbia: South Carolina Archives Department, 1955), 251-52. Port Royal was about eight days distant from Charleston via a heavily-loaded flatboat. McDowell, *Journals 1710-1718*, 109.


\(^{144}\) June 14, 1717, S.C. Commons House Journals, Green Transcripts, SCDAH, (1716-1721): 323
harbour” and location as a “frontier town, lyes ready for the supply of the Indian Trade.” Some Tuscaroras, like one named Sauhoe, made the transition by registering as a “pack horse man” who earned three pounds a month in the Creek trade. Others remained in Port Royal, either dressing raw skins shipped down the river before reshipping them to Charleston (a trade overseen by officials) or participating in a less formal, unregulated local trade open to such Indians deemed to “reside constantly in the Settlements.”

For a short while, this group led an existence in contact with, but separate from, those Tuscaroras under Blount in North Carolina. South Carolina recognized a leader named Forster as “chief of the Tuscaroras at Port Royal.” In 1718—around the time that Blount was consolidating many Tuscaroras in Indian Woods—Forster journeyed to Charleston and indicated that he was “desirous of bringing over the Remainder of his People (which remain at North Carolina) to settle at Part of the Province.” South Carolina officials approved of the plan and promised assistance in the form of passports and letters, but no evidence shows that large numbers came. As the Yamasee War faded, the brief opportunity to free kin that had first attracted these


146 Others, presumably whites, earned slightly more than three times that amount.

147 Perhaps reflecting ties owing to the enslavement of some of their kin during the Tuscarora War, the official factor over the Tuscaroras in this trade at Port Royal was “Tuscarora” Jack Barnwell, leader of the first South Carolina expedition. McDowell, Journals 1710-1718, 251-52, 262; Cooper, SC Statutes, 3: 141.

148 McDowell, Journals 1710-1718, 262.
Tuscaroras reversed, leaving them feeling themselves vulnerable to enslavement. In a
dispute over a canoe, a trader named Callihaun threatened Forster that “since the
Government had now no further service for him or his People, that ‘twas designed to
knock some of them on the Head and enslave the rest.” In this instance officials
reassured Forster. Nonetheless, under such pressures, the attractiveness of South
Carolina declined. Eventually, Tuscaroras in South Carolina either merged with
other nearby Indians, migrated back to Blount, or journeyed even farther north.

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Tuscaroras and other Indians within the Lower Alliance had probably
evidioned their war as a brief, sharp rebuke meant to force more equitable relations
with nearby settlers and traders. Almost from the beginning, however, multiple
governments moved beyond simple defense and attempted to turn the war to their own
purposes, transforming the conflict into a broader contest over the region’s political
and cultural structure. South Carolina enmeshed the war in the slave trade to
strengthen the double-braided bonds of war and trade with Catawbas, Cherokees,
Yamasees, and other Indian allies. The Tuscarora War can be seen as the high point of

149 A resumption of hostilities between South Carolina and Tuscaroras from among the
Iroquois and from Indian Woods in the 1720s (described below) likely caused the final
collapse of this community.

150 McDowell, Journals 1710-1718, 262, 277. Forster had hatched this plan to bring
Tuscaroras to South Carolina in the wake of this threat, perhaps in an effort to relieve
feelings of vulnerability through increased numbers.
South Carolina’s Indian-slaving empire before its final denouement in the Yamasee
War shortly afterwards. North Carolina began divided, torn between Graffenried’s
efforts to negotiate with the Tuscaroras as neighbors and a broader desire for revenge.
Eventually the acting governor, Pollock, came to see value in acquiring Indians as
allies, including large numbers of Tuscaroras, chiefly as a tool to quell holdouts from
the war. Building upon a long history of tributary relations, Virginia initially viewed
the war as a test of this system, and then as an opportunity to expand its scope and
scale. Such efforts were not confined to the Tuscaroras, or even to Indians. After his
failures with the Tuscaroras, Spotswood quickly turned to the next suitable group of
refugees, inviting Palatines displaced from New Bern to fortify the Rappahannock
location formerly slated for Tuscaroras. The community became Germanna, a
prominent frontier town.\footnote{Spotswood, \textit{Letters}, 2: 196; Alexander, ed.,
\textit{Journal of Fontaine}.} Having seen the backcountry come apart, leaders were
afforded the opportunity to rebuild it in the image of their choosing.

But colonial manipulation did not mean colonial control. Tuscaroras who had
not been killed or enslaved were still able to weigh their options, however restricted
and unpleasant, and to make tough choices. Three colonies presented at least as
many paths. In North Carolina, Tom Blount emerged from the Tuscarora War as the
preeminent new leader, albeit as a leader in a paradoxical position. On one hand, he
achieved a level of authority over his fellow Tuscaroras that was probably
unprecedented during the colonial period. On the other hand, this role came at the
cost of attaching himself as a dependent of North Carolina’s government and attacking
fellow Tuscaroras and neighboring coastal tribes of the Lower Alliance—an act that most “neutral” Tuscaroras had avoided for much of the war. Not all Tuscaroras made the transition under Blount easily. Some members of the Lower Alliance held out in North Carolina’s swamps for years. Some Tuscaroras briefly considered a separate existence as tributaries under Virginia, others in South Carolina. In succeeding years, Tuscaroras in North Carolina would face a two-pronged struggle: to constitute a community among themselves, and to fend off impositions by outsiders.

There was another path, another option. Throughout the war, colonial officials had worried about possible involvement by warriors from the powerful five-nation Iroquois Confederacy in New York and Pennsylvania. At the war’s conclusion, the Iroquois continued to play a role, making their own bid in the scramble for displaced Tuscaroras. On Virginia’s frontiers Hix had found the Tuscaroras there “in despair whether to return to their old Settlements in No. Carolina and run the risque of being knock’d in the head by the English and So. Carolina Indians or to submit themselves to the Senecas who had made them large offers of Assistance to revenge themselves on the English, upon condition of incorporating with them.”

Other Tuscaroras received similar offers. They could leave the region and journey north among the Iroquois. The trail lay open. Between fifteen hundred and two thousand made the choice.

CHAPTER SEVEN
TRAIL TO THE IROQUOIS

Far from being an end, military defeat for many Tuscaroras represented the beginning of a remarkable journey that covered considerable cultural and geographic ground. Significant numbers of Tuscaroras abandoned their troubled Carolina homeland to relocate along the Susquehanna River and near Oneida Lake -- locations within and on the edge of territories claimed by Pennsylvania and New York. Regardless of these colonies' territorial aspirations, in practice both governments bowed to the regional cultural and political influence of the Five Nations. Sometimes willingly, sometimes grudgingly, other Indian groups living in the Susquehanna and Delaware watersheds that drained south from the region likewise often looked to the Five Nations for leadership, guidance, or representation in colonial councils. For these reasons, historians and anthropologists have taken to calling the vast area -- ranging across present-day central New York and north-central Pennsylvania -- to which the Tuscaroras relocated, "Iroquoia." Tuscarora newcomers used to dominating affairs in the North Carolina coastal plains would be finding their way into a terrain that was as culturally and politically unfamiliar as the hills, lakes, and valleys of their new northern homes.
The journey was undoubtedly arduous. It was undertaken by Tuscarora families already forced by war to flee familiar farms and fields, to forge in upland forests, and to beg and steal from backcountry settlers. Warriors and hunters might travel light, relying on their guns and handfuls of parched corn, but for large-scale relocations, Indians, like any colonists setting out to a new land with their families, knew the necessity of provisions and careful preparation. That any Tuscaroras chose to begin such a journey with little opportunity to lay in supplies testified to the desperation of their circumstances and their hopefulness of finding better at the trail's end. As much as any seafaring Englishmen, Tuscaroras came as pilgrims, fleeing oppression and seeking better lives in new lands among new neighbors, Indian and white.

The journey also widened by miles rifts that had already existed within Tuscarora society. In North Carolina, Tuscaroras had long been linked more by common culture than by uniform politics. Nonetheless, as neighbors, Tuscaroras from different towns and of different political stripes usually strove for cooperation, and when that proved elusive, for peaceful coexistence. Hostility was a last resort—its presence among Tuscarora upper and lower towns, even when coerced by colonial officials and rarely acted upon, was one of the most shocking aspects of the war. The decision to stay or go encompassed many considerations, and probably did not break down along precise political lines. But in the aftermath of the infighting during the Tuscarora War, a higher proportion of those dissatisfied, first with colonial governments and then with Blount's bid for power, departed. Therefore, physical
separation confirmed and clarified distinctions that had already developed. Under these separate pulls, a sense of shared identity between those Tuscaroras who departed north and those who stayed in North Carolina, stretched nearly to the point of breaking but, as events would show, did not snap.

The endurance of Tuscarora culture proved all the more remarkable in light of other transformations taking place. In addition to physical distance, the Tuscaroras' trail led them on a course of political and cultural alterations. Tuscaroras never lost their own sense of distinctiveness. Nevertheless, weakened and dependent, migrants adopted many of the traits of the Iroquois who were their hosts and neighbors.

Numerous other Indian groups in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had made similar journeys into Iroquoia with various results: some had virtually disintegrated, leaving isolated atoms of individuals and random cultural components; other groups maintained greater autonomy, often as uneasy “dependents” of the Iroquois. Only the Tuscaroras’ trail ended at a different destination, a unique status within the hitherto five-nation Iroquois Confederacy as the adopted “sixth nation.”

Until the American Revolution, the story of the Tuscaroras would be the tale of how some adapted to circumstances in Iroquoia, how others adapted to circumstances in North Carolina, and how both reacted to the changes in each other.

### Iroquois-Tuscarora Relations Before the Tuscarora War

“These Indians went out heretofore from us. . . .”

--Teganissorens, Onondaga speaking for Iroquois, 1713.
One understanding of the Tuscaroras' journey to Iroquoia was that they were drawn there by preexisting links stemming from the Tuscaroras' and Five Nations' distantly shared "Iroquoian" cultural ancestry. While such connections played a role, the story of these cultural connections is far more convoluted than such a simple statement would suggest.

Oral tradition, archeological finds, and linguistic analyses all confirm that the Tuscaroras and Iroquois shared cultural similarities stemming from a shared ancestry through ancient proto-Iroquoian stock.¹ In a sense, the northward flight of 1,500 or more Tuscaroras at the end of the Tuscarora War reversed an earlier ancient migration and reaffirmed ancestral links between the Tuscaroras and the Iroquois of the Five Nations. No doubt linguistic and cultural similarities helped ease the transition when,

hundreds of years later, Tuscaroras returned north. As one Iroquois speaker explained when migrants arrived after the Tuscarora War, "they were of us and went from us long ago and are now returned."²

Such statements, and several others like them, are tantalizing, but a fuller explication of the Tuscaroras' and Iroquois understanding of their shared ancestry went unrecorded for white outsiders until the nineteenth century. In a series of "sketches" first published in 1825, David Cusick, an influential Tuscarora warrior and scholar, outlined the genesis of those who eventually became the Six Nations.³ In 1881, a Tuscarora chief named Elias Johnson picked up, repeated, and in some cases expanded upon these narrations.⁴ Some danger lies in over-reliance upon "upstreaming" from these accounts to understand the 1710s since they may reflect subsequent efforts by Cusick and Johnson to more fully integrate Tuscaroras into an imagined historical community with the other nations of the Iroquois Confederacy. If so, these tellings offer a fascinating glimpse at one tactic by which outsiders become

² NYCD, 5: 387. Also see Peter Wraxall, An Abridgement of the Indian Affairs Contained in Four Folio Volumes, Transacted in the Colony of New York, from the Year 1678 to the Year 1751, ed. Charles Howard McIlwain (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1915), 101; NYCD, 5: 376; MPCP, 2: 511.


insiders. Nonetheless, scattered eighteenth-century statements such as the one above suggest that Cusick’s and Johnson’s later accounts illuminate inherited traditional understandings of these bonds.

Together, Cusick and Johnson describe a dreamlike age when Tarenyawagen, the “Holder of the Heavens,” guided a household of six families—predecessors of the Tuscaroras and Five Nations. They already had lived together for millennia, surviving assaults by giants, horned serpents, and monstrous elk. Under Tarenyawagen’s direction, the company relocated to the upper Hudson and then gradually westward, leaving a family at every remove, one by one planting the ancestral Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas in what became their respective homelands. Each in turn received their name.

For the sixth family, the journey continued. They traveled west, first to the Great Lakes, then to the banks of the Mississippi. There, part of the sixth family crossed the river by means of an immense grape vine that broke, stranding some on the east, others on the west. The group remaining on the east bank turned around, re-crosse the Appalachians, and eventually arrived near the tributaries of the Neuse River at a place they called “Cau-ta-noh,” meaning “pine in water” (a reference to the region’s frequently submerged, swampy pine lands).  

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5 Susan Kalter, “Finding a Place for David Cusick in Native American Literary History,” *Melus* 27, no. 3 (Fall 2002): 9-34.

There, like pines in the marshy soil, they took root in the lands they would inhabit into the age of European contact, with the ancient place name, Cau-ta-noh, being preserved as Hancock’s town Catechna. Speaking with Indians in the region, Lawson recorded that “when you ask them whence their Fore-Fathers came,” their response was to point west.\(^7\) Lederer also recorded a tradition among the region’s Indians (although it is unclear if the speakers were Siouan or Iroquoian) that they were driven by enemies from the Northwest and “invited to sit down here by an oracle about four hundred years since.”\(^8\)

As a systematic chronology, these narratives leave much to be desired. Nonetheless, they give a sense of native perceptions of the ancient ties and the gulfs of time and distance between the Tuscarora and Five Nations. Culturally, Tuscaroras and the other Iroquois were related, but they had not lived together for a long, long time. Aspects, moreover, reinforce certain findings from modern archeological and linguistic investigations.

Early in their perambulations, according to Cusick, “the people were yet in one language.” At each remove, “their language was altered” but not “so far as to lose the understanding of each others’ language.”\(^9\) Linguists also describe a process of linguistic divergence whereby separate languages broke off from a single proto-

\(^7\) Lawson, *New Voyage*, 173.


\(^9\) Beauchamp, *Iroquois Trail*, 11-13
Iroquoian “speech community.”\textsuperscript{10} Reversing Cusick's sequence, glottochronology suggests that speakers of the Tuscarora-Nottoway-Meherrin language (excepting slight local variations -- these southern languages were similar, if not identical) broke off extremely early, perhaps “in the neighborhood of 2000 years ago.”\textsuperscript{11} Only hundreds of years later did the speech of the remaining northern Iroquois separate and differentiate into distinct languages for each of the five nations in addition to the Hurons, Wyandots, and Susquehannocks. Therefore, although all of these languages shared a common heritage, owing to the extreme age of the Tuscarora-Nottoway-Meherrin split, the greatest number of differences arose between the northern and these southernmost languages.

\textsuperscript{10} Chafe, "How to Say They Drank," 302.

\textsuperscript{11} For discussion of the relation of the Meherrin, Nottoway, and Iroquois languages see Blair A. Rudes, "The Meherrin in the Nineteenth Century," \textit{Algonquian and Iroquoian Linguistics} 6, no. 3 (1981): 31-34. Nottoway may have been “the more conservative in phonology” (Shannon Lee Dawdy, "The Secret History of the Meherrin" (M.A. thesis, Dept. of Anthropology, College of William and Mary, 1994), 35; Lounsbury, "Iroquoian Languages," 335. The Coree and Neusiok Indians (also known as the Neuse River Indians) to the east of the Tuscarora core area may also spoken Iroquoian languages, but this identification is largely speculative, based largely upon their association with the Iroquois during the Tuscarora War, and a statement by Lawson that the Coree spoke the same language as a group of Indians “beyond the mountains.” Douglas W. Boyce, "Iroquoian Tribes of the Virginia-North Carolina Coastal Plain," in vol. 15 \textit{Northeast}, ed. Bruce G. Trigger, \textit{Handbook of North American Indians} (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 282. For the dating of the Tuscarora linguistic split: Chafe, "How to Say They Drank," 302; Michael K. Foster, "Language and the Cultural History of North America," in vol. 17 \textit{Languages}, ed. William C Sturtevant, \textit{Handbook of North American Indians} (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1996), 64-110. Chafe suggests that ancestral Cayugas may have joined this Tuscarora-Nottoway group briefly, before re-converging with ancestors of the other five nations. Only the distantly related Iroquoian Cherokees broke off earlier than the Tuscaroras.
Efforts to reconstruct this mother tongue from before the Tuscarora separation reveal the divergence which took place early in these societies' cultural growth: before the development of complex political structures and their accompanying terminology. While hunting terms abound, terms for horticulture and farming can only be reconstructed unambiguously after the Tuscarora-Nottoway departure, suggesting shared roots in a simpler hunter-gatherer society of small bands. Terms point towards a material culture at the time of the split that included baskets, wooden troughs, dishes, bowls, kettles, axes, knives, and cradleboards.\textsuperscript{12}

No substantive efforts have been made to track the proto-Tuscaroras' archeological trail. Debates still rage among researchers whether ancient Iroquoians developed in an original homeland near their historic location (the \textit{in situ} theory) or migrated from Ohio, Pennsylvania, or farther south (migration theories), making it hard to hypothesize even where to begin scouting for diverging proto-Tuscaroras.\textsuperscript{13} Again, hints may come from linguistic clues. The shared proto-Iroquoian language

\textsuperscript{12} Mithun, "Proto-Iroquoians," 276-77.

contained words for elm, slippery elm, basswood, and pine, but not more northerly species such as white ash, birch, balsam fir, and tamarack—hints of a common homeland in the mid-Atlantic Appalachians, from which the proto-Tuscaroras presumably departed before the proto-five nations made their own northward migration into their historic locations.\(^{14}\)

While points of departure remain unclear, archeologists have been more successful in uncovering the arrival of the proto-Tuscaroras in North Carolina. North Carolina’s coastal plain had long acted as a meeting point for northeastern and southeastern Indian cultures.\(^{15}\) As early as 4,000 B.C. certain northern influences, recognizable through finds of Halifax projectile points, had been felt in the region. A sequence of archeological finds known as the Cashie Phase, dating from about A.D. 800 likely represented the arrival of the Tuscaroras’ prehistoric ancestors in North

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\(^{15}\) The HNAI, for example, includes the Tuscaroras and other Iroquoians of the Virginia-North Carolina Coastal Plain within its volume on the Northeast (volume 15). Boyce, "Iroquoian," 282-89.
Carolina's coastal plain. This date matches favorably with an estimate, made by Dean Snow, of A.D. 600 as the period when Iroquoian-speaking peoples possibly expanded from a postulated central-Appalachian homeland.

The previous inhabitants, according to ancient recollections recorded by Lederer, were "far more rude and barbarous, feeding only on raw flesh and fish, until these taught them to plant corn, and shewed them the use of it." Such differences might have been as much overblown insult as recollection, but archeological investigations have unearthed cultural distinctions. Unlike their predecessors and neighbors in the region, these Iroquoian newcomers to North Carolina frequently palisaded their villages and used pebbles and small stones to "temper" or strengthen their pottery. When burying their dead, they interred bundles of bones alongside those of two to five kin, offering a few bone awls or other modest grave goods interspersed

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16 Byrd and Heath, "Country Here;" Byrd and Heath, "Rediscovery," 8; Dean R. Snow, "More on Migration in Prehistory." Radiocarbon techniques may push back this date to as early as A.D. 673 (Ward and Davis, *Time Before History*, 224.) For efforts to uncover evidence of Iroquoian intrusions and cultural mingling in the North Carolina Piedmont see Daniel Simpkins, "Aboriginal Intersite Settlement System Change in the Northeastern North Carolina Piedmont During the Contact Period" (Ph.D. diss., Dept. of Anthropology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1992).

17 Snow, "Migration in Prehistory;" Snow, "More on Migration;" Byrd and Heath, "Rediscovery" 8; Byrd and Heath, "Country Here."

18 "Discoveries of John Lederer," 142.
among the invariable hundreds or even thousands of *Marginella* shell beads acquired through trade with the coast.\(^\text{19}\)

Combined, Cashie Phase traits, according to a recent archeological study, signaled the arrival of a new culture that was “intrusive and did not develop in situ from the Coastal Plain’s . . . [earlier] period.” These artifact patterns continued into the historic period where their makers were identified as Tuscaroras. During the same period, the Algonquian ancestors of the Tuscaroras’ tidewater neighbors also began to leave their distinctive archeological mark through mass community burials and “Collington ware” pottery tempered with crushed oyster or mussel shells.\(^\text{20}\) Intermixture of styles at sites suggests cross-cultural sharing, either through captives or trade.

Despite ancient cultural ties between the people who eventually became the Tuscaroras and the Five Nations, it would be a mistake to assume that the Tuscaroras’ eighteenth-century integration as the Sixth Nation can be explained merely as the ethnic homecoming of a prodigal son. During intervening centuries, the Tuscaroras and Five Nations evolved along separate cultural paths. Only after the Tuscaroras’


\[^{20}\] Phelps, "Archaeology of the North Carolina Coast," 36-43
departure, according to Cusick, Tarenyawagen, "solemnly visits the [northern] families, and he instructs them in various things respecting the infinity, matrimony, moral rules, worship, etc." Tuscaroras arriving among the Iroquois centuries later would discover that even their basic worldviews had evolved along separate paths.

Indeed, archeology agrees that the highpoint of changes among the Iroquois ancestors came after the proto-Tuscaroras emerged in North Carolina. Archeological remains of the "Oswasco culture" in the Northeast indicate that the centuries around A.D. 1,000 saw a transition so dramatic as to suggest that either there was the introduction of a new Iroquoian population from elsewhere or there were rapid internal changes. These ancestors of the Iroquois experienced an agricultural revolution, increasing their populations and becoming more sedentary as they reoriented their communities fully around the cultivation of maize, beans, and squash for the first time. Remains of palisades and weapons evidenced a "continual cycle of feuding." Clans congregated into larger communities, but at the same time, isolation between communities in an era wracked by warfare helped create the remaining separate languages and cultures out of the proto-Iroquois.

It was in reaction to these cycles of violence in the Northeast that reciprocal ceremonies of condolence, peace making, and limited political cooperation through a joint council developed, culminating in the creation of the Iroquois League. Among


the Five Nations, this political and cultural genesis was remembered in the founding
epic of Deganawidah. As repeated by successive generations, Deganawidah, with the
aid of his convert Hiawatha, succeeded in winning over leaders of the Mohawks,
Senecas, Oneidas, Cayugas, and finally the Onondagas away from barbarism to the
“good message of peace and power.” The names of these early converts were
subsequently memorialized as titles within the grand council’s roll call of fifty chiefs.
Together these early statesmen wove their peoples together into a cooperative league
and metaphorically planted a great white pine, the Tree of Peace, on the shore of
Onondaga Lake.²³

The political transformations underlying this epic stood central to the Iroquois
understanding of themselves and the outside world. According to historian
Christopher Vecsey:

The stories define and express the teleology of Iroquois national life: its
grounding in human nature and human problems; its rules of ritual
propriety; its incorporation of seemingly conflicting forces; its hope of
transforming individuals and groups. These are stories—I should say
this is a story—of nation-formation, with its infrastructure,
transcending loyalties, reciprocal duties, and principles for promoting

²³ This story and its ramifications are summarized in Richter, Ordeal of the
Longhouse, 31-41; Elisabeth J. Tooker, "The League of the Iroquois: Its History,
The categorization of an Oswasco culture has recently been challenged by Hetty Jo
Brumbach and John P. Hart in “The Death of Oswasco” American Antiquity 68 no. 4
human life according to divine models and accomplished through
supernatural intervention and power. An analysis of such a story can
help to illuminate the relationships among myth, religion, and national
identity.\textsuperscript{24}

And yet, though exact chronologies are uncertain, it is clear that these changes
took place after and independent from the departing proto-Tuscaroras—perhaps as
recently as the fifteenth or sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{25} In Elias Johnson’s recollection of this
epic, Tarenyawagen assumed a human form as Hiawatha to teach the Five Nations to
have “one fire, one pipe, one war club” after departing the Tuscaroras whom he had
guided south.\textsuperscript{26} Similar ancestries they might share, joint membership in the Iroquois
League they did not.

\textsuperscript{24} Christopher Vecsey, "The Story and Structure of the Iroquois Confederacy,"\textit{ Journal of the American Academy of Religion,} vol. 54, no. 1 (Spring 1986), 79.

\textsuperscript{25} In the Tuscarora language, words related to concepts of the Iroquois League had to be borrowed from other Iroquois languages—evidence that these words and ceremonies were learned after their eighteenth century return to Iroquoia. Rudes, \textit{Tuscarora-English Dictionary,} xvi-xvii. For discussion of possible dates for the founding of the League see Tooker, "League of the Iroquois," 418-22; William N. Fenton, \textit{The Great Law and the Longhouse: A Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy} (Norman: U. of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 66-84. Richter distinguishes between the League as a cultural and ritual institution and the Confederacy as a political and diplomatic entity in Daniel K. Richter, “Ordeals of the Longhouse: The Five Nations in Early American History,” in \textit{Beyond the Covenant Chain,} 11-27.

\textsuperscript{26} Johnson, \textit{Legends,} 46-54.
Friends or Foe?

“their Kings will Come and sue for the peace they so much desire.”

--Tuscarora Diplomat speaking at Conestoga, 1710

This particular relationship between the Tuscaroras and the Five Nations—a distantly shared cultural ancestry and yet divergent political tracks—actually made it more likely that future interactions between the two groups would be hostile. The League reduced internal strife among its five members. The grim flip side of an internal peaceable kingdom, however, was near-constant external warfare as grief and anger directed outwards as “mourning wars” coupled at times with a near crusader-like fervor for extending the roots of the Tree of Peace to include other peoples.27 “I am Deganawidah,” proclaimed the founding epic, “I now send you out amongst hostile nations and you shall show them this Constitution and proclaim to them the

27 Daniel K. Richter, “War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd ser., no. 40 (1983): 528-59; Article 80 of the Iroquois Great Law states: “When the council of the League has for its object the establishment of the Great Peace among the people of an outside nation and that nation refuses to accept the Great Peace, then by such refusal they bring a declaration of war upon themselves from the Five Nations. Then shall the Five Nations seek to establish the Great Peace by a conquest of the rebellious nation” quoted in Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from Its Beginnings to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744* (New York: Norton, 1984), 162-63; Cadwallader Colden described: “It has been a constant Maxim with the Five Nations, to save the Children and Young Men of the People they Conquer, to adopt them into their own Nation, and to educate them as their own Children, without Distinction; These young People soon forget their own Country and Nation; and by this Policy the Five Nations make up the Losses which their Nation suffers by the Popel they loose in War” (Colden, *History*, 8).
unchallengeable laws of peace.” In the seventeenth century, the desire for captives and remnant populations from smashed villages spurred the so-called Beaver Wars—misnamed because prisoners and refugees for adoption, not pelts, were main object of the Iroquois. As Cadwallader Colden described:

It has been a constant Maxim with the Five Nations, to save the Children and Young Men of the People they Conquer, to adopt them into their own Nation, and to educate them as their own Children, without Distinction; These young people soon forget their own Country and Nation; and by this Policy the Five Nations make up the Losses which their Nation suffers by the people they lose in War.

In these wars for assimilation, far from being protected by shared genealogies, other Iroquoian peoples from around the Great Lakes such as the Hurons, Petuns, and Neutrals suffered the heaviest blows. Cultural similarities, related languages, and shared religious beliefs made them better targets for incorporation. Such cultural

28 Paul A. W. Wallace, *The White Roots of Peace* (Philadelphia: U. of Pennsylvania Press, 1946), 240-42. Caution needs to be applied to the use of anachronistic English terms (i.e. “constitution.”) in such accounts. “You of the different nations of the south, and you of the west, may place yourselves under our protection, and we will protect you. We earnestly desire the alliance and friendship of you all,” stated Hiawatha according to Johnson in *Legends*, 51. This Tuscarora version may have emphasized connections with other nations.


overlaps would prove crucial: helping to forestall a wholesale identity crisis and breakdown of Iroquois society by 1661 when a French missionary remarked that, "[i]f any one should compute the number of pure-blooded Iroquois, he would have difficulty in finding more than twelve hundred of them in all the five Nations, since these are, for the most part, only aggregations of different tribes whom they have conquered."\textsuperscript{32} Despite the scope of the influx, survivors from shattered nations carried back to Iroquoia lacked the cohesiveness to maintain a separate ethnic identity; although a more limited sense of distinctiveness may have let them contribute to the creation of several new clans within Iroquois society.\textsuperscript{33}

Tuscaroras and their Nottoway and Meherrin neighbors found themselves targets for similar reasons.\textsuperscript{34} In addition to the "Beaver Wars" around the Great

\textsuperscript{32} J.R 45: 207 as quoted in Richter, "Ordeals of the Longhouse," 20.


\textsuperscript{34} Cusick asserted that "perhaps about 150 years before Columbus discovered America" the Tuscaroras "renewed their intercourse with the five nations" and formed an alliance against nearby enemies. Beauchamp, Iroquois Trail, 36-37. Ancient joint war ventures would have invigorated a sense among the Tuscaroras and other Iroquois nations that they shared common bonds of interest and ethnicity. If such cooperation had occurred, by the late seventeenth century when European observers began to take note, Tuscarora-Iroquois relations had taken a dramatic turn for the worse—towards war, not peace.
Lakes, Iroquois warriors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries also frequently raided south, much to the distress of Virginia’s government who alternated between sending militias and diplomatic delegations to head off war parties which “perpetrated great Spoiles on the stocks,” “riffled some houses,” and “reduced” Indian allies. On at least one occasion Virginia paid a ransom to help recover captured Indian allies. Raids worsened in the wake of the Grand Settlement of 1701 when the Iroquois withdrew from conflicts around the Great Lakes, leaving Virginia and the Carolinas as an outlet for war parties. Moreover, the incorporation of defeated Susquehannocks—enemies of Virginia and many of the region’s Indians during Bacon’s Rebellion—may have added impetus to Iroquois southern war aims.

On the region’s long list of victims, Tuscaroras stood out as a frequent, perhaps even preferred, target. In 1703, twenty “strange Indians,” who probably included Senecas and Susquehannocks, “set upon” a band of Nottoways, killing five

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35 Quotation from *EJCCV*, 1: 52-54; for further examples see *EJCCV*, 1: 117, 259, 262, 322, 506. For southern wars by the Iroquois see James H. Merrell, "'Their Very Bones Shall Fight': The Catawba-Iroquois Wars," in *Beyond the Covenant Chain*, 115-33.

36 *EJCCV*, 1: 192.

37 Boyce, "As the Wind," 153; Merrell, "Their Very Bones," 117. In 1684 Virginia negotiated a treaty to try to keep the Iroquois from venturing too close to Virginian plantations. Such restrictions, albeit virtually ignored, may have helped redirect the brunt of raids around Virginia’s Indian tributaries and against the Tuscaroras.

38 Attacks on Nottoways and Rappahannocks: *EJCCV*, 1: 54; Attacks on Chickahominies, Saponies, Catawbas, Occaneechees, and Appomattox: *EJCCV*, 1: 192. Around the time of the Tuscarora War, Catawbas and Cherokees replaced the Tuscaroras as preferred targets.
and capturing several others, including the Nottoway chief. Later, a spokesperson for
the attackers claimed they were “only in search of the Tuscoruro Indians without any
design to disturb the Inhabitants of this country.”39 As the region’s largest Iroquoian
group, and outside the official protection of any colony, Tuscaroras ranked high
among logical replacements for earlier enemies from the Beaver Wars who were either
destroyed or no longer accessible. However, any particular basis of animosity remains
a mystery. Long repetition gave the raids logic of their own. According to Lawson,
“If you go to persuade them to live peaceably with the Tuskeruros, and let them be
one People, and in case those Indians desire it, and will submit to them, they will
answer you, that they cannot live without War, which they have ever been used to.”40

Attacks by the Iroquois, coming on top of European encroachment, diseases,
and slave raids, had a devastating effect on the Tuscaroras. Lawson encountered a
Keyauwee man who had escaped Iroquois captors despite their having flayed and
mutilated his feet. The wounds ran deep. Lawson remarked that the survivor “had
little Heart to go far from home, and carry’d always a Case of Pistols in his Girdle,
besides a Cutless, and a Fuzee.”41 Nearby, whole communities of Tuscaroras carried
similar scars, mental and physical. In 1710, Tuscarora speakers outlined the ills of a
people in profound distress: “older women” afraid to venture out for “wood and
water,” “children born and those yet in the womb” unable to “sport and play,” young

39 Quotation in EJCCV, 2: 331. Also see EJCCV, 2: 369, 380; 3: 45.

40 Lawson, New Voyage, 207.

41 Lawson, New Voyage, 59; Merrell, "Their Very Bones," 117.
men unable to go hunting for "fear of Death or Slavery," a nation of people unable to trade or treat with neighbors, skittish at the sounds of a mouse, "or any other thing that Ruffles the Leaves." 42

The effects of such fears extended beyond deeply personal emotional trauma to tangible effects such as the rerouting of native trade networks. Tuscaroras had often benefited as middlemen between the coast and the interior. In the wake of attacks, a few hardy souls willing to risk the "great Danger of the Sinnagars or Iroquois" could make a hefty profit by venturing out to gather and sell a red root used for dye that only grew in the western hill country. Most stayed at home and made do with an inferior local "Pecoon-Root" or were driven to seek substitute dyes from European traders. 43

Looking into one of the Southeast's ubiquitous trade mirrors, a Tuscarora would see in his own crimson-painted features a reminder of the effects of Iroquois raiders.

Uneasy Europeans also held up a glass to the spiraling warfare's effects on diplomatic networks and did not like what they saw. In 1704, Maryland's government launched an investigation into the "Strength and Alliances" of the Piscataway Indians after discovering that they had stopped paying their customary tribute in preparation for "joining the Senecas in order to war with the Tuskaroras." 44 Virginia officials, for their part, warily took notice as members of six Virginia tributary tribes joined several Tuscaroras who went north to appeal for peace and the release of the Nottoway

42 *MPCP,* 2: 511.


king—evidence that one unintended side-effect may have been increased cooperation among the Tuscaroras and similarly besieged tribes. Such joint appeals failed, however, and war continued.

More surprising, and ultimately more troubling for colonists, were the new bonds that could be established between Tuscaroras and Iroquois even as war bred bloodshed and animosity. Even before 1713, when the first mass exodus of refugees from the Tuscarora War arrived in Iroquoia, a smaller earlier flow of Tuscaroras trickled north as prisoners and potential adoptees. When Tuscaroras and Iroquois later spoke of shared kinship, besides older cultural backgrounds, one must also take into account the double ties of individuals born as Tuscaroras, snatched from Carolina homes, and “requickened” as Iroquois kin.45 A half-century earlier a lone Huron had encountered a Mohawk war party. “I have been seeking you,” said the Huron, “I am going to my country, to seek out my relatives and friends. The country of the Hurons is no longer where it was, --you have transported it into your own: it is there that I was going, to join my relatives and compatriots, who are now but one people with yourselves.” His old country, he claimed, was inhabited but with “the phantoms of a people who are no more.”46 Tuscarora losses were never so drastic; nonetheless, they,


46 JR, 35, 217; Richter, Ordeal, 72. It should be pointed out that the Huron speaker was seeking to deceive his captors, but the fact that his ruse worked indicates that such statements were considered plausible.
too, could have felt a powerful draw to join the Iroquois even as they reeled from their attacks.

These influences came to the surface in 1710 when Tuscaroras sent three chiefs to Conestoga, a multi-ethnic Indian town on the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania. There they sued for peace before the town’s inhabitants and a visiting delegation of “Seneques Kings.” Adopting protocol normal among the Iroquois and other northeastern groups, the three Tuscaroras used eight wampum belts to offer the previously described entreaties from every man, woman, and child. If the Iroquois and their allies in the Susquehanna basin sought a repeat of the Beaver Wars’ early successes—smashing the Tuscaroras until their shattered remnants embraced the Great Tree of Peace and voluntarily removed to Iroquoia—it seemed they were on the verge of success. The Tuscarora delegates begged for peace and discussed resettling in central Pennsylvania near the Iroquois “southern door”—a drastic step, but one that would doubly allow them to escape abuses by North Carolina settlers and end Iroquois attacks.

Such Tuscarora-Iroquois interactions did not take place in a vacuum free from European influence. Records of the Conestoga meeting survive through the writings of Pennsylvania officials who participated. During the eighteenth century, Iroquois politicians seeking an alternative to their relationship with New York increasingly

47 Unfortunately, it is impossible to determine the precise origins of the Tuscarora delegates at Conestoga—whether they hailed from Upper or Lower towns.

48 *MPCP*, 2: 511.
advertised claims of control over the land and Indian peoples of Pennsylvania’s backcountry. For its part, Pennsylvania’s government inclined towards recognizing “the fiction of Iroquois suzerainty” as a means of centralizing and simplifying relations with the region’s disparate Indian groups, and dealing with an absentee landlord willing to sell.49

In 1710, when Tuscarora delegates arrived in Conestoga, however, these patterns were just taking shape; it was unclear to whom they should direct their appeals for peace and permission to relocate: the Indian residents at Conestoga, visiting Iroquois representatives, or the two Pennsylvania commissioners. Predictably, the results were frustratingly equivocal. With regards to relocating, the Pennsylvanians seized the prerogative. The Tuscaroras were not the first group of southern Indians to eye the region. Besides being known as the “best poor man’s country” among European immigrants fleeing poverty and persecution, Pennsylvania—in particular the Susquehanna Valley—through William Penn’s early efforts to establish friendship with Indians, was becoming a refugee haven for

displaced Indian migrants as well. For example, the conference’s Shawnee hosts at Conestoga had drifted across much of the eastern continent, most recently from the hostile borders of South Carolina into Pennsylvania’s hill country. In the Tuscaroras’ case, before Pennsylvania would “take them by the hand and lead them,” that colony’s commissioners demanded a certificate of good behavior “to confirm the sincerity of their past carriage towards the English, and to raise in us a good opinion of them”—an impossible demand that year before the Tuscarora War. Pennsylvania representatives also may have unintentionally dimmed hopes of relocating or appealing to other colonies still further by insisting that all English people were essentially the same, “tho’ divided into several Govmts.” Ultimately, this rebuff by Pennsylvania officials may had the unintentional effect of making war in North Carolina more likely, by frustrating efforts by some Tuscaroras to relocate out of the region.

Appeals to the Iroquois met somewhat better success. Representatives agreed to carry the belts on to the Five Nations, beginning the process by which their leaders would gradually decide on a course to take with the petitioners. For their part, the Tuscarora speakers had declared that they were only delegates and not decision

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51 Jennings writes that this was the “only instance on record of a rebuff by a Pennsylvanian to Indians seeking hospitality” (Jennings, "Pennsylvania Indians," 83.)

52 MPCP, 2: 511.

53 MPCP, 2: 511.
makers; the belts they carried were “only sent as an introduction and in order to break off hostilities till next spring.” At that time “their Kings” would come and “sue for the peace they so much desire.”  

More broadly, the prospect of peace and the potential for a Tuscarora migration helped spur another meeting weeks later in which Iroquois and Pennsylvania officials established what Francis Jennings has described as a secret “charter” to dictate future behavior in the Susquehanna Valley. “Indians may settle wherever Corn could be made;” “new settlements in these parts may be industrious;” “strangers may be helped for that was [the] Custom;” “peace might everywhere be known”—these are a sampling of the provisions recorded in the unofficial minutes. While laying out this framework, an Iroquois speaker there declared that “a peace between the Tuscaroroes and them being now in agitation, none of the young people here should war agt that Nation.”

But when did the Tuscarora-Iroquois peace actually occur? The question is important because, despite promises of a Tuscarora delegation in the spring of 1711, records make no mention of the anticipated Tuscarora-Iroquois summit. Without an

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54 *MPCP*, 2: 511. It is unclear whether the three Tuscarora representatives, Iwaagenst, Terrutawanaren, and Teonnottein, represented all of the Tuscarora nation or only specific towns. The “kings” who were to come later would probably have more directly represented specific towns. This, then, might represent an example of the structure of politics in Tuscarora foreign affairs: generally individual towns attempted to coordinate their actions, but final decision-making remained in the hands of town leaders, who ideally represented a consensus of their townspeople.

55 “Minutes, 31 July 1710,” in Penn Papers, Indian Affairs. Also see Jennings, "Pennsylvania Indians," 82-85 for a discussion of this treaty.

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official declaration of peace, hostilities continued to simmer. Violence resumed. As late as June 1711, Gov. Charles Gookin of Pennsylvania met with the inhabitants of Conestoga (several Senecas and Shawnees were also in attendance) to inform them of his intention of establishing settlers along the branches of the Potomac, where hopefully they would reside in “mutual friendship” with the native inhabitants. No, replied the Indian leaders. Their reason: “as they are at present in Warr with the Toscororoes and other Indians, they think that place not safe for any Christians.” The proposed location lay astride the warpath, and Indian leaders worried that “if any Damage should happen to these [settlers] the blame will be laid upon them.”

Perhaps the Indians at Conestoga purposefully painted relations in the worst possible light to forestall encroachment. Perhaps the Tuscarora leaders had not yet come. Perhaps the delegation had come but had temporarily failed in their objective of peace. Whatever the outcome, it was soon obscured by the outbreak of the Tuscarora War.

A survey of Tuscarora-Iroquois relations before 1711 reveals a long history that influenced some Tuscaroras to feel drawn northward even before the Tuscarora

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56 MPCP, 2: 533.

57 This continuation of warfare with the Indians of the Susquehanna Valley as late as 1711 may explain why Tuscaroras unhappy with their lot in North Carolina felt they could not merely depart. With no obvious way out, war with North Carolina settlements may have seemed a more viable option. Hints of a rapprochement between the Iroquois and some of the Iroquoians of the North Carolina and Virginia coastal plains is suggested by rumors that emerged in March 1711 that the “Nottoway and several Northern Indians had conferred together” to conspire against Virginia. See William Byrd, The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709-1712, ed. Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling (Richmond, Va.: The Dietz Press, 1941), 319.
War. But these pulls were not the result of deeply rooted friendship and cultural compatibility. Instead, talk of migration represented a last-ditch effort to end Iroquois predation, paired with the push of aggressive colonial neighbors. Even then, talk of moving north never amounted to more than that—mere talk. Actual flight to Iroquoia did not take place until after the Tuscarora War made North Carolina homelands untenable for some emigrants. As long as Tuscaroras still had a choice, most chose not to go. Upon arrival, migrants would be building upon a history of violence as much as shared cultural roots. Likewise, during the Tuscarora War itself and despite many colonists’ fears of an outright Tuscarora-Iroquois alliance, what actually occurred was far more complex.
Because the Tuscarora War erupted during the midst of Tuscarora-Iroquois diplomacy, it would be no mere local conflict, easily stamped out. We have already seen how the conflagration in North Carolina’s Pamlico and Neuse basins sounded alarms along the volatile frontiers of Virginia, South Carolina, and beyond, hastening politicians and soldiers to contain the blaze even while attempting to harness its energy to reshape the frontiers. Nonetheless, it seemed likely to spread, not just among small previously defeated bands of Virginia Indians or larger groups of Catawbas and their neighbors to the south. These skirmishes were mere kindling compared to that powder keg to the north, the Iroquois. What would they do? Would Iroquois warriors rush southward into the brewing free-for-all? If so, predicted Governors Hyde and Pollock in North Carolina, the added weight of Iroquois blows would break the colony’s back. Likewise, Spotswood and his predecessors in Virginia had long sought to deter passing Iroquois war parties, but now greater numbers threatened to transform the fringes of Virginia’s settlements into a perilous thoroughfare of crisscrossing marauders.

58 Tracing Iroquois participation in the Tuscarora War is an extremely difficult task. Fenton, *Great Law*, offers an excellent analysis of some of the councils in New York related to the issue; but depending mostly upon published sources, he passes over several early key meetings and entirely neglects the Iroquois actual participation in North Carolina. Boyce spends little time on the actual participation of the Iroquois in the Tuscarora War. See also Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 238-39.
In New York, the center of Anglo-Iroquois diplomacy, Gov. Robert Hunter shared similar fears. The colonial conclusion of the War of Spanish Succession, known in the Americas as Queen Anne's War, depended in no small part upon precarious Iroquois neutrality that prevented neither the French nor English from seizing the valuable corridor of the eastern Great Lakes.59 Even this neutrality, however, was something of an illusion, the result of precariously balanced divisions within Iroquoia between anglophile and francophile factions.60 It seemed possible, indeed likely, that alliance with—or worse yet—adoption of, English-hating Tuscaroras from the south might tip the delicate balance. A conspiracy between Tuscaroras in North Carolina and Iroquois from New York might signal the start of a general uprising among Indians along the entire length of the Appalachians. From this perspective, what the Iroquois would do became the question of the Tuscarora War.

But at other times—and this is what makes Hunter so interesting—the New York governor's thoughts swung to the opposite extreme: a belief that the Iroquois, under New York's direction, could impose peace upon the Tuscaroras and extend English authority across the backcountry. These beliefs grew out of his confidence in a relationship between the English (in practice, usually New York) and the Iroquois called the "Covenant Chain." This metaphorical bond of friendship born of decades of

59 Although hostilities did not formally end until the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, fighting in North America virtually ended by 1711.

60 Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, 214-15.
ongoing diplomacy that employed European and Iroquois protocols could lengthen to include other groups—in theory. What this process actually looked like remained undefined. The Tuscaroras, Hunter felt, had recently submitted themselves to the Iroquois; and the Iroquois, he mused, were tied by the Covenant Chain to New York. Therefore, he reasoned, the Iroquois should prove their friendship and goodwill by imposing authority over the Tuscaroras on New York's behalf. Anything else would imply hostility.

Thus, New York's agents repeatedly queried Iroquois politicians on the course they would take. But with sphinx-like inscrutability, Iroquois eyes stared back with questions of their own: what course would the English—in particular New Yorkers—take? What did their actions signify? Remarkably, Indian observers in Onondaga, learning of events in the Carolinas, reached conclusions that mirrored back English fears in reverse. They, too, looked to English actions hundreds of miles away in the Carolinas for clues to the state of Anglo-Iroquois relations. They, too, feared that the Tuscarora war would engulf them. However, they worried not of an Indian conspiracy, but of the beginning of a general pan-English conspiracy designed ultimately to shatter the Covenant Chain and uproot the Tree of Peace. The war, some Iroquois feared, might even bespeak a broader English effort to roll back not just the Iroquois, but more broadly, other Indians like them. The fact that South Carolinians came to war alongside Catawbas, Yamasees, Cherokees, Creeks, and other Indians did little to alleviate fears. Historically these groups had often been enemies of the Iroquois. If anything, the fact that North and South Carolinians, with
whom New York's envoys repeatedly claimed to be one people, would ally themselves with such traditional Iroquois enemies only heightened mistrust.

The ironies here are profound. Governor Hunter's fondest hope was not to box in the Iroquois. Quite the opposite: under his supervision he wanted to extend the reach of Iroquois influence and use it as a tool to impose order into hard-to-reach corners of the English colonial backcountry. During the decade of the Tuscarora War, New York policy envisioned the Iroquois acting and coordinating with the English as far south as the Carolinas. Likewise, a significant portion of Iroquois politicians hoped to use their relationship with New York to influence English policies among distant colonies. Both groups expected cooperation to bring a speedy end to the conflict. But failures at coordination fed flames of mutual mistrust and hinted that dangerous schemes were afoot.

Linked to these tensions were the torrents of truths, half-truths, rumors, and lies that raced between the Carolinas and Iroquoia.61 During the early eighteenth century, the Iroquois increased their communications and relations southward with Indian groups in the Susquehanna Valley and beyond in what has been described as their "Southern Strategy" by historians and a "more than ordinary intercourse" by contemporaries.62 The same period, which witnessed England's transformation into

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61 Fenton also points out the importance of stories of white aggression spread by fleeing Indian refugees during this period (Fenton, Great Law, 387).

the British Empire after the Act of Union, also saw an increase of cooperation among colonial governors according to new imperial strategies. The result was a rough rewiring of the colonial borderlands into at least two distinct, yet linked networks. Like parallel circuits, one carried signals among Indians associated with the Iroquois, another linked colonial heads of government.63

Often faulty and prone to interference, each network carried its share of news and false static great distances. Not only did these new linkages allow the Iroquois and English to each re-conceptualize their own broad strategies (and eventually notions of racial identity); they allowed each to scan the distant horizon for evidence of conspiracies among the other. Englishmen could piece together events of the Tuscarora War with unexplained behaviors among the Iroquois and imagine that Indians must be colluding. The opposite also held true. North Carolina Tuscaroras and New York Iroquois could compare local incidents, connect the dots, and for the

first time discern broad patterns of English behavior. Meetings meant to brighten the Covenant Chain might only heighten discord by bringing together clashing interpretations, making Indians and Iroquois each appear to be liars in the eyes of the other. In such a setting, resolving the crises created by the Tuscarora War would be no easy task.

Iroquois in the Tuscarora War

Deciphering the role of the Iroquois in the Tuscarora War is difficult in part because the state of Iroquois-Tuscarora relations was unclear at the war’s outbreak. Hostility between Tuscaroras and Iroquois had continued until the eve of the war, if not later. Contradictory accounts of hostility or collusion appeared throughout the war years. Moreover, neither the Tuscaroras nor the Iroquois acted as a single, unified body. Therefore, the greatest effect of the Iroquois was the uncertainty they caused for participants on every side.

The local causes for the war in North Carolina have already been described. Did the Iroquois contribute to these? Seeking to uncover the war’s roots, in January 1712 John Barnwell learned through interrogations of Tuscarora prisoners that twelve Iroquois had come recently and “made peace with them.” The Iroquois listened to stories of abuses, particularly an incident where a settler had set upon a Tuscarora for an insult committed while drinking.\(^\text{64}\) The Iroquois, who like the Tuscaroras, blamed

\(^{64}\) Barnwell, “Journal,” 397.
inebriated incidents on the drink and not the drinker, would have sided with the speaker. Anger provoked by an Iroquois war captain’s recent death at the hands of whites while hunting near Virginia may have furthered Iroquois sympathy for the Tuscaroras’ plight.65

Despite sympathies, the Iroquois response was part offer of assistance, part bravado sure to rile former enemies turned hosts:

whites had imposed upon them[, claimed the Iroquois speaker,] and that when the whites had used them so, they knocked them on the head, they advised them that they were fools to slave and hunt to furnish themselves with the white people’s food, it was but killing of them and become possessed of their substance, that they did not fear the want of ammunition for that, they would come twice a year and furnish them with it.66

Considering subsequent confusion over the Iroquois position, it is unclear whether this half-derisive offer of assistance represented formal promises of aid on the part of the Iroquois Confederacy or tongue wagging by a few hotheaded warriors. Moreover, accepting such an offer, with its implicit economic, military, and cultural hierarchy, might entail exchanging one form of dependency for another.

Nonetheless, accounts quickly circulated of aid amounting to more than powder and shot. In November 1711, when Christopher Gale arrived in South

65 CSP (1710-1711), 355-57.

Carolina to beg for help, he added to his colony’s list of woes news that the Tuscaroras and “Senekoes” had “become one nation” and that he was “certainly informed” that a “considerable number” were “coming to cohabit with the Tuscaroras, our enemies this winter.”

A few months later, Spotswood wrote to Lord Dartmouth detailing reports “from persons who had lately lived among the Indians” that the Iroquois have been “very industrious to unite all the scattered bodys of Indians on the frontiers of this and the neighboring Governments.” “Such a combination of all our neighbouring Indians,” he dryly surmised, “might put our frontiers in a very unhappy condition.”

But despite colonists’ fears of Iroquois-Tuscarora collusion, even Tuscaroras taking part in the war wondered over the meaning of the evolving relationship and did their best to shape it. In New York, Governor Hunter in April 1712 got wind of a Tuscarora delegation on its way north to present “several belts of wampum” to the Iroquois. Rather than attempting to “engage the Five Nations in their quarrel,” the...

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67 NCCR 1: 829.

68 CSP (1710-1711), 355-57; Spotswood, Letters, 1: 138-46. The language that these reports share of “one nation” and plans to “unite all the scattered bodys of Indians,” suggest once-removed perceptions among colonial leaders of the expanding roots of the Tree of Peace.

Tuscarora delegates hoped the Iroquois would stay out. The representatives speaking to the Iroquois "desire[d] them not to Joyn with her Majesty's [forces]", not to "assist them [the colonists] is this Warr, nor to resent the[ir] entring into it." The reticence makes sense considering their recent rivalry. Any alliance with Iroquois warriors, formerly the scourge of Tuscarora towns, would be young and shaky. What was to prevent the Iroquois from partnering with North Carolina?

Whereas some Tuscaroras feared Iroquois intervention, Governor Hunter recognized the same possibility and hoped for it. Even before the Tuscarora emissaries had arrived among the Iroquois in New York, instead preceded by "3 Indians who gave an Acct that they were on the way," Hunter hurried to enact a counterplan. Unlike leaders of the southern colonies who quaked at the thought of a Tuscarora-Iroquois relationship, Hunter hoped to take advantage of it. His view

70 Quotation from Colden, Continuation, 409. Colden presents one of the most useful descriptions of Iroquois-Tuscarora diplomacy during this period. However, from my reading of New York's colonial council minutes, I disagree with Colden's assessment that the Tuscaroras did "engage the Five Nations in their quarrel" at this meeting.

71 Iroq. Doc. Hist., reel 7; 1712 5 April, New York Council Minutes, 11: 69-70. Unfortunately this document is extremely fragmented physically, particularly around the key passage from which I quote above. I feel that my interpretation of the text best corresponds to collaborating circumstances. Several other sources portray the same document as a direct appeal by the Tuscaroras for Iroquois aid (see, for example, Colden, Continuation, 409, NY Council, Calendar, 246.) Further confusing the issue, it is unclear if these Tuscaroras came from the Upper or Lower Towns. Subsequent events suggest that Blount may have played a hand from early on in trying to prevent the Iroquois from participating in the war. This would suggest, from the beginning of the conflict, that Blount saw the war from its beginning in terms of a threat to his people's autonomy at the hands of the Iroquois.

72 Colden, Continuation, 409.
demonstrated a different vision of what such an alliance might mean. Rather than an equal partnership, Hunter thought he perceived a chain of domination that extended from the Tuscaroras to the Iroquois and ultimately back into his hands. Therefore, Hunter commissioned Lawrence Claessen, an interpreter who had spent his youth as an adopted captive among the Mohawks, to travel to Onondaga and deliver word that he "expects the[m] [to] interpose their interest and authority" over the Tuscaroras in order to immediately end the war. If the Tuscaroras refused to heed their superiors, then Hunter demanded that the Iroquois should join with "her Majestys Subjects w[ith] whom the[y] are in alliance and . . . Carry on the War with all poss[ible] vigour agst the Tuscaroro Indians."74

Thus, at the war's outset, several interpretations of the Tuscaroras-Iroquois relationship presented themselves. For the Tuscaroras, were the Iroquois comrades, mollified enemies, or sovereign lords? Instead, the Iroquois attempted to chart a course different from any of these, one that reveals much about the Iroquois perception of the Covenant Chain and their role in Indian-European diplomacy.

After listening to Claessen at Onondaga, the Iroquois council—or at least members of the anglophile faction—accepted the need to settle the conflict in North Carolina. But rather than volunteering as New York's thugs, they sought to be peacemakers. The chief function of the Iroquois League was condolence. The

73 He was captured by Canadian Iroquois during the 1690 raid on Schenectady. Richter, Ordeal, 220; Axtell, Invasion Within, 262.

Iroquois envisioned themselves expanding League principles by assuming a symbolic role of the keeper of the fire who sat and mediated between two angered parties. Moreover, the speakers at Onondaga hoped to negotiate this peace within the context of the Covenant Chain that bound the Iroquois and New York together as partners. Both must act together.

Therefore, the Iroquois replied to Claessen that they “promised to send Messengers” to North Carolina only if Hunter would also send some emissaries “to act in concert with them.” Together these “wise men . . . sent from the govt of New York” would “meet wt the Sachems they design’d” and “hear and examine into the occasions of the Differences . . . to determine between the contending parties” having “taken the hatchet out of the hands of the Tuscaroras that the Messengers or Deputys on both sides might meet with more freedom.” “They were sure of performing what was desir’d if this method were taken and any reasonable terms proposed.” On behalf of Hunter and New York, Claessen agreed.

Despite this roadmap to peace, whereby Iroquois and New York cooperation would stop war in North Carolina, the two parties found themselves veering unexpectedly into a wilderness of distrust and estrangement. One sign of the rocky

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76 Colden, *Continuation*, 409.

77 Colden, *Continuation*, 411. The implication here is that New York’s emissaries were similarly responsible for taking the hatchet out of the hands of North Carolina. Peace was to be mutual, not a one-sided affair with a victor and a loser.

78 Colden, *Continuation*, 409.
road ahead came from the note of suspicion the Iroquois sensed in Claessen’s mission—exacerbated when the Iroquois surely detected him gathering intelligence on the Five Nation military strength.\(^79\) Afterwards, in time-honored fashion, Hunter sent word that if the Iroquois imagined the “least jealousy of their fidelity to her Majesty,” they could blame the messenger.\(^80\)

Competing stories reaching Onondaga furthered Iroquois doubts. Hunter instructed Claessen to convince Iroquois listeners that it was the “Tuscararo Indians who are the aggressors and who without any Declaration of Warr began it in a very barbarous way.”\(^81\) But the Tuscarora envoys claimed fighting “was occasion’d by the Christians” when a planter had seized two Tuscaroras for taking “tobacco from a Gentlemans.”\(^82\) The planter, according to Tuscarora informants, killed one and whipped the other, who subsequently fled to one of their towns. Some time afterwards (perhaps after the war had begun?) the Carolinians had “made an assault on that Castle but were beaten off.”\(^83\) For Iroquois listeners, who had a lengthy memory of being similarly driven from colonists’ doorsteps and accused of theft, the story had


\(^{82}\) The variety of such different accounts among Tuscaroras raises the possibility that Tuscaroras had perceived themselves already to be in a state of war begun by Europeans before the September 1711 uprising.

\(^{83}\) Colden, *Continuation*, 409.
a ring of truth; but neither account could be confirmed. The predicament illustrates the difficulties of listening at the end of two parallel communication networks, one native and one colonial, neither entirely reliable.84

Moreover, Hunter and the Iroquois council blithely walked away with two different interpretations of their agreement. Hunter sent thanks to the Iroquois for “interposing their endeavours for a peace between her Majestys subjects of Carolina and the Tuscarora Indians.”85 Whereas from the Iroquois perspective taking the hatchet from the Tuscaroras signified the first step towards multi-party negotiations, Hunter persisted in his notion that the Iroquois should force a peace unilaterally upon the Tuscaroras. Contacts between the Iroquois and the Tuscaroras that did not result in a speedy cessation of war might hint that the Iroquois were not being entirely trustworthy, and might even be cooperating with the Tuscaroras.

At the same time that the Iroquois were finding themselves unwilling actors in an unexpected role, the New York governor was himself failing to perform the Iroquois version of the script. Send ambassadors—urged the Iroquois—let them join

84 For an example of these networks in action among Indians and colonial officials, see the March 6, 1713 letter from Pollock to Hunter (NCCR, 2: 23-25). In it Pollock mentions the sequence by which a rumor (regarding the death of two Iroquois in North Carolina) moved: 1) from Indians in North Carolina to Iroquois in New York (possibly to Claessen); 2) to Col. Schuyler; 3) to Gov. Hunter; 4) to Secretary Clarke; 5) to Gov. Hyde to Pollock. This same rumor may also have traveled native networks via Tuscarora messengers and then through Indian runners. See Colden, Continuation, 409 and Iroq. Doc. Hist., reel 7; 1712 5 April, New York Council Minutes, 11: 69-70. The number of Indians killed changed from one to two. The process took approximately a year. Pollock insisted that the entire story was false.

counterparts from Onondaga on a trip to North Carolina to end the war there. But Hunter did not. He offered no representatives to accompany Iroquois peace delegations. Instead, Hunter informed Iroquois leaders that he must first coordinate separately with the governor of North Carolina. Speed was not his forte. Only months later, in late July 1712, did he finally pen a letter to Governor Hyde in North Carolina. Even then, he complained that New York could not afford to send the ambassadors that the Iroquois wanted until Hyde somehow came up with the money and wrote back to him—a several month process. Instead, time passed, North Carolina spiraled deeper into debt, and Hyde died.

Even more damning to the Iroquois proposals was North Carolina’s secret opposition. Hyde would never admit as much to Hunter, but in a message to South Carolina the North Carolina governor laid out his resistance to allowing New York and the Iroquois to become powerbrokers for peace: depending on assistance from a royal colony such as New York “would not do so well” for either North or South Carolina, “it being a fair way” for the Carolinas’ Proprietors “to lose their Province to the Queen by reason of not being able to defend it.” As if New York’s meddling was not bad enough, if the “five nations of Indians should come in and destroy the

88 This same attitude helps explain the rocky relationship between the royal colony Virginia and proprietary colony North Carolina during this period. The fact that New York and Virginia were both royal colonies, however, did not prevent their governors from arguing about the role of the Iroquois.
Tuscaroras,” wrote Hyde, “they would not only have all the advantage of the slaves but by pretending a privilege in the Tusquerora country that they had conquered, they would become bad neighbors to their Indians, either to destroy them, [or] join with them against the Government.”\textsuperscript{89} The Iroquois authority that Hunter sought, Hyde feared: why trade one set of Indian enemies for another set of Indian overlords?

Hunter may not have been entirely at fault, but the Iroquois perceived such delays as evidence that the New York governor only feigned interest in peace. Instead, to Iroquois observers, his sluggish insistence on first coordinating with North Carolinians suggested a willingness to put aside the Covenant Chain in favor of cooperation with distant English governments. Hunter insisted that colonists from New York to the Carolinas were all one people, owing allegiance to one government and coordinating their actions. Meant as reassurance, such statements did the reverse, making it possible for Iroquois to suspect that Tuscarora tales of thefts, murder, and enslavement were not isolated North Carolina events—they might be part of a broad English scheme.\textsuperscript{90} Rumors traveling along the same paths of other skirmishes between settlers and Indians around Maryland in early 1712 further darkened the atmosphere.\textsuperscript{91}

Thus, at the same time that English leaders scanned the horizon for signs of a Tuscarora-Iroquois storm, the Iroquois read the winds of a pan-English conspiracy.

\textsuperscript{89} \textit{NCCR}, 1: 900. Pollock did express similar views openly in a letter to Hunter on May 12, 1712 (\textit{NCCR}, 2:23-25).

\textsuperscript{90} At the meeting with Pennsylvania officials at Conestoga in 1710, officials similarly informed the Tuscaroras that “most of this Continent were the subjects of the Crown of Great Britain, tho’ divided into several Govmts,” (\textit{MPCP}, 2: 511).

\textsuperscript{91} \textit{NY Legislative Journal}, 337.
French agents did their best to add to the gloomy forecast. Among the Iroquois, this was a period of extreme oscillation, where the "political pendulum swung wildly from francophile to anglophile extremes." The Tuscarora War offered an opportunity to sway the Iroquois against the English. French missionaries and agents asserted that "the English of New York had join'd with the People of Carolina and had promised to fall upon the 5 nations because of their being confederates to the Tuscaroras."

To prove their case, emissaries of New France assembled the pieces of a scattered puzzle. First, English forces that expelled French traders from several Iroquois towns had hung placards bearing the queen's arms—an act, the French told them, which was intended to signify English possession of Iroquois lands. Then there were the disappointments of the "ill success of the Expeditions against Canada."

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92 In the spring 1711, distrust towards Europeans had risen to such a level among the Iroquois that they had questioned French agents if the English were secretly cooperating with the French in a secret European conspiracy against the Indians (Colden, Continuation, 399).

93 Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, 214-15.

94 Quotation from Colden, Continuation, 410; NY Legislative Journal, 337.

95 Wraxall, Abridgement, 92; Colden, Continuation, 410.

96 In 1709 a joint Iroquois-English mission against Canada had been aborted. Again, in 1711, 682 Iroquois (and Shawnee) warriors joined another expedition that got only as far as the tributaries of Lake Champlain before turning back upon hearing of the destruction of the English fleet in the Saint Lawrence River. On this occasion sachems had complained, "Brethren we have now tried twice with you to go to Canada to reduce it to her Majesties Obedience, We are therefore now so ashamed that we must cover our Faces" (Wraxall, Abridgement, 92).
English had bred deep distrust in English manliness and their willingness to join the Iroquois in concerted action. Atop this, the French asserted that a chest recovered from an English shipwreck contained secret plans for the English to turn against "all the Indians" after defeating New France.97

Economics completed the puzzle. French spokespeople pointed out recent English stinginess in presents (actually the result of a cash-strapped legislature torn by divisions between old Dutch elites and English officials, and debt incurred by the Canada expeditions) and high powder prices as evidence of an English plan that the Iroquois "might have none to defend themselves" and thereby "lose their country."98 The Iroquois, like most Indians, equated fair, equitable trade with a state of peace and harmony. Rising prices signaled eroding friendship.99 In contrast, the French handed out powder to the Five Nations to go "out a fighting to the Southward" alongside the Tuscaroras.100


98 Wraxall, Abridgement, 92; Colden, Continuation, 410.

99 Ramsey makes a similar argument about the relationship of prices to diplomacy in his explanation of the Yamasee War. William L. Ramsey, "Something Cloudy in Their Looks: The Origins of the Yamasee War Reconsidered," Journal of American History 90, no. 1 (June 2003): 44-76. See NYCD, 5: 441, for an example of Hunter trying to convince an Iroquois audience in 1715 that "the prices of Bever etc does not at all depend upon the pleasure of any man or number of men, but intirely upon the demands there happen to be for those commodities in the European markets."

100 NY Legislative Journal, 337.
Acting on fear and French promises, the francophile faction became more vocal, asserting that “they will not join with her Majestys Interest if there should be occasion.” So far, Iroquois warriors had taken little real action either for or against the warring Tuscaroras. But increasingly it seemed, even to some Iroquois leaders, that dissatisfaction with the English would transform into concerted acts on behalf of Hancock’s Tuscaroras. Which way would the Iroquois pendulum swing?

Riding ahead of the brewing storm, the Onondaga sachem, Teganissorens, reached Albany in mid-June 1712 to report that young men were passing belts of wampum seven-hands wide, signifying that they were “making bullets and getting their Warriors ready in order to go and cut off the Christians.” These militants planned a “meeting on the Tuskohana [Susquehanna] River to joine the Tuscarora Indians.”

Driving their actions, New York officials learned, were suspicions “mistrusting that wee are joined with those of Carolina to distroy them”—again, evidence that Iroquois viewed Hunters’ laggardly efforts at coordination though a lens of doubt. In response, New York commissioners gathered several Mohawk sachems at Albany and dressed them down for “their inhumane Intentions, their Infidelity and Baseness in Attempting to break a sacred Covenant.” Iroquois apologies did little to allay fears.

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101 *NY Legislative Journal*, 337.
103 *NY Legislative Journal*, 340.
104 *NY Legislative Journal*, 340.
Robert Hunter afterwards worried to the Board of Trade that “the war betwixt the people of North Carolina and the Tuscarora Indians is like to embroil us all.”

For months, such rumblings rolled through the South. In early 1713, a Meherrin named John Querro reported rumors among the Tuscaroras that “about the time of the leaves coming or between that time and hott weather the Sinnagars were Expected, perhaps a thousand or more.” Similarly, the following summer, when a Tuscarora leader was captured and executed, his dying words included an admission that the Senecas “have promised them a powerful assistance” and that they would arrive in late August. The news echoed letters to the same effect coming via official channels from Governor Hunter. The North Carolina Council resolved on July 31 to send an express to an Indian trader named Martin at the head of the Potomac to “gett Intelligence from him of the motion of the Seneca Indians.”

Nonetheless, the massive invasion never came, in part because of the ongoing efforts of New York officials. Hunter secured from the assembly £50 for gifts and another £50 to pay for a journey to Onondaga by a virtual Who’s Who list of Albany’s Indian affairs experts: besides Lawrence Claessen, who was returning to Onondaga yet

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106 NYCD 5: 343.

107 CVSP, 1: 153-54.

108 CSP (1712-1714), 13-20. In the same letter Spotswood continued: “It was but the other day that a party of Tuscaroras killed 3 and wounded two Nottoway Indians our Tributarys as they were hunting near our inhabitants, which seems only a prelude to what we may expect after their conjunction with the Senequas.”

109 NCCR 1: 866.
again, there was Peter Schuyler, a Commissioner of Indian Affairs and former mayor of Albany, Elizabeth "Madam" Catherine Montour, a skilled interpreter who was the daughter of a French trader and an Algonquin Indian, and Montour’s Iroquois husband.110 Their mission: to “disswade [the Iroquois] from this fatall design”111 and “indeceive them of the ill impressions they have rec’d from the ffrench [and] and to Engage them to a firm adherence to their covenants and promises to this Government.”112 Schuyler was to refute “groundless reports” and “continue to preserve and cultivate a good understanding and lasting friendship” by thanking them for their earlier proposals to negotiate a Tuscarora peace, and to assure the Iroquois that the English had no plans to claim their lands.113 Most of all Hunter hoped that “they will upon his [Schuyler’s] oration renew their Covenant with him and continue in


111 NYCD 5: 343

112 NY Legislative Journal, 337.

the same joint interest.”114 To seal their friendship and allay accusations of stinginess, he was to offer them five barrels of powder waiting for them at Albany.115

On July 3, 1712, Schuyler reached Onondaga and carried out his charge. Turning previous accusations on their head, he argued that it was the French who were trying to engage the Iroquois in the Tuscarora War: “merely that their fighting Men might be sent far away and they have an Opportunity of falling upon their defenceless Wives and Children in their Absence.”116 The Iroquois agreed to renew the Covenant Chain, but in doing so, took the opportunity to demand a reduction in the prices of English goods as a sign of goodwill.117 Moreover, they called attention to New York’s failure at joint diplomacy to end the Tuscarora War. They were still waiting for “some fit Persons should be sent from New York thither.”118


115 Iroq. Doc. Hist., reel 7; 1712 14 June, N.Y., Council Minutes, 11: 100-103. Iroq. Doc. Hist., reel 7, 1712 16 June (II), Letter of N.Y. Gov. Hunter to the Commissioners for Indian Affairs N.Y., Colonial Manuscripts, 57: 170 differs in that it includes the caveat that if Schuyler feels suspicious towards the Iroquois, he was not to mention the powder.

116 This is quoted from Wraxall, Abridgement, 94, but seems to match the partially illegible instructions issued to Schuyler in Iroq. Doc. Hist., reel 7; 1712 14 June, N.Y., Council Minutes, 11: 100-103.


118 Wraxall, Abridgement, 96
strange that you took no Notice of our Proposal," continued the speaker. "It is an Affront when one writes to another and they return no Answer. . . ." 119

The meeting did head off the creation of a large pro-Tuscarora army: indeed, Iroquois politicians claimed—inaccurately—to have "taken the hatchet from the hands of the Tuscarora Indians." 120 Nonetheless, politicians at Onondaga did not or could not prevent smaller warrior bands from heading south. Hunter later claimed that these were "chiefly some loose and stragling Indians of the Five Nations who joyn'd the Tucaruros." 121 But on the receiving end in Virginia, Spotswood guessed the number to be about two hundred. 122 It was one such band that ambushed the trader Robert Hix’s caravan near the Eno River as it unsuccessfully attempted to skirt the Tuscarora War. Survivors reported that the perpetrators "did not disown their being Mohacks and other Northern Indians." 123 Some of the plunder was intended for desperately under-supplied Lower Town Tuscaroras; the rest, Spotswood complained to Hunter,

119 Wraxall, Abridgement, 96; Colden writes that "the Govr had sent an Answer to this Proposal of Sending Deputies but for what reason I know not the Comrs did not communicate in the usual form to the 5 Nations which is the reason they complain of having no answer and thinking themselves neglected" (Colden, Continuation, 411).

120 Wraxall, Abridgement, 96.

121 NYCD, 5: 548-49. This quote is from 1720—but it was probably partially in response to Spotswood’s accusations that the Iroquois raided traders during the Tuscarora War.

122 CSP (1719-1720), Item No. 535 pp. 323-27.

123 NCCR, 2: 48-49. Livingston, Indian Records, 222-24; NYCD, 5: 491. Of course, there is the possibility, explored in a later section, that such incidents offered the opportunity for imposture.
was "publickly vended to the northward, [so] that it is no secret to your people at Albany."\textsuperscript{124} Afterwards small Iroquois bands spread fears across the North Carolina and Virginia frontier, but fled before Virginia’s more cumbersome militia.\textsuperscript{125} In North Carolina, Pollock also reported hearing that some Iroquois were "now among the Tuscaroras."\textsuperscript{126}

More than anything, these conflicting reports of Iroquois behavior reveal that the sort of compulsory, top-down authority that Hunter hoped to employ through the Covenant Chain did not really exist in Iroquois society. Hunter envisioned using power politics to impose peace in North Carolina from his seat hundreds of miles away, but the tools for such coercion did not exist.

At the same time that some Iroquois warriors were providing limited assistance to the Lower Alliance, other Iroquois diplomats attempted to make good on offers to mediate the conflict, but met foreseeable difficulties. An Oneida named Anethae journeyed to North Carolina to "caution the Tuscaroras against going to warr with the English here."\textsuperscript{127} His mission came to an abrupt halt in early 1713 when Colonel Moore’s South Carolinians killed a party of Tuscaroras and captured Anethae among them. The Iroquois diplomat’s explanation that he was in Carolina “persuant to an

\textsuperscript{124} \textit{MPCP}, 3: 82-89.
\textsuperscript{125} \textit{NCCR}, 2: 48-49.
\textsuperscript{126} \textit{NCCR}, 2: 23-25.
\textsuperscript{127} \textit{NCCR}, 2: 1-2.
order from the Government of New York" saved his life, but not the mission. Pollock packed his unwilling guest onto the next sloop bound for Manhattan and touted the incident as proof of the extraordinary lengths to which he was willing to go to preserve peace and prove goodwill towards the Iroquois.  

From the deck of a ship, however, Anethae was literally out to sea, unable to accomplish anything. For good measure, Pollock sent along a note disapproving of any plan to "fly to the Indians and hire them to be mediators of a peace." Then, adding to the insult, Pollock forced Hunter's government to pay for Anethae's passage. The incident proved what the Iroquois had been saying all along: namely, Iroquois ambassadors, by themselves, must fail. One can only imagine the difference, if a New York official—say Claessen or Schuyler—had been by Anethae's side when Carolina troops encountered him. Anethae's unexpected voyage at least saved him from the challenge of negotiating the rocky waters of divided and, at times, hostile Tuscarora factions. Iroquois warriors, for example, became involved in inter-Tuscarora strife when members of the Lower Alliance captured an Upper Town delegate and gave him to the Iroquois. Tuscarora politics, it has already been shown, were a confusing swirl of

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129 *NCCR*, 2: 23-25.

130 *EJCCV*, 3: 352; Spotswood, "examination of the Indians,"
conflicting factions during the war years. Even if they wanted peace, where would Iroquois diplomats begin?\textsuperscript{131}

Some Tuscaroras who were inclined towards peace, nonetheless did not welcome Iroquois interference. The skilled Tuscarora politician Tom Blount was never one to allow himself to be shut out from any aspect of negotiations. He claimed responsibility for sending four ambassadors to New York who met with the Commissioners of Indian Affairs in Albany. They returned in late winter 1713 with a letter from the commissioners.\textsuperscript{132} Characteristically, Blount described the letter to the North Carolina officials, but never introduced to them an Iroquois sachem named Conaguanee who accompanied the letter. Instead, Blount preserved his own exclusive role as Indian spokesperson to North Carolina.

There may also have been a deeper, more fundamental tension. Eager to maintain and build his own position, Blount joined North Carolina officials in being wary towards inviting Iroquois interference. Blount’s message from Iroquoia, that “there is no great danger of the Seneca Indians, coming to help the Enemy,” makes it possible that they were those mentioned by Hunter in the spring of 1712.\textsuperscript{133} Their objective, to keep Iroquois warriors at bay, suggests that from the war’s initial outset, Blount feared Iroquois dominance as much as colonial retaliation. In other words,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[\textsuperscript{131}] They seem to have come to both the Lower Towns (for example, Anethae was captured among Tuscarora combatants) and to the Upper Towns (Conaguanee, for example, met with Blount).
\item[\textsuperscript{132}] \textit{NCCR}, 2: 21, 23-25.
\item[\textsuperscript{133}] \textit{NCCR}, 2: 21, 23-25.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Blount wanted to end the war, but not on Iroquois terms. In fact, one wonders, whether Blount’s position during the war and his willingness to deal with North Carolina authorities can be understood primarily in terms of his wariness towards the Iroquois.

The question stood: would Blount escape the violence of the Tuscarora War through the Iroquois or through North Carolina? Which choice would better protect his people? Which choice would preserve and elevate Blount’s authority? Tensions reached a head when Conaguanee reproached Blount, telling him that the English “only amused him with fair words to keep him from doing them mischief, but when they had destroyed the rest of his nations, he might be sure to be destroyed likewise.” Then, the Iroquois diplomat attempted to use the moment to strengthen the Confederacy in its time-honored tradition of assimilation—a maneuver sure to rile Blount. “If he would take his advice,” suggested Conaguanee, “he would settle him out of danger of the English.” Blount’s response was sharp: “He would not hear him;” the Iroquois sachem should “leave them to themselves and mind his own concerns.”

For everyone involved, the possibility of Iroquois intrusion in the Tuscarora War provoked great consternation, but it remained only that—a possibility. Far from either single-handedly ending the war or from turning British frontiers into an unbroken horizon of destruction, the Iroquois were reduced to little more than hapless bystanders. Stymied at nearly every turn, the Iroquois exerted little real influence even

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134 NCCR, 2: 21
as the war raced towards its bloody end. In March 1713, as Moore’s army besieged Neoheroka in what would prove the decisive battle, “a considerable body of northern Indians,” Spotswood later discovered, “came into the Tuscaroruro Country, and would have persuaded the neutral towns to join with them in raising that siege.”

Iroquois warriors and peaceful emissaries alike would have blanched at the impending slaughter; neither could prevent it. Neoheroka fell; its inhabitants were killed, enslaved, and put to flight. Only in the aftermath did the Iroquois indirectly have some ameliorative effect. Persistent rumors that the Iroquois—even then—might step in encouraged English forces to move speedily towards negotiations, rather than inflict further revenge.

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135 NCCR, 2: 38, 48-49.

136 NCCR, 2: 48-49.
Reactions to Refugees

Neoheroka’s destruction did little to calm tensions in the region, nor did it divert the dangerous orbits of New Yorkers, Southern colonists, and Iroquois caught in the gravitational pull of the Tuscaroras’ struggle. During the war, authorities had repeatedly feared that Iroquois might come south to join the Lower Alliance in its war efforts. Such worries had provoked great sound and fury but signified nothing. Increasingly, however, new fears mounted about a flow in the other direction, as Tuscarora refugees fled north and resettled near and among the Iroquois. The contentious postwar construction of lines of authority so diligently debated by Spotswood, Pollock, and Blount extended beyond the Carolinas and Virginia into New York and Iroquoia.

Tuscarora refugees began to arrive in New York’s backcountry as early as the summer of 1712. Justices from Ulster County reported that the sachems of the Esopus Indians—an Algonquian group also sometimes known as “River Indians” who fled the Hudson Valley towards the northern headwaters of the Susquehanna in the late seventeenth century—“desire to settle some others among them whom its believed are some of those who are in Warr with North Carolina.”\(^{137}\) The timing of these Tuscaroras’ arrival suggests that they fled during the early days of Barnwell’s invasion. They claimed to be neutral, that they “have lost their Country” because they would

“not be engaged in the Warr against the people of North Carolina.” Left with little recourse in the face of this surprise arrival, New York’s Council granted permission for this charter band of Tuscarora migrants “in the meane time” to “Continue where they are” on reassurances that they stay out of the war. In return, New York’s government pledged to “Endeavor to dispose the people of Carolina to make peace with them and to restore them to their ancient settlements again.” Their stay, New York officials hoped, would be short.

But the next year, after the fall of Neoheroka, this trickle became a flood. By May 1713, New York’s council received word from North Carolina reporting defeat of the Tuscaroras and requesting that “no succour” be given the refugees. Soon similar news arrived via Indian channels that “it is plain” that the Tuscaroras “are coming to settle with the five nations.”

That the Tuscaroras were coming may have been plain; less clear were the reasons these Tuscaroras chose to come or what effects they would have when they arrived. Even before the outbreak of the Tuscarora War, the 1710 talks at Conestoga revealed that some Tuscaroras were considering going north to avoid war with the Iroquois and perhaps to rejoin captured kin. Reversed, Iroquois war routes, with their

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140 NY Legislative Journal, 356.
closely spaced communities accustomed to offering supplies to passersby, now channeled and hosted passing parties of migrants.\textsuperscript{141} The early wave of Tuscarora migrants to Ulster County apparently gained an additional modicum of security by joining a larger stream of approximately six hundred Shawnees departing South Carolina in 1711.\textsuperscript{142} Conaguanee's statements to Blount indicate that after the war had begun, Iroquois leaders continued their pattern of inviting outsiders to join them. By offering refuge, the Iroquois continued earlier practices of assimilating defeated groups, thereby bolstering their own numbers and prestige. The Five Nations "have never appeared so haughty," wrote a French official in 1715, "as they are at present for they have been strengthened by the accession of a nation . . . who were settled near Carolina and took refuge among them."\textsuperscript{143} Even though defeat this time came not at the hands of Iroquois warriors, the wording of Iroquois invitations still carried thinly concealed threats suggesting that refusal would invite retribution. In Virginia, Spotswood had tried to counter Iroquois offers for the Tuscarora refugees to "submit

\textsuperscript{141} The role of communities as way stations for travelers will be discussed in a later chapter.


\textsuperscript{143} "Extracts from Letters of Ramezay and Began to the French Minister, dated Sept. 13, 16, 1714," in Lyman Copeland Draper, and Reuben Gold Thwaites, eds., \textit{Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin} (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1903) 16: 321. Also quoted in Boyce, "As the Wind," 155. Later evidence suggests that this statement should not be taken to mean that the Tuscaroras were made the Sixth Nation of the Iroquois at this time, but merely they had relocated and put themselves under the Iroquois.
themselves" to the Iroquois, by promising to protect those Tuscaroras from Iroquois attacks. On the other hand, some Tuscaroras saw the Iroquois as an alternative to reservation life under Blount and southern governments. Colonists and South Carolina Indians who continued to capture, kill, and enslave Tuscaroras in the unsettled months after Neoheroka gave added inducement to flee. Whatever the migrants' reasons, the status of the Tuscaroras among the Iroquois—as guests, victims, allies, and kin—would be ambiguous for nearly a decade. Not until a treaty in Albany in 1722 were the Tuscaroras recognized as the "Sixth Nation" of the Iroquois. Therefore any understanding of the Tuscaroras' place among the Iroquois during this first decade requires tracing the events that led to this treaty.

For colonial officials, migration by the Tuscaroras entailed great uncertainty. The danger came on two related fronts. First, although Governor Hunter had been eager for the Iroquois to establish some sort of authority over the Tuscaroras, he did not want between fifteen hundred and two thousand Tuscaroras with a dangerous track record coming into his colonial backyard. Instead of the Covenant Chain extending New York's influence, it often seemed during the ensuing decade that anti-English Tuscarora migrants might shatter links of friendship. Second, South Carolina's Indian allies, especially the Catawbas, and their neighbors—collectively referred to in derision by the Iroquois as "flatheads"—had long been targets of

Iroquois animosity. Iroquois warriors repeatedly made forays against these flatheads much to the dismay of southern colonists who counted them as allies. After the Tuscarora War, colonial leaders often blamed Tuscarora migrants for exacerbating this bloodshed. Therefore, for at least a decade, colonial officials did their best to limit the potentially disastrous effects of the migrants' influence on the Iroquois.

Not long after the Tuscaroras' arrival, the Onondaga spokesman Teganissorens confirmed these worst fears, that bands of Iroquois were joining recent Tuscarora migrants in retaliatory raids against the "flatheads." Therefore, in 1713 the legislature sent belts to the Iroquois demanding that they "not upon any pretence whatsoever receive any of the Tuscaroras amongst them nor permitt them to settle with them nor to give them any countenance or assistance." Belts were not enough. When the Iroquois rejected these, the legislature thought it "absolutely necessary" to send "some Gentlemen of the best Note" armed with presents to Onondaga to "prevent the five Nations from joining the Tuscaroras and with them entring into a Warr with the flat heads"

Plans for the diplomatic mission stalled for part of the summer as the legislature, governor, and Albany Commissioners tussled over who would pay for it. All the while, strains increased, especially after August when the Mohawk chief Hendrick secretly informed that the Iroquois were planning to have a general council

145 NY Legislative Journal, 356.
146 NY Legislative Journal, 357.
to discuss “making Warr on her Majestys Subjects.” Hunter continued to write the Albany Commissioners urging them to send “proper persons to the Five Nations to prevent the ill designs of the Indians in general, and in particular, to hinder the Tuscaroras Indians from settling amongst them” Old nightmares of a frontier in flames recurred. Consumed with worries that “the five nations are hardly to be diswaded from sheltering the Tuscaruro Indians,” Hunter finally decided to pay for the envoys and their gifts personally from his own pocket. These would hardly be the “presents they expect upon all such occasions,” but they would have to do.

The journal of Hendrick Hansen, the envoy appointed by New York, recorded a journey to Onondaga made more difficult by also having to traverse a political terrain strewn with mutual accusations and apprehension. Only a day out, on a hill above Schenectady, a trader named Jan Baptist van Eps approached Hansen with dark warnings of an “evil design.” “Friend I am in conscience bound to tell you what I am warned of by Indians” that if any English ambassador went to Onondaga, “care would be taken that he should not bring any thing back from there.” Hansen forged on, but several of his Indian companions were not so confident, especially since they feared

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147 Jennings, et. al., History and Culture, 170.


149 NYCD, 5: 371.

150 NYCD, 5: 371.

151 The following account, including the quotations, comes from the “Journal of a Mission to Onondaga,” by Hendrick Hansen in NYCD, 5: 373-76.
that Hansen might have been sent by colonial authorities to signal war with the
Iroquois. One Mohawk backed out feigning illness. Another quit a day later, also sick
from fear. Restless, the prominent Onondaga speaker, Teganissorens, privately pulled
Hansen aside and begged to learn Hansen’s charge. Hansen reassured him that he
came to make peace, not end it. In return, Teganissorens let Hansen in on a secret:
two belts had arrived, one from the French, another from the Tuscaroras in the
Carolinas via Conestoga, signifying that “the English have resolved to kill and destroy
all who had Black Pates, meaning thereby all the Nations of Indians.” English and
Indians each feared that the others were uniting against them. The arrival of the
Tuscaroras had brought the Iroquois and New York to a crossroads; collision seemed
imminent.

Hansen arrived to an unusually intimidating welcome at a Wood’s Edge
Ceremony where 150 “old and young . . . surrounded us and set up a wild shrieking
and uproar.” Despite the sinking sensation of marching into verbal confrontation that
could quickly progress beyond a war of words, fingers stayed off rhetorical triggers
and avoided the first shot; with circumspection both parties carefully talked around the
sore spot. For days they spoke, only once indirectly alluding to the Tuscarora crisis:
Hansen asked the Iroquois “not to render any sort of assistance to the enemies of her
Majesty, or of any of her subjects, either in person or with powder, lead or otherwise,
nor afford the least protection.” The Iroquois response showed that they understood

152 Decanesora also appears in records and some secondary sources as Teganissorens.
the oblique reference. They agreed not to abet attacks on the English “at the South . . . [or] anywhere else."

Only at the end, after the Covenant Chain had been symbolically renewed and Hansen appeared ready to depart, did the sachems dare to broach the real subject of the conference—the Tuscaroras. First, the Iroquois sachems showed Hansen the belt from Carolina that Teganissorens had furtively mentioned on the trail, the one reporting that “Corlaer”—meaning New York—“designed to destroy all that were Indians.” Hansen did not take the message lightly: It is “Devil’s news, not men’s,” he preached, “for the Devil is the father of all lies, and whenever he perceives the brethren living in friendly alliance, he is always busy sowing his bad seed between them; but we tell you not to believe a particle of it.” The Iroquois agreed. They would maintain peace and goodwill with New Yorkers by willfully ignoring stories from Tuscaroras and other displaced southern Indians—an act, when proclaimed by sachems, that was easy enough in theory, but almost impossible in practice, especially when Tuscaroras were settling near and among them.

Hunter had hoped to avert such difficulties altogether by having the Iroquois turn the refugees away. Instead, the Iroquois had a different plan. They would welcome the Tuscaroras, but tried to assure Hansen by promising to exert authority over the newcomers—the same sort of authority that Hunter had previously hoped for during the Tuscarora War. First, Iroquois speakers claimed ancient kinship ties despite lengthy physical separation, stating that “these Indians went out heretofore
from us.” Next, they proclaimed an end to the need for fighting since “the English have got the upper hand of them; that they have abandoned their Castles and are scattered hither and thither; let that suffice.” Now was the time for peace, and Hunter should play the role Onondaga had long urged on him by joining the Iroquois in mediating a settlement. Finally, the Iroquois proclaimed suzerainty over the Tuscaroras: “we assure that we will oblige them not to do the English any more harm; for they are no longer a Nation with a name, being once dispersed.” With the carpet rhetorically swept from under him, Hansen had no reply except that he would inform the governor.

Henson’s sermon notwithstanding, tensions mounted the ensuing year as both sides listened to the “Devil’s news.” The English heard stories of a hidden conference to unite Indians “living at the Jesey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Carolina, etc” and did their best to send spies, despite the meetings reputedly being so top secret that “if any Person divulged it they were to suffer Death.” Alternately, Iroquois sachems, for their part, heard stories that diverse English governments conspired to “cut off and disperse” the Five Nations. Neither set proved true.

A conference held in Albany in late September 1714 revealed how little had changed in a year. Before, it had been Hansen who had nervously eyed his hosts; a


\[154\] Wraxall, Abridgement, 98; Fenton, Great Law, 387.
year later, it was the Iroquois sachems who admitted that among their people, "all are in confusion and think nothing less than that some mischief will befall us" in Albany. Again sachems informed New York officials—this time Governor Hunter in person—that the "Tuscarore Indians are come to shelter among the Five Nations." Again they re-affirmed ancient kinship ties, stating that "they were of us and went from us long ago and are now returned and promise to live peaceably among us." And again, they proclaimed authority over the adoptees, this time as "our Children who shall obey our commands and live peaceably and orderly." Nonetheless, a year had done little to prepare Hunter. According to historian Francis Jennings, there was "no response by the governor to the Tuscarora statement which is in the draft records but omitted from [secretary] Robert Livingston's official minutes forwarded to the crown." 155

Reassurances aside, there was little evidence that the Tuscaroras actually were living "peaceably and orderly," meekly following the commands of Iroquois fathers. Much of the rest of the conference centered on rumors spread by several belts and "by word of mouth" that the "English Colonies on this Mayne of America have concluded to cut off[f] the five nations." 157 The force of these in turn had incited 40 Senecas and 100 Onondagas south into the Carolinas against the flatheads, en route raising the

155 NYCD, 5: 387.

156 Jennings, et al., History and Culture, 170. Jennings' statement is somewhat confusing because the copy in the Public Records Office CO5/1050 "Proceedings of conference at Albany" does have this statement. Perhaps Jennings is referring to evidence from the unavailable Livingston Family Papers.

157 NYCD, 5: 383.
usual havoc of killed cattle, razed fields, and burnt fences. "I enjoyn you," beseeched Hunter in an oblique reference to the Tuscaroras, "to putt a stop to the present designs of your young men who as I am informed are gone out to make War upon her Majesties subjects or such Indians who live under the protection of Her Governmt and have been aiding and assisting to her subjects of the other Provinces against those who have contrary to their Covenants and their duty attackd them." The sachems replied that they would try to convince the young men to "bury the Hatchett they have taken up against the Flatheads." But they were not even sure if the warriors would "hearken and obey us." In return, they revived their old request that New York officials take an active role negotiating peace between "the Christians of Carolina and the Indians"—evidence that in Iroquois minds, the tensions unearthed by the recent Tuscarora War and brought north by migrants had not yet been buried.159

Fortuitously, the beginning of the Yamasee War in early 1715 accomplished what two years of diplomacy had not—a respite from a situation in which Iroquois and New York officials had been hampered by suspicion, unable to coordinate their actions, and incapable of agreement. Whereas previously Hunter had unsuccessfully tried to have Iroquois sachems "stop up" war parties against the flatheads, now these forays could be praised and encouraged. Hunter sent messengers to the Iroquois and the assorted towns on the Susquehanna River (where many Tuscaroras probably lived

158 In other words, the Iroquois should not attack South Carolina Indians who had just recently helped against the Tuscarora Lower Alliance.

159 NYCD, 5: 386.
at this point) “to perswade them to make war upon these who have lately attacked Carolina.” He eagerly reported to his superiors in London that already these Indians had brought back thirty prisoners.\textsuperscript{160}

Hunter even revived hopes of using the Iroquois as enforcers of unified British rule in the southern backcountry. He wrote to the Lords of Trade:

“I have strong hopes of perswading them [the Iroquois] to interpose in the Carolina War, if that Government will send terms of accommodation with their Indian enemies I am confident that our Indians will offer and enforce them. I have wrote to the Governor [of South Carolina] to that purpose and there is no other way devisable to put an end to that war and restore that Colony to its former tranquillity.”\textsuperscript{161}

In other words, South Carolina only had to tell Hunter what terms of peace it wanted, and Hunter would have the Iroquois force those terms upon the Yamasees. “It is a matter of wonder,” he congratulated himself, “that hitherto no effectual method has been thought of for uniting the divided strength of these Provinces on the continent, for the defense of the whole.”\textsuperscript{162} The puzzle to the continent had been unlocked, and the Iroquois were the key.

Or so Hunter liked to think. In meetings with the Iroquois, Hunter accomplished far less of a stroke of diplomatic dominance. After all, it was the

\textsuperscript{160} NYCD, 5: 417-18.

\textsuperscript{161} NYCD, 5: 420.

\textsuperscript{162} NYCD, 5: 417-18.
English who had come around to the Iroquois position, that the Catawbas, Yamasees, and other Indians involved in the Yamasee War were a perfidious people who deserved destruction. Moreover, Hunter's explanation for the English policy shift fell flat. Hunter put out that the "cause of their [the Yamasee and other South Carolina Indians'] fury against his majesties subjects is chiefly this that when the Flatheads implored their assistance against the 5 Nations they absolutely refused it because you were even in strict alliance with the Crown and good friends to the Subjects of Great Brittain."\textsuperscript{163} The Yamasees had attacked because of the South Carolinian love of the Iroquois! Like other New Yorkers, Hunter knew better.\textsuperscript{164}

Ultimately, Iroquois and Tuscarora participation contributed to English victory in the Yamasee War. But ancient animosities and recent Tuscarora arrivals, not Hunter's directives, guided them. They would make peace on their own terms and in their own time. In the meanwhile, war would continue, despite the wishes of colonial officials. In April 1717, forty Tuscaroras and Iroquois warriors launched a surprise attack on a Catawba peace delegation that had come to Virginia.\textsuperscript{165} Spotswood, who had gone to meet the Catawba leaders, considered the attack a personal affront.

\textsuperscript{163} Colden, \textit{Continuation}, 421-22.

\textsuperscript{164} Even other New Yorkers did not believe the story that Hunter tried to pass on the Iroquois. Colonel Caleb Heathcote wrote to Lord Townsend that the real reason for the Yamasee War was the illegal enslavement of friendly Indian children and the theft of land. Heathcote recommended that London order all the governors to make peace with local Indians (while they deal with the French) and "a line of garrisons . . . [be] erected on the frontiers of all the governments, to answer to the line of settlements the French have . . . from Mississippie to Canada," (\textit{NYCD}, 5: 1716).

\textsuperscript{165} \textit{NYCD}, 5: 483, 490; \textit{MPCP}, 3: 22-24, 82-89.
Perhaps more important, similar attacks by Tuscarora and Iroquois war parties against Catawbas continued for the next several decades. Colonial officials were left gasping in frustration as they watched Indians—all supposedly allies of the English—warring upon one another. The result was rounds of recriminations as officials from various colonies alternately blamed each other and various Indian groups.

Within these cycles of accusations, however, attention repeatedly returned to the role of the Tuscaroras. In September 1718, Hunter met Iroquois sachems to discount recent murmurings. “Whoever it is that whispers these things in your ears is certainly not your friend,” he asserted. “You say that the Tuscarora Indians say that the Christians have raided them to get their land.” He countered with the English version of the Tuscarora War, that the Tuscaroras had originally been to blame for murdering innocents in their beds “at a time of a deep and quiet peace.” Playing up old animosities between the Iroquois and the Tuscaroras, Hunter recalled old Iroquois statements that the Tuscaroras were “a mean and unbelievable people who had no truth in them.” The Iroquois, he remembered, had promised to discipline or destroy them. But that had not happened—quite the opposite: “It seems that they have quickly found credit or favor among you, or you or they have miraculously changed since those days. . . .”

Hunter was right: the Iroquois had changed; Tuscaroras had found credit and favor among parts of Iroquois society. But no one had expected this, at least not the

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166 MPCP, 3: 82-89.

167 All of above quotations from Livingston, Indian Records, 226-27.
Iroquois. As Tuscaroras had arrived, Iroquois speakers had tried to soothe Hunter. The Tuscaroras had nearly been destroyed, they had been dispersed, they were hardly a nation worthy of a name. The Tuscaroras had become like children and the Iroquois would be like fathers; the Iroquois would command and the Tuscaroras would obey. The English might worry, but Iroquois speakers stood and assured anyone who would listen that all would live in peace. Most of all, the Iroquois council assumed that Tuscarora refugees would diffuse quietly into Iroquois society like countless captives and adoptees from wars past. Tuscaroras were supposed to walk down the same cultural and ethnic trail as Hurons, Neutrals, Susquehannocks, and scores of other refugees before them. Repeatedly during the Tuscarora War, whether they spoke to Blount, or Hancock, or refugees hiding in the Virginia hill country, Iroquois had issued the same invitation: join us.

Many came, and many did pick up Iroquois traits; nonetheless, their situation differed from that of earlier adoptees in several respects. First, these were not the Beaver Wars from a half century before. Tuscarora defeat, as the Iroquois readily admitted, had come at the hands of the English and their South Carolina native allies—an early example of a new eighteenth-century pattern where immigrants to Iroquoia first met defeat at the hands of Europeans, not the Iroquois. Warriors might lurk about and give an edge to diplomats' offers of sanctuary, but there was no longer any mistaking that the real threat came from Europeans, and that Iroquois needed migrants

168 NYCD, 5: 373-76; 387.
to face this threat. Moreover, the Iroquois nations of the eighteenth century no longer wielded the same demographic clout as a hundred or even fifty years before. The 1,500 to 2,000 Tuscaroras streaming north would have been comparable to the population of the Oneidas or Mohawks.\textsuperscript{169} Rather than dispersing evenly, Tuscaroras tended to cluster together in their own communities near Oneida Lake or along the upper Susquehanna River.\textsuperscript{170} The existence of another Tuscarora population remaining in North Carolina outside the sphere of Iroquois influence also contributed to the survival of a distinct Tuscarora identity.

Therefore, despite assurances to Hunter’s messengers that the Tuscaroras had no official standing among the Iroquois, all observers agreed that among smaller meetings at individual towns and around campfires, the Tuscaroras exerted substantial

\textsuperscript{169} Table 1 in Tooker, “League of the Iroquois,” 421. Quickly, however, the Tuscaroras’ population dipped precipitously, perhaps indicating increased mortality among the refugee population, or assimilation by some of its members into other tribes. This latter occurrence would have been especially true if males represented a high proportion of the migrants, who then married into a matrilocal society.

influence—much of this in ways that circumvented Iroquois leaders.\textsuperscript{171} According to historian William Fenton,

an internal schism, not unlike a structural fault, rent the body politic of the Iroquois Confederacy during the first quarter of the century. The sachems, who came regularly to Albany to renew the Covenant Chain, admitted that they could not control the warriors. French agents easily appealed to the warlike genius of the young men, for whom the warpath was the route to glory and the way to achieve status.\textsuperscript{172}

The Tuscaroras benefited from this structural split, often siding with Iroquois warriors. The Tuscaroras injected an anti-English element into the region, with their communities gaining reputations as hot-spots best avoided by English missionaries.

\textsuperscript{171} Hunter explained to his superiors: “Their Wars are begun and carried on in this manner, one of them who has got the design in his head makes a feast and invites his Canton to it and in the assembly he dances explaining in a way his intentions and reasons. Such as approve of it dance one after another and all that eat at his feast are looked upon as enlisted for that expedition . . . .” (Iroq. Doc. Hist., reel 7, 1713 12 March, Letter from Colonel Hunter to Lord [ ? ] BPRO, CO5/1085). Hunter failed to notice the role of Iroquois matrons in this process, whose grief and anger often initiated warparties, and afterwards often the fate of captives when the warriors returned. Moreover, at the time that Hunter wrote this in 1713, he took comfort in the fact that the informal nature of raising warparties probably would prevent any single Iroquois uprising against the English. Later, however, as Tuscaroras and Iroquois warriors became troublesome, he bemoaned that the lack among Iroquois of the “laws and orders for the prevention of abuses and the regulation of the conduct of subjects towards each other and their neighbours” (Livingston, Indian Records, 226-27).

\textsuperscript{172} Fenton, Great Law, 384. Officials in New France were uncertain in their attitudes toward the incorporation of the Tuscaroras. On one hand, they welcomed the conflict Tuscaroras provoked against the English; on the other hand, they were wary of the potential increase in Iroquois strength.
planning to put off martyrdom for another day. A missionary from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, William Andrews, who worked among the Mohawks at this time, reported:

The before mentioned Tuscarora Indians who formerly had warred with the People of Carolina and Ever since hating all Christians, have been a great Occasion of our Indians becoming so bad as they are, they now take all occasions to find fault and quarrel wanting to revolt as they told the interpreter when he was to deliver the Governours Order to them, that the Covenant Chain between them and the Christians was grown very weak. It is a great misfortune to this province to have its security depending so much on the Indians.

"The other Indians were too easily persuaded to believe everything the Tuscararo Indians told them," wrote one of Andrews's contemporaries.

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173 David Humphreys, *An Historical Account of the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts* (London: Joseph Downing, 1730), 304-305, describes how "a farther Misfortune did quite set the Indians against the English. Some of the Tuscaroro Indians, who had fled from North Carolina after the War there with the English, came and settled in the Country of the Onontages, one of the Iroquois Nations, bordering on the Mohocks. These People being enraged at the English, stirred up the Onontages against them, telling them they had been most barbarously used, and drove out of their Country, and that the English watched only for an Opportunity to extirpate them too. The other Indians were too easily persuaded to believe everything the Tuscararo Indians told them; so that when any of these People came by the Mohocks Castle, and the Queen's Fort, in their Way to Albany, to trade and buy themselves Necessaries, they used to mock at Mr. Andrews when he would offer to talk to them about Religion; and when he proffered to go to their Abode, they absolutely forbad him."


175 Humphreys, *Historical Account*, 304-5.
Tuscaroras stirred up nearby Onondagas with stories that “they had been most barbarously used, and drove out of their Country, and that the English watched only for an Opportunity to extirpate them too.”\textsuperscript{176} Thus enraged, Onondagas passing by Andrews’s mission on their way to trade at Albany would mock the missionary and forbid him from venturing in their direction.\textsuperscript{177} Soon members of Andrews’s own Mohawk congregation stopped coming by his chapel, or if they did come, stood at the door jeering or banging drums. His flock thus turned dangerously against him, the missionary left.

The contagion spread. Besides raids that incensed Spotswood, Tuscarora ties to the south made them a steady source of rumors and disinformation, perhaps peaking in 1720 when two belts proposing peace sent by Virginia fell en route into Tuscarora hands who reversed their meaning, saying that they signified war.\textsuperscript{178}

In Virginia, Governor Spotswood shared Hunter’s frustration at the Iroquois and Tuscaroras, but in a blistering 1720 letter he saved his greatest passion for the policies of New York. Led by Hunter, that colony had spent much of the previous decade attempting to use the Iroquois as agents of a grand policy whereby British control centered in Albany would radiate far into the southern backcountry. But in

\textsuperscript{176} Humphreys, \textit{Historical Account}, 304-5.

\textsuperscript{177} Humphreys, \textit{Historical Account}, 304-5.

reality, claimed Spotswood, New Yorkers did little more than coddle the Iroquois in a "submissive and soothing Stile." His letter outlined a history of woes: how during the Tuscarora War Iroquois "were actually in these parts assisting the Tuscaruros, who had massacred in cold Blood some hundreds of English;" how during the war they had robbed English trade caravans to supply the Tuscaroras; how "this very day" the Iroquois harbored the "chief murderers" of the Tuscaroras "seated under their protection near Susquehanna River;" how they had joined forces against the Indians around Fort Christanna and continued to lay ambushes against Indians and whites. By this evidence, asked Spotswood, had any of New York's recent policies been successful?

"Is their Confederacy with the Tuscourroroes, any ways agreeable to the five nations answer . . . [to] Lawrence Claessen in 1712 . . . and to be taken for the assistance promised to reduce those Murderers? Or is the reason they gave for plundering our Traders a Testimony of their acting for the English? Can their . . . continual attacks upon . . . [the Catawbas] be look'd upon as a faithful observance of their engagements to your Governor on the last of August 1715?" 

In short, asserted Spotswood, officials like Hunter and the Albany Commissioners were foolish to imagine that they wielded any real influence. And then, when

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Spotswood and other southern governments complained, New York officials acted as if Spotswood and his allies “chose to clamour upon those Occasions, only to put your province to trouble and expense.” This policy, warned Spotswood, “however much you may fancy it raises the Reputation of your province, is far from strengthening it, or acting for the Honour of the British Nation in general.” Where Hunter viewed himself disinterestedly working for the preservation of the empire in America, Spotswood saw only narrow-minded self-interest and obsequious kowtowing to the Iroquois. Were such things to be tolerated?

No more. Rather than sending costly gifts and messengers, Virginia’s assembly would rather spend its money drilling militias. If war resulted between the Iroquois and Virginia, Spotswood predicted, New York would be the loser. “Once the blow is struck” did New York officials think that the crown would not force New York to side with Virginia, destroying their precious trade? The only solution, according to Spotswood, would be to refashion the whole web of diplomacy and the very geography of Indian interactions.

The Treaty of 1722

A tangle of discord had snarled relations across much of the backcountry, leaving the southern colonies, New York, the Iroquois, and Tuscaroras ensnared in

180 MPCP, 3: 82-89.

181 MPCP, 3: 82-89.
knots of mutual mistrust and recrimination. At the worst of times, each side feared bonds of alliance might be refashioned into the noose of war. At other times, it was colonial leaders at each others' throats. Cutting through the mess would require sharp new lines of authority and influence. It was in this context of trying to instill order into the backcountry that the Tuscaroras eventually attained their status as the Sixth Nation of the Iroquois Confederacy in the wake of a treaty held at Albany in 1722.

The road to Albany began when Spotswood began lobbying for a new policy, or rather an old one that had languished nearly forgotten. In a 1684 conference, Virginia's then governor Francis Howard, baron of Effingham, had proposed a line separating Virginia from the Iroquois: “when you march to the southward, . . . keep to the foot of the mountanes, and come not nigh the heads of our Rivers, there being no Beaver hunting there.” Although the Iroquois had agreed to the boundary in principle, in practice this line along the upper piedmont proved too ephemeral to police. Moreover, Hunter's efforts to employ the Iroquois in southern diplomacy had run counter to the spirit of the agreement.

Now Spotswood attempted to resurrect the idea of a boundary and expand it, pushing it outward to better protect Virginia's tributary Indians and to give growing room to white settlers. This boundary would dictate that non-Virginian Indians would “not pass over Potowmeck [River] into Virginia to the Southward, nor shall go over

to the Eastward" of the "high Ridge of Mountains extending along the back of
Virginia."\textsuperscript{183} Virginia’s government, for its part, would ensure that Indians under its
influence would not pass the other direction. Spotswood did not make similar
promises that Virginia settlers would cease to sprawl outward. In part, this omission
reflected a refusal to abandon the sea-to-sea claims of Virginia’s original charters.
Most of all, it reflected British concerns in the 1710s and early 1720s over disorderly,
unsupervised contact between Indian groups (and the opportunities these might create
for the French).\textsuperscript{184}

An early ally of Spotswood in these proposals was Governor Sir William Keith
of Pennsylvania. Keith’s government stood in a particularly awkward position with
the Iroquois. Although the heartland of the Iroquois lay north of Pennsylvania’s
border, many of the Indians living in Pennsylvania, particularly in the Susquehanna
Valley, claimed kinship and political ties with the Iroquois. During this period,
Pennsylvania gradually came to a mutual accommodation with the Iroquois: the colony
recognized and supported Iroquois authority by “right of conquest” over the
Susquehanna Valley and the Indians who lived there. In return, the Iroquois acted as a
broker in matters of land and authority with Pennsylvania’s government, allowing that
government largely to exclude from decisions the actual Indian inhabitants of the
Susquehanna Valley. Nonetheless, a downside of this relationship was that Iroquois

\textsuperscript{183} M\textit{PCP}, 3: 114. The Potomac was referred to as the Great River Kahongoronton by
the Iroquois.

\textsuperscript{184} Rhoades, “Assarigoa’s Line,” 95-96.
war parties passing to Virginia and the Carolinas threatened to bring bloodshed to the region. Keith recognized that closing the southern border would bring the best of both worlds: Pennsylvania could continue trade and diplomatic relations with Iroquois from the north, but avoid importing war from the south.  

Moreover, fences—or good borders—made good neighbors. Spotswood and Keith agreed that one of the best ways that European “subjects of the same Sovereign, however divided into distinct [colonial] Governments” could “still to be united in Affection to each other” would be through the division of Indians into separate spheres of influence by ensuring boundaries whereby “neither of them cross the Patowmeck River, [so] they cannot in their several courses come at one another.”  

But any such agreement would mean little without the consent of New York and the Iroquois. Spotswood tried to press the plan upon a Tuscarora and four Iroquois diplomats in Virginia in October 1721. These Indians stubbornly replied that formal negotiation could only occur at either Onondaga or Albany, the Covenant Chain’s two customary council sites. Straining his body and his assembly’s willingness to pay for expensive diplomatic junkets, Spotswood journeyed to Albany in 1722.

185 *MPCP*, 3: 204-5.

186 *MPCP*, 3: 117-18; also see *MPCP*, 3: 209-12 where Governor Keith argued that “if our Indians . . . were brought voluntarily and distinctly by themselves to accept of and confirm the same Propositions as to the Boundaries . . . it would in all probability prevent future Disturbance on the Frontiers of these Colonies, and tend to a General Peace amongst the Indians on this side of the Lakes.” However, for reasons which are unclear, the Pennsylvania council did not agree to this plan (*MPCP*, 3: 207). The governor sidestepped the obstacle by going personally to Conestoga and merely informing Indians there that the treaty had already been enacted (*MPCP*, 3: 209-12).
where he met with diplomats from the Iroquois and Tuscaroras and the governors of New York and Pennsylvania.

All large conferences dealt with a host of issues. The Albany treaty of 1722 was no exception. Broadly stated, Spotswood aimed to establish peace between his colony and the Iroquois after several years of near-warfare. As a first step, English governors and the Iroquois recited a history of their relations, renewing the Covenant Chain that had bound them together and provided that “accidents or mischief” should be “forgot and forgiven” and not lead to further bloodshed. Spotswood pressured the Iroquois to include within the peace the “Toderechrones” (who included the Catawbas and smaller Siouan groups like the Saponis who lived around Fort Christanna). The Iroquois agreed to treat their former targets as if they “have put their hands into the Covenant Chain”—a hard task, the Iroquois claimed, since doing so meant overcoming within themselves “so inveterate an enmity, that we thought it impossible it could be extinguished, but by a total Extermination of them.”

Declarations of goodwill spat with such loathing earned little trust. Spotswood instead relied on his border plan, which he outlined for his Iroquois audience. Thereafter, crossing the Potomac or traversing the Blue Ridge would entail great risk, threatened Spotswood. Waiting on the other side would be trigger-happy militias instructed to shoot on sight. Already, bragged Spotswood, Virginia’s assembly had

187 NYCD, 5: 671.
188 NYCD, 5: 671-72.
189 NYCD, 5: 671.
“given a very considerable sum of money for the buying of arms for the defense of those Frontier counties which lye most Exposed to the incursions of the Indians.”

Survivors of this warm reception without proper passports would find themselves shackled in a slave ship bound for the Caribbean. The only exception would be for Iroquois warriors returning runaway slaves. Slave catchers were welcome to Col. George Mason’s house on the banks of the Potomac, where they could collect their reward of a “good gun” and two blankets, and then hurry home.

The stark simplicity of this plan should not obscure the complexity of its consequences. Fully realized, it would have reworked the whole system of diplomacy, alliances, and warfare. Hunter had imagined a system of alliances running the length of the frontier with Albany at its head and the Iroquois as its spine; connective tissue grew from exchanges between the Iroquois and other Indian groups. If this awkward beast ever breathed at all, Spotswood planned to chop it up and kill it dead. His line on the map was about more than territorial claims and an eye towards land for future settlers. Spotswood envisioned a new diplomatic landscape where Indians from different colonies rarely met, where they no longer had “free Liberty to Pass and Repass” across the landscape in pursuit of game, war, or even peaceful relations and trade with other Indians.


\[191\] *NYCD*, 5: 674.

\[192\] *MPCP*, 3: 215.
would bar them almost entirely. Even if Iroquois came to Virginia with proper passports and carried the small golden horseshoes Spotswood gave them for such occasions, they would be subject to expulsion at the first sign of meeting with Virginia’s tributaries.  

If native diplomacy would happen at all, Spotswood planned for negotiations to be conducted vicariously. A network of colonial governors who would take up the role of passing around “their” Indians’ treaty belts, each officially stamped with their respective colonies’ seal of approval. During the negotiations in Albany in 1722, Spotswood had brought two sets of belts, one for the “Christians” of Virginia, and another on behalf of the Indians who stayed behind in Virginia. Iroquois sachems complained, “we wish you had brought some of the Sachems of your Indians that they might have spoke to us face to face.” Such a meeting would have defeated Spotswood’s entire point.

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193 *NYCD*, 5: 674.


195 *NYCD*, 5: 669-77.

196 Iroquois negotiators signaled their intent to exploit a loophole in this plan and allow face-to-face meetings between Indian groups to continue. Spotswood made it clear that “the Government of Virginia will not demand satisfaction for whatever you do to any of their [Virginia’s] Indians whom you shall take” on the other side of the border—practically an invitation for the Iroquois to do their worst. The Iroquois, however, declined. Instead they declared that Indians who crossed could signal peaceful intent by leaving stones in their campfire ashes, upon which the Iroquois would “treat them as friends and give them victuals” (*NYCD*, 5: 673-675).
Negotiators, Indian and white, agreed to the plans. New York’s government, now represented by Gov. William Burnet who had succeeded Hunter, approved of the proposals in hopes of reviving relations with Virginia and ending southern wars that had been a major thorn in Iroquois-New York relations. Moreover, Burnet appreciated language that iterated a New York monopoly on Iroquois diplomacy.\(^{197}\)

"It appears to be a method agreed upon by your five Nations to receive no proposalls, nor have any manner of Treaty with any of the English Provinces, than through the Government of New York, to which you belong," noticed Spotswood approvingly.\(^{198}\) This was not entirely true, but Burnett wished it was. Recently, officials from Massachusetts had attempted to establish an independent council fire at Boston or Deerfield. At Albany, with representatives of Pennsylvania and Virginia present, Burnett "approved the method that had been taken by the other governours to consult this government before they would enter into treaty with their Indians and blamed the conduct of New England which had taken other sort of measures and had attempted to treat with the five nations without the interpositions of this government."\(^{199}\) By dividing the backcountry, Spotswood, in the future, expected to rely on New York


\(^{198}\) *NYCD*, 5: 674. During this period Pennsylvania also began treating privately with the Iroquois, a trend that would increase in subsequent years. But as of 1722, Pennsylvania’s officials still preferred to negotiate major decisions in Albany and give primacy in Iroquois affairs to New York.

even more. Frustrated with the difficulty and expense of coming to Albany, Spotswood expected to make this trip his last.\footnote{It was his last trip, but because Spotswood lost his position as governor shortly after the treaty. \textit{NYCD} 5: 674-75. For Spotswood’s tussles with the House of Burgesses for money for Iroquois diplomacy, see \textit{Iroq. Doc. Hist.}, reel 8, 1718 23 Apr, Copy of Speech of Gov. Alexander Spotswood to the Virginia House of Burgesses, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia, Papers of the General Assembly of the House of Burgesses, Committee of Propositions and Grievances, 1711-1730, Section Three, Mss 3v8b7; and \textit{Iroq. Doc. Hist.}, reel 8, 1718 28 May, Copy of message of the House of Burgess to Gov. Alexander Spotswood of Virginia, about covenant with the Five Nations. Virginia Historical Society, Papers of the General Assembly, House of Burgesses, 1711-1730, Mss 3v8b18. The Assembly especially resented the Iroquois view that treaties needed to be periodically renewed with expensive gifts and councils, instead holding to the European model that treaties and laws held valid until specifically revoked. These differences perhaps reflected the differences between an oral, face-to-face culture versus one based on the written word.} Iroquois leaders approved of the proposals, perhaps in hopes of reviving ailing relations with southern colonial leaders, perhaps to curb undisciplined warriors. Besides, Spotswood promised that refusal meant war.

Enacting proposals to divvy up the backcountry would require affirming lines of authority and affiliation among Indian groups, ultimately creating the context for the Tuscaroras’ emergence as the sixth nation. Spotswood presented ten guns and declared that he spoke on behalf of ten Virginia tribes: the Nottoways, Meherrins, Nansemonds, Pamunkeys, Chickahominies, and the Fort Christanna Indians comprised of the Saponis, Occaneechees, Stenkenocks, Meipontskys, and Toteros. In turn, the Virginia governor asked the Iroquois sachems to “declare the names of all those Indians whom you comprehend in the present Treaty and for whose Performance the five Nations will answer.” Two days later, the Iroquois similarly “engaged” for ten
groups: the Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas, and Mohawks of the Iroquois Confederacy, and "for the Tuskarores, Conestogoes, Chuanoes [Shawnees], Octaghquanawicroones [probably the mixed settlement of Oquaga], and Ostownhaes [perhaps Otsiningo] which live upon Susquehanna River."\(^{201}\) 

As Governor Keith of Pennsylvania explained, these groups on the Susquehanna “actually pay Tribute now to the five Nations, and either from natural affections or Fear are ever under their Influence and Power.”\(^{202}\) Moreover, adding to the ties, among them often lived expatriate Iroquois—often called Mingos—“who speak the same language to this day.”\(^{203}\) To a certain extent, the absolute control by the Iroquois over these groups was a purposeful fiction whose fallacy became bloodily apparent when many moved to the Ohio and later sided against the Iroquois during the Seven Years’ War. Nonetheless, in 1722 these assertions carried a component of truth. Governor Keith of Pennsylvania afterwards explained the treaty to the Conestoga, Conoy, Delaware, and Shawnee Indians and flatly concluded, “You see therefore, my Friends and Brethren, that as the Five Nations have thought it necessary for preventing all further misunderstandings with Virginia to bind not only themselves

\(^{201}\) NYCD, 5: 675. Otsiningo was a community comprised of several nations of Indians living on the upper Susquehanna River.

\(^{202}\) MPCP, 3: 204-5.

\(^{203}\) MPCP, 3: 204-5.
but have taken upon them to bind you, also must firmly to observe this treaty.”

Those Indians grumbled, but agreed.

Events had already shown, however, that bids to assert similar authority over the Tuscaroras were inadequate. The conference itself proved no different. A Tuscarora named Sketowas was present, whom Spotswood despised as acting “the part of an Incendiary rather than a messenger of Peace” because he had hurled rumors that the Virginia governor had poisoned Iroquois sachems several years earlier. Spotswood countered with accusations of his own—that the Tuscarora “may be justly suspected guilty of destroying those of his Companions who would not joine in his Designs.” Negotiators revisited the incident where Tuscaroras had reversed the meanings of belts from Virginia to signify war. At one point Iroquois speakers admitted that “diverse have endeavored to raise jealousies and evil Reports among us, and so perswade us to have a bad opinion of our Brethren the English,” but they swore they were immune to such efforts by the French and Tuscaroras. Facts proved otherwise. Reports circulated through the conference of three companies of Iroquois

204 MPCP, 3: 209-12.

205 MPCP, 3: 215.


207 NYCD, 5: 660.

208 The French were also seeking to perpetuate conflict among Indians allied to the English and were included within this statement.
warriors "gone out to fight against the Flatheads;" these warriors "made their abode among the Tuscaroras that live near Virginia and go backwards and forwards.\textsuperscript{209}

No longer was it plausible to claim that the Tuscaroras had no influence, that they were hardly even a nation, having been defeated and dispersed. Dictates from above would fail. Success for the English in Albany hinged on the Tuscaroras joining the other Iroquois nations at the negotiating table. Therefore, although the Tuscarora migrants had not participated in any treaty since their flight north, in Albany they claimed—and were granted—a formal role. "Divers chiefs of the Tuscaroras" negotiated "together with" representatives from other Iroquois nations during the main talks and also in side-conferences discussing land cessions in Pennsylvania.\textsuperscript{210}

Further confirmation of the Tuscaroras' changing status came at the treaty's culmination. Spotswood sought to arrange an assent that was more broad-based than the Iroquois norm whereby designated speakers presented treaty belts. Too often, experience had shown that such diplomats could not speak for the whole. Therefore, Spotswood arranged for a ceremony that would include all the Indians present. This would include warriors often excluded from formal talks, and the Tuscaroras. An Iroquois speaker held aloft a coronet and the rest "gave six Shouts five for the five Nations and one for a castle of Tuscarores lately seated between Oneyde and

\textsuperscript{209} \textit{NYCD}, 5: 660.

\textsuperscript{210} \textit{Iroq. Doc. Hist.}, reel 8; 1722 Sept (II), \textit{A Treaty of Peace and Friendship made between the Governor of Pennsylvania and the Five Nations, at Albany} (Printed in Philadelphia by A. Bradford, 1722), 8; \textit{MPCP.}, 3: 199-202, 205-6. No speeches by the Tuscarora speakers were recorded, but it was typical of the Iroquois to express themselves through only one or two speakers at treaties.
Onondaga."211 Then, the paperwork: alongside the names of Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, and Seneca leaders, the treaty carried home by Spotswood showed the marks of three Tuscarora chiefs.212

Spotswood had gotten his treaty, but it proved of little value. Its main provisions for dividing the backcountry were soon ignored. Raids and counter-raids between Indians across the colonies quickly resumed, if they had ever paused at all. Nonetheless, the process had witnessed and codified another transformation. Afterwards, English and Indian diplomats began referring to the Iroquois as the Six Nations. Exactly what this status meant had yet to be answered.

211 NYCD, 5: 672. The importance of the geographic location of this Tuscarora community between Onondaga and Oneida to the Tuscaroras’ status should not be discounted. The main Iroquois diplomatic metaphor of the Great Longhouse almost perfectly conflated political roles with physical location (Senecas kept the western door, Onondagas tended the fire, Mohawks guarded the eastern door, etc). It would have been difficult for the Iroquois to conceptualize a Tuscarora community between Onondaga and Oneida that was “outside” this Longhouse. Moreover, this location along the main east-west thoroughfare would have ensured that Tuscaroras were privy to internal affairs among the Iroquois. Letters by the missionary William Andrews suggest that this community may have existed at least as early as 1717 (SPG Letter Books, Ser. A, 12: 310-12).

212 Iroq. Doc. Hist., reel 8; 1722 29 Aug- 12 Sept; Account of Treaty at Albany (copy made by an unidentified amanuensis, ca 1740) , Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Va., Westover MS., pp. 369-380, MSS 1B9966a. Perhaps the Cayugas are absent because of opposition to land deals along the Susquehanna included in the treaty (MPCP, 3: 182-83). The three Tuscaroras were Suwuitka, Adories, and Spotswood’s accuser, Sketowas.
CHAPTER EIGHT

SIXTH NATION

Shortly after the Albany Treaty of 1722, the Iroquois regularly began to refer to themselves as the “Six Nations.” Returning from an errand to the “several castles” of the Iroquois the following spring, Lawrence Claessen described the “Tusquarores being settled near Onoyde reputed now as a nation.”\(^1\) Around the same time, an Iroquois speaker told a crowd of Massachusetts officials that “last fall some of the Five Nations came into your Government” but “we are now come in the name of the Six Nations.”\(^2\)

Besides making their mark among officials of the various English colonies, within several years French officials noted among the Iroquois a “village” of the “Tuscarorens . . . of two hundred and fifty men near the Onontagues who brought them along.”\(^3\) Officials learned to wait for a sixth shout at conferences, and revised older maps, such as one of the “Country of the Five Nations” published in 1718, but amended in 1726 with a handwritten note in


\(^3\) *NYCD*, 9: 1056-57. A large contingent of Tuscaroras settled between the Onondagas and the Oneidas. Hence the French, who tended to view the Iroquois from west to east, described them living near the Onondagas, and the English, who diplomats traveled from the east, described them near the Oneidas.
the margins that "the Tuscarora are now reckon'd a sixth nation and live between the
Onondagas and the Oniedas."4

What exactly did this new reckoning, as the sixth nation, mean? Distinguishing the
Tuscaroras' precise role and status alongside among the other five Iroquois nations
remains difficult. Did the Tuscaroras function as true equals among the more established
nations? One eighteenth-century expert on Iroquois affairs, Sir William Johnson, believed
that after having been "admitted into the confederacy of the Five Nations," the Tuscaroras
"now enjoy all privileges with the rest."5 On the other hand, Conrad Weiser, who had an
equal grasp of Iroquois workings, scoffed at Tuscaroras, "first compelled thereto by the
English of Carolina," as having "no Title in Council, but is frequently called a Fool."6
Two experts close to Iroquois society, two widely divergent opinions, and perhaps neither
entirely wrong. Such differences reflect the Tuscaroras' unique and somewhat uncertain
status: members of the Iroquois and, yet, newcomers who had to bend and adapt to the
others' cultural and political norms.

Among the Iroquois themselves, no metaphor was as persistent or descriptive as
the comparison of nations to a Great Longhouse stretching from east to west with the
Mohawks and Senecas guarding their respective "doors" and the Onondagas tending the

4 For shouts see Iroq. Doc. Hist., Reel 13, 1746 Aug- Sept (II), Printed copy of a treaty
between N.Y. Gov. Clinton and Six Nations; with manuscript note. BPRO, CO5/1061.
6 Iroq. Doc. Hist., Reel 12; 1744 22 June- July (IV), Treaty Held with the Indians of the
Six Nations at Lancaster, in Pennsylvania, in June 1744. Including account of the first
Confederacy of the Six Nations. Minutes of Treaty Between the Six Nations and Colony
central council fire. Nineteenth-century Onondaga documents refer to the Tuscaroras as an added “frame-pole to the great frame work” of the longhouse—an “inner one, . . . bent to form the frame.” The description is apt. They were members, integral ones even, and yet they had to be shaped to fit among the others, and lashed to them through ceremonies, practices, and habit. At the same time, for a frame pole to serve any use, it could not be bent so far as to be broken, or snapped—the Tuscaroras’ sense of themselves as a people and a culture had to remain intact.

Members of the League and Confederacy

The basis of much Iroquois cultural and ritual behavior was the Great League of Peace. This was the institution founded as a series of alliances at an uncertain date, possibly between A.D. 1400 and A.D. 1600. Explained in a central Iroquois myth, the Deganawidah epic, the period was one of constant “mourning wars” and feuds between the peoples of the Five Nations. These came to an end only after the supernatural being Deganawidah taught a series of ceremonies to a man named Hiawatha who had gone nearly insane with grief after the deaths of his daughters. Deganawidah offered strings of wampum and symbolically dried Hiawatha’s tears, opened his ears, unstopped his throat, and ultimately cleared his mind. Then in a series of epic adventures, these two spread the

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ceremonies, known as the Good News of Peace and Power, among the warring peoples of the Five Nations. They recruited approximately fifty headmen from towns into a Grand Council and organized the Great League of Peace. Thereafter, the main function of the League was to alleviate the need for war between its members through the use of condolence rituals and ceremonial gifts.8

It has already been explained how the Great League, ironically, may have aggravated wars between its members and outsiders like the Tuscaroras. It also affected the role and status of Tuscaroras after they had come among the Iroquois. The structure and behavior of the Great League and its Grand Council relied heavily on the history of its founding. Foremost, its gifts and rituals reenacted the original exchange between Hiawatha and Deganawidah. Meetings began with long recitations of the Deganawidah epic and a recollection of the roles of its original fifty sachems, whose names were preserved on specially marked staffs. In 1743, Weiser witnessed such a roll-call: performed "in a singing way" by a speaker "walking up and down the house." He spoke "in praise of their wise Fathers and of the happy union" repeating "all the names of those ancient chiefs who established it." "They, no doubt," said he, "are now Gods and dwell in heaven." The crowd responded at each phrase with hearty "yo-hass."9 The council's membership remained limited to these fifty sachems, each of whom bore the name of his

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9 John Bartram, Lewis Evans, and Conrad Weiser, A Journey from Pennsylvania to Onondaga in 1743 (Barre, Mass.: Imprint Society, 1973), 121.
predecessor. The connection to the past ran deeper still: in Iroquois minds, these sachems were near-reincarnations of their predecessors, who inherited their names, traits, and virtues. The “most important League ritual occurred when one of the fifty sachems died.” Members carried out condolence ceremonies, and symbolically “requickened” the deceased with a kinsman chosen by female elders.10

The nations themselves likewise occupied roles related to the circumstances from the epic. Mohawks, for example, were remembered as the “first promoter” of the League and thus considered “the Eldest.” Oneidas in the Deganawidah epic were the next to join the Mohawks in the league “by putting themselves under their Protection;” thereafter, “he calls the Mohawks his father, and in return he is called a Son.” Mohawks employed him as “Ambassador to the other Nations.”11 The list continued with other nations carrying titles and roles based on their participation in the epic. Thus, members were not merely carrying out functions established long ago. In essence they were the same people carrying out the same ceremonies: past and present in a closed, never-ending cycle.

And Tuscaroras were out of the loop. It should be recalled that in Iroquois understanding, the formation of the League with all of its attendant tales of precedent-

10 Richter, “Ordeals of the Longhouse,” 17..

setting events took place after Deganawidah left the Tuscaroras’ ancestors in North Carolina. No tales of the League’s founding included the Tuscaroras, no Tuscarora names appeared in the roll-call of the founders; and within a conservative framework dependent upon ancient precedent, no new place within the Great Council could easily be made. Therefore, according to the Tuscarora Elias Johnson and several other nineteenth-century commentators, when the Tuscaroras were adopted they were “initiated without enlarging the framework of the confederacy and formation of the League.” Tuscarora names were not added to the roll-call of League Chiefs. Tuscaroras were never given full membership in the council; in league matters they never received a guaranteed vote. Structurally, these distinctions within the Grand Council could ensure that they remained somewhat different, lacking the full prestige of the other five nations who often took pride in their roles. The missionary Zinzendorf, for example, spotted such attitudes among Onondagas glorying in their ancient “heroik deeds” like “old Romans” who looked down on nearly everybody else “as a miserable creature.” Tuscaroras, who had made an “irregular entrance into the House,” may have been especially vulnerable—perhaps even “fools.”

And yet, according to Elias Johnson and others, the Tuscaroras, enjoyed “a nominal equality . . . by the courtesy of the other five nations.” They were “not

12 Johnson, Legends, 69.
14 Boyce, "Tuscarora Political Organization," 189.
15 Johnson, Legends, 69.
dependent, but were admitted to as "full an equality as could be granted them without
enlarging the frame-work of the confederacy." In practice, this reflected the fact that
although the Grand Council had fifty sachems distributed unevenly among the five nations,
each nation only cast one vote. Moreover, the goal was consensus and goodwill, not
narrow electoral victory. Although lacking league titles, the Tuscaroras could participate
as spectators, and could make their voices "heard through the sachem of some other
tribe." In this context of seeking unity, the Tuscaroras could still wield influence even
without a formal participatory role.

Moreover, the Grand Council was not the only, or perhaps even most important,
entity for intercourse among the Iroquois nations. The Grand Council acted as a source of
prestige and ceremonial precedent. However, its role centered on "peace functions;" it
possessed few "state-like characteristics" in terms of decision-making, centripetal
authority, or external diplomacy. Historian Daniel Richter has made a distinction
between the older Great League of Peace as a cultural and ritual institution, and a more
recent political and diplomatic entity, the Iroquois Confederacy. The Confederacy
borrowed heavily in terms of ritual and form from the League, and at times membership in
the two institutions overlapped, but they were different. As opposed to the earlier inter-
tribal crises confronted by the League, the Confederacy arose to confront the trade,

16 Johnson, Legends, 69.

17 Lewis Henry Morgan, League of the Ho-De-No-Sau-Nee or Iroquois, ed. Herbert M.
Lloyd, reprint ed. (New York: Burt Franklin, 1966), 1: 93-94; Boyce, "Tuscarora Political
Organization," 189.

18 Richter, "Ordeals of the Longhouse," 17.
warfare, and diseases brought by contact with Europeans beginning in the seventeenth century. Unlike the Grand Council of the League composed of the fifty bearers of sacred sachem titles, the Confederacy relied on the cooperation of an unfixed number of influential local headmen and skilled orators who had risen to authority in their home villages. It was these men who were most likely to try to exercise and coordinate authority within their communities; it was they who were most likely to treat with European diplomats, arguing in matters of war, trade, alliances, and land. Increasingly into the eighteenth century, the Confederacy wielded a greater amount of influence in decision-making among the Iroquois, and even took on some ceremonial functions of the League.  

Whereas the conservative nature of the League had restricted the roles available to the Tuscaroras, flexibility in the Confederacy allowed a fuller voice. Even while employing many League rituals and protocols, the Confederacy proved more adaptive and open to change. "Innovation," according to Richter, "grew within a framework of traditional forms." The same might be said of the Tuscaroras. Despite being barred from full participation within the League, Tuscaroras found a secure place in the Confederacy. In the process they adopted many protocols originally employed in the League, but which had trickled down to the Confederacy.

In other words, even though the Confederacy arose as a separate entity from the League, the line between the two became almost immediately hazy. Therefore, it is

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impossible to analyze the Tuscaroras’ position within a static version of an idealized
League (or Confederacy). Instead, Tuscarora political leaders rose, similar to other
Iroquois leaders around them, by internalizing the forms of the League, and by employing
them in political discussions among themselves, other Indian groups, and with Europeans.
One anthropologist, examining Tuscaroras in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, even
suggests that they became greater sticklers for proper ceremonial protocol than the other
five nations, perhaps to compensate for an abiding self-consciousness as outsiders.21

An example of this process can be seen in patterns of Tuscarora leadership.
Although Tuscaroras were denied positions in the League’s roll-call of sachems,
Tuscaroras joined the swell of local leaders rising to positions of broader prominence in
the Confederacy. Therefore, at councils and treaties, Tuscarora leaders appeared in the
records. Some of their positions, according to Elias Johnson, initially followed old
bloodlines inherited from the south.22 Moreover, those Tuscaroras who came north were
able to preserve previous patterns of one or two village headmen who consulted with a
council of elders and respected men from the community—a contrast to the efforts of
"King" Blount who monopolized unprecedented personal authority at the end of the
Tuscaroras War.

21 David Landy, "Tuscarora Tribalism and National Identity," Ethnohistory 5, no. 3

22 Johnson, Legends, 69-72. Describing groups near the Tuscaroras in North Carolina,
Lawson wrote, “succession falls not to the King’s son, but to his sister’s son”—evidence
of a matrilineal system that corresponded to the Iroquois (Lawson, New Voyage, 204-05).
In spite of such continuity, change did occur. Chiefs came to be “raised up” or installed using ceremonies adapted from other Iroquois nations. Old terminology (i.e. “teetha” for “king”) gave way to a new political vocabulary for words like “judge,” “Confederate Chief,” and “council” based on roots and stems borrowed from the speech of Iroquois neighbors. Like other Iroquois leaders who rose to prominence in the Confederacy, Tuscarora leaders performed ceremonial duties that echoed League etiquette. In some cases, Tuscaroras adopted the Iroquois practice of preserving leaders’ names as titles. The most prevalent such designation was that of Sakwarithra — “The Spear Dragger” — whose name appeared repeatedly in eighteenth-century records and which was held by several individuals in the nineteenth century. In a 1794 treaty, a man by that name was referred to as “head sachem by birth.” Another probable title was that of T’hanhanagwanageas. One leader holding that name died in a 1754 fire; another Tuscarora of the same name died and received an elaborate funeral two decades later. Other inherited names are harder to identify in the records, although Douglas Boyce has published a tentative list of about twenty.


25 Pickering, *Papers*, 153. The position was probably hereditary within a clan, not to the child of a single individual.

26 *Doc. Hist. N.Y.*, 3: 1036; Journal, 1754/04/08, Hawley Papers; James Dean to Philip Schuyler, 1776/03/10 in Kirkland Letters, 64a. The first bearer of the name also went by Jacob, and may have married into the Tuscaroras. Hawley wrote that his Indian name “is long, but of no extraordinary meaning.”

Led by such men, Tuscaroras took part in many ceremonies common among the Iroquois. They participated in condolence rites for the deaths of leaders among other nations, offering beaded belts, blackened strouts, and soothing words. The death of one of their own likewise provoked the "usual ceremony" from other nations and well-informed Europeans. In 1776, the diplomat James Dean reported that a "principle sachem" of the Tuscaroras "is lately dead" and that the Tuscaroras refused any negotiations "till his funeral observances are performed." In another instance, Tuscaroras and Oneidas chastised other Iroquois nations for neglecting a condolence ceremony for recently killed warriors—an omission, according to their speaker, "which we think wrong."

When such gifts and observances were not enough to end grief, Tuscaroras might receive captives "in order to replace some of their Friends deceased." Taking up the Iroquois practice of using adopted prisoners to fill spiritual and physical voids in grieving communities, Tuscaroras treated such captives, no longer "as prisoners, but with that kindness and tenderness and respect which they had for the deceased. If one of them makes [up] the loss of a child or brother, he has title and privileges that appertain to the situation he stands in. In a word the deceased are now revived again." The missionary Gideon Hawley watched the Tuscaroras give a "shout of approbation" as they received

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28 Johnson, Papers, 12: 364, 946-47.

29 James Dean to Philip Schuyler, 1776/03/10 in Kirkland Letters, 64a.


31 Johnson, Papers, 4: 367-72; 9: 357; Journal, 1756/02/18, Hawley Papers.
one such prisoner to replace “Cayadanorong, a Tuscarora” who had recently died at the Battle of Lake George. Captive-taking practices with similar roots had probably existed previously among the Tuscaroras in North Carolina, but were transformed by the slave trade. Transplanted and tended in Iroquois lands, they took new flower.

Clans were another area where Tuscarora behaviors fell into step with northeastern norms. Clan organization was so interwoven with the League that some Iroquois traditions attributed their creation to Deganawidah. Each of the five nations had varying numbers of clans, usually named after animals and birds, which served as an important way for individuals to reckon their kinship. Taking pride in their heritage, “Indians, in their hours of leisure, paint their different marks or badges on the doors of their respective houses, that those who pass by may know to which . . . [clan] the inhabitants belong.” At the League and village level, clans played a number of roles. Iroquois women gained a voice through clan matrons who controlled succession to League sachem titles. In an exogamous society where Iroquois married outside of their own clan, clan lines set the boundaries of prospective husbands and wives. In councils and ceremonies, clan groupings of “moieties” or “phratries” determined roles. One set of clans sat across the council fire from another, while a third might sit between, acting as “firekeepers” or “judges” who

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32 Journal, 1756/02/18, Hawley Papers.


34 John Heckewelder, *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1876), 254. “Clan” has been inserted in the above quotation in the place of “tribe” in keeping with Heckewelder’s pattern of using the two interchangeably.

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moderated points of discussion. Such descriptions date at least as far back as 1666 when a Jesuit missionary wrote that “when they assemble together for consultation, the first division ranges itself on one side of the fire in a cabin; and the other Division places itself on the other side” and continued into the twentieth century.

Although no evidence suggests such complex clans among Tuscaroras in North Carolina, Iroquois patterns became the norm by the nineteenth century. Among those who came north, observers have since counted eight or more clans. For Tuscaroras, clans may have been especially important because of the ties they created between nations: a Bear clan member among the Tuscaroras, for example, could seek out and expect hospitality from fellow members of the Bear clan in each of the other five nations. If a member was hurt or killed, clan members—even from another nation—would be expected to provide aid or offer revenge. Beyond a place to rest, a meal to share, or even an ally in need, belief in a joint lineage from ancestors in an ancient mythological past could offer a sense of common history and likeness.


Likewise, in the language they used to describe their relationship with other nations, the Tuscaroras adapted Iroquois usage, using a vocabulary that borrowed and expanded on clan patterns. Just as clans were divided into moieties for ceremonial purposes, the Six Nations imagined themselves as a family with an “elder” and a “younger” branch. Like clans, the two branches symbolically sat across from one another in councils between nations. During times of loss and grief, members of one branch collectively mourned together, receiving the ministrations of the other branch who cooperated to assuage the grief. The elder branch included the Senecas, Onondagas, and Mohawks; the younger branch included the Oneidas and Cayugas. As the newest members, the Tuscaroras were a natural addition to this younger branch. Like other members of the younger branch, they often referred to those in the elder branch as their “fathers” and in turn were called “sons.” Moreover, within the younger moiety, the Oniedas occupied a place as the “head” or “elder brother.”

These structural divisions help explain the confusing array of kin terms associated with descriptions of the Tuscaroras’ place among the Iroquois, such as statements that the Tuscaroras were “brother to the Onoyders and Cayuquos’s, and son to the others.” Likewise, one gains a better understanding of Elias Johnson’s statement that the Tuscaroras

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40 For an example of the use of such divisions in a condolence in 1750 see MPCP, 5: 476-78.

made an application, through their brothers the Oneidas, to be admitted
into the Iroquois and become the Sixth Nation . . . . Then the Seneca
adopted the Tuscarora as their children. Ever since that time to the
present, if a Seneca addresses the Tuscaroras, he will invariably salute them
as 'my sons,' in social or in council; and also the Tuscarora in turn will say
‘my fathers.’

Thus, being called “son” or “younger brother” and in turn addressing others as “father” or
“older brother” did not necessarily signify derision pointed at a newly adopted outsider,
but instead could represent integration within broader Iroquois patterns. The Cayugas, for
instance, referred to the Senecas and Oneidas in similar kin terms as the Tuscaroras.

Iroquois metaphors, however, were notoriously slippery; rarely did any term have
a single concrete meaning. Therefore, discussions of Tuscaroras as children could slide
rhetorically into implying power relationships based upon their recent arrival. Likewise,
references to other nations as their fathers, or especially to the Oneidas as their “elder
brothers,” could suggest dependency. At the Tuscaroras’ first arrival, it will be recalled,
the Iroquois themselves had proclaimed authority over the adoptees as “our Children who
shall obey our commands.”

42 Johnson, Legends, 69.

43 In matrifocal Iroquois society, an elder brother could have influence comparable to the
father. Even greater male authority could come from the mother’s brother. As suggested
in William Johnson’s quotation below, such relations also entailed obligations. Under
European influence, however, the Iroquois and other Indians increasingly adopted
patriarchal language.

44 NYCD, 5: 387.

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referred to the "Tuscaroras who belong to you as children" and who were received on a "cradle" for the Oneidas to "feed and protect."\textsuperscript{45} Two decades later Johnson urged a group of Tuscaroras to obey "the Oneida chiefs who are the proper heads of your settlement" and to remember early kindness shown upon their ancestors' first arrival half a century earlier.\textsuperscript{46} Such language might even translate into faintly damning praise, as when Johnson lauded the "wholesome advice" given to the Oneidas by "your brother the Tuscarora, although younger."\textsuperscript{47}

Exactly how pervasive such views were, and what effect they had on relations between the Tuscaroras and other Iroquois nations is hard to determine, especially since descriptions came from patriarchal-minded Europeans. Johnson himself realized that the northeastern Indians had no "word which can express, or convey the Idea of Subjection." Instead in treaties and elsewhere, Indians might use native kin metaphors such as father or brother, only to have colonial translators "readily adopt & insert a Word very different in signification, and never intended by the Indians." The results could be of "dangerous consequence."\textsuperscript{48} Nonetheless, Johnson did not heed his own warnings, and instead may have attempted to use such language as a way to understand unfamiliar hierarchies and perhaps impose a few of his own. Trying to distinguish factions among the Iroquois, he wrote that the "Tuscaroras ( . . are, as it were, under the Oneidas), [and] I suppose


\textsuperscript{46} Johnson, \textit{Papers}, 12: 1110.


followed their Example.” But only a few months later, he discovered a more cooperative mindset when the Oneidas refused to accept one of Johnson’s proposals, claiming they could not give a “determinate Answer till they had consulted with their Bretheren the Tuscaroras.”

A broad analysis of the record suggests that Oneidas, in fact, often did take the lead, but not invariably. In many cases, the two cooperated apparently as equals; less frequently Tuscarora opinions proved a deciding influence. In a few instances, Oneidas and Tuscaroras broke with one another and took separate paths. Such interactions may have owed as much to local politics and the fact that Tuscaroras and Oneidas lived in close proximity, as to deep-seated structural authority based upon Oneida seniority.

**Negotiations as the Sixth Nation**

Despite any internal differences, the Iroquois were masters at shielding splits from the prying eyes of outsiders and putting forward a seemingly united front—one main reason why analysis of the relative position of the Tuscaroras among the other five nations is so difficult. External cooperation helped make six individual nations into a collective

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50 Johnson, *Papers*, 9: 332-34; In this encounter an Oneida described his people as “drunk” for not following the advice of the Tuscaroras earlier.

“Six Nations” that wielded great diplomatic and military influence among colonists and other Indian groups. Any losses in prestige that Tuscaroras may have experienced as newcomers among the Iroquois were in large part compensated for by the diplomatic gains to be had as member of the Six Nations. By casting their lot with the Iroquois, the Tuscaroras gained newfound political leverage in dealings with colonists, which is hard to imagine for refugees who had suffered massive military defeat and expulsion from their homelands.

After the Albany Treaty of 1722, colonial diplomats viewed Tuscaroras primarily as part of the Six Nations with whom they held councils and entered into treaties. In such external affairs, members of the Iroquois Confederacy balanced individual autonomy with efforts to cooperate and coordinate their actions. Towards these ends, councilors from the different nations, including the Tuscaroras, frequently met at the central council fire at Onondaga; during treaties with Europeans they would confer and debate privately before emerging to answer colonial officials with a harmonized voice. Internal disagreements occurred—indeed, they were common—but inaction rather than contrary courses were the usual result. As one Iroquois politician explained, “one Nation often makes a Proposition and gives their consent to a thing in the name of all the rest, which if they afterwards consent and approve of, it is well, but if they disallow’d it, it was void.”52 A lack of true coercive authority hindered enforcement of such a veto, but at very least, nations

52 NYCD, 5: 788.
attempted to steer clear of open conflict and bloodshed among themselves. Internal peace, their leaders recognized, could translate into external influence.\(^{53}\)

Despite limitations, the Six Nations were the preeminent diplomatic force among Indians in colonial eastern North America.\(^{54}\) As members, Tuscaroras gained privileged access to numerous treaties and conferences, addressing a multitude of issues. Many of these conferences were landmarks of colonial Indian diplomacy. At the 1744 Treaty of Lancaster, officials from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia debated with Iroquois councilors over the fate of the Ohio Valley and the future of wars between the Iroquois and several southern nations. At the Treaty of Easton in 1758 during the Seven Years’ War, English officials and leaders from the Iroquois and other Indian nations negotiated a general peace across much of western Pennsylvania, New York, and the Ohio Valley. In 1768, Iroquois diplomats signed a treaty at Fort Stanwix with British officials, creating a several-hundred mile frontier boundary to divide Europeans from Indians. At all of these conferences, and at numerous other meetings, Tuscaroras participated as the sixth nation.


of the Iroquois, sending representatives, negotiating in public or "in the bushes," and affixing their signatures to official documents.\^5\^5

The vastness of this sea of talks, treaties, and conferences extending from Virginia to Canada becomes even more evident when compared to the Tuscaroras' situation before the Tuscarora War. Earlier, Tuscaroras had been big fish in a small pond whose diplomatic shores rarely extended outside of Virginia or the Carolinas. Those who remained in Indian Woods after the war had seen these waters recede even farther (even while their status slipped further down the local political food chain). Migrants, on the other hand, quickly became a fixture at the multitude of negotiations involving the Iroquois. If anything, documents give the impression that these Tuscaroras became more active as the century progressed.\^5\^6

One of the most important topics of these treaties was land, which by mid-century an Iroquois speaker declared was the "chief cause of all the late Wars."\^5\^7 During the eighteenth century, unprecedented numbers of European settlers flooded into the mid-Atlantic backcountry, making the ownership and control of territory, particularly rich


\^5\^6 For an overview of activity, see the entry under "Tuscarora" in the \textit{Iroq. Doc. Hist.} Index, pp 691-92. This apparent increase in political activity may in part reflect an overall increase in records of Iroquois diplomacy after the elevation of William Johnson to the position of Northern Superintendent of Indian Affairs.

\^5\^7 \textit{NYCD}, 7: 726.
bottomlands suitable for farming, vital. The Iroquois made the strategic sale and distribution of land a central means of securing their importance to colonial governments. One historian, tongue-in-cheek, has labeled them as America's "first great real estate agency."\textsuperscript{58} Rather than merely chasing profit and selling any chunk of land to the highest bidder, however, Iroquois diplomats strategically claimed and sold territory to shape settlement patterns by both European and Indian settlers along the edges of Iroquoia, and to leverage advantageous deals in trade and war.\textsuperscript{59}

Membership among the Iroquois gave a great leg up to Tuscarora migrants displaced from their own homelands in North Carolina. Whether negotiations centered on lands along the Susquehanna and Delaware rivers, the shores of the Great Lakes, or deep in the Ohio country, the Iroquois grounded ownership on assertions of ancient occupation, military conquest, or pretensions of authority over native inhabitants. Although nearly all of these basis for ownership predated the Tuscaroras' adoption, the Iroquois conferred such prerogatives to the Sixth Nation. For example, at the 1744 Treaty at Lancaster, the Iroquois responded to Maryland claims over the Susquehanna Valley,

\textit{[you] told us, you had been in Possession of the Province of Maryland above One Hundred Years; but what is One Hundred Years in Comparison of the Length of Time since our claim began? Since we came out of this ground? For we must tell you, that long before One Hundred Years our


\textsuperscript{59} Jennings, \textit{Ambiguous Iroquois Empire}.
Ancestors came out of this very Ground, and their children have remained here ever since. You came out of the Ground in a Country that lies beyond the Seas, there you may have a just Claim, but here you must allow us to be your elder Brethren, and the Lands to belong to us long before you knew any thing of them.60

At another point in the same negotiations, the Iroquois claimed ownership of the Susquehanna Valley and parts of Ohio by military conquest: "we conquered the Nations residing there, and that Land, if the Virginians ever get a good Right to it, must be by us."61 At one point, Iroquois negotiators conceded that the English had "drove back the Tuscarorrowas," voiding those Indians' claims to parts of Virginia.62 On such a basis, one might expect the Tuscaroras to have had limited diplomatic clout. Nonetheless, Tuscaroras still took part in the negotiations alongside other Iroquois diplomats and affixed their name to the final treaty.63


This was no limited case. Despite their status as newcomers to the region, Tuscaroras joined in negotiations related to the claim and sale of numerous lands in the mid-Atlantic and Northeast. In 1741, for example, Tuscaroras, alongside Onondagas, Cayugas, and Oneidas, took part in talks with the English and French regarding the possibility of selling a plot near Niagara. Likewise, in 1754, a Tuscarora sachem named Suntrughwacho affixed his name alongside those of representatives from the other five Iroquois nations onto a treaty handing over a vast swath stretching westward from the banks of the Susquehanna River. Four years later at Easton, Iroquois leaders claimed that the scope of the sale was larger than they had intended and had alienated Indians living in the Ohio Valley. Therefore, the western portion was returned to the Iroquois in another treaty, this time signed by leaders including “Nihaquontoquon, a sachem or chief of the Tuscarora nation.”

Many of these territories were not even particularly near Tuscarora communities. Indeed, the Six Nations, including the Tuscaroras, made a habit of seizing a lead role in negotiations of lands inhabited by the smaller tribes whom Iroquois and colonial officials

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64 NYCD, 9: 1081.
67 In one odd case, a Tuscarora signature apparently appeared on a patent which was attempted to be used to defraud Mohawks of part of the Kayadarosseras tract. The Mohawks inspected the paper and decided it was invalid based in part upon the fact that “one of the subscribers was a Tuscarora” with improper authority over the tract. The fact that the paper was apparently signed in 1702, decades before the Tuscaroras’ adoption among the Iroquois, added to the illegality. Johnson, Papers, 12: 530-31.
alike chose to view as subordinate to the Iroquois. In 1769, for example, a group of Indians from various tribes living along the Wabash River in the Ohio country complained that the Six Nations had given up "so much of the Country to the English without asking their consent and approbations and say the lands down the Ohio . . . is as much theirs as the Six Nations." Senecas and Cayugas (who had strong ties with these Indians to their west) agreed, admitting that the sale was against their "judgements;" nonetheless, they gave in to the will of the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, and Tuscaroras. In other cases, the Tuscaroras' position among the Iroquois allowed them to influence negotiations closer to home. In 1764, a group of Tuscaroras and Oneidas from communities near Oneida Lake approached Sir William Johnson in order to express their "hope that . . . [he] will protect our Possessions" by writing down their lands bounds in duplicate, one copy to be held by the Indians, and another to be preserved by colonial officials. More dramatic was the effect on the Treaty Line of Fort Stanwix. That line, meant to separate Indians and whites, ran up the length of the eastern branch of the Susquehanna towards that river's headwaters, except at one point where it suddenly skirted east to bypass the Tuscarora and Oneida community of Oquaga. The detour apparently owed in part to politicking by the town's Tuscarora and Oneida inhabitants. Rather than merely

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68 See, for example, Doc. Hist. N.Y., 2: 750. MPCP, 5: 392-393.

69 Johnson, Papers, 7: 184-185.

70 Johnson, Papers, 11:29-31. Johnson ultimately rejected the entreaty, instead informing the petitioners that the recently enacted Proclamation of 1763 would guarantee their lands.

71 NYCD, 7: 729; Johnson, Papers, 12: 542, 628-29; Doc. Hist. N.Y., 1: 591. NYCD, 8: 120-21, 125, 135-37 (includes treaty line and map).
defending lands, members of the same community selectively sold other portions, ranging from large tracts of over a 200,000 acres down to more personal sales, such as one to "a Woman at Schohare who wanted to buy a piece of land from them sufficient for a farm." 72

Another benefit derived by Tuscaroras as members of the Six Nations was access to the gifts that were regularly distributed at conferences. English and French officials had quickly learned that gifts played numerous roles in Iroquois society and were an unavoidable cost of conducting any serious business. Costly treaty belts, knives, fine clothes, and guns gave weight to a speaker's words and indicated that he spoke for a whole community. Although initially both sides had exchanged presents as symbols of goodwill, increasingly in the eighteenth century, exchanges became a "one-way affair," with Europeans viewing presents as payment, even bribes, for lands and alliance. 73 As members of the Six Nations, Tuscaroras stood at the receiving end of this steady flow.

Tuscarora leaders received individual presents from European diplomats as signs of respect and friendship; these in turn could bolster a recipient's own standing among their people. One dapper Tuscarora leader returned from a conference sporting a "Silver Laced Hatt," courtesy of William Johnson who recorded its cost in his account book. Another entry recorded L5/16/4 for "a present" given to three Tuscaroras who came "on

72 Johnson, Papers, 12: 542.

73 Jennings, et. al., History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy, 94; White, Middle Ground, 112-119, 399-404; Nancy Shoemaker, "An Alliance between Men: Gender Metaphors in Eighteenth-Century American Indian Diplomacy East of the Mississippi," Ethnohistory 46, no. 2 (1999): 239-63 discusses the effects of these patterns of gift giving on gender conceptions.
During a 1732 meeting with the proprietor of Pennsylvania, a Tuscarora leader received one of “six fine Japanned and gilt guns . . . to be delivered one to the Chief of Each of the Six Nations.” Six other Tuscarora leaders lined up for silver medals issued for military service against the French at Montreal. At times, Indians could be persistent in their expectations. Leaders from an Oneida and Tuscarora community (Oquaga) wrote to the “Governor . . . and great men” of Boston to remind them of a promise to give “several dollars to each of the heads” of their community, that had never arrived.

Much to the frustration of European hosts, rarely did only a few needy diplomats arrive. Instead, officials learned to expect a traveling road show, such as the one in 1736 that arrived in Pennsylvania consisting of several Delaware chiefs, a Cayuga chief, “Teshansomen [,,] a Tuscarore” leader and “several young Men, Women, and children, to the number of twenty-five in the whole, coming to town on a visit to this Government.” This number was small compared to some later treaties to which Tuscaroras contributed sizable contingents. A delegate to the 1744 Lancaster Treaty recorded how “during our

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Johnson, Papers, 3: 152; 12:734-35, 797-99, 863-69. The three Indians “on business” are referred to as from Ganughswawaghte, which was a community largely occupied and led by Tuscaroras, although there were also Oneidas there as well.

Johnson, Papers, 251-54.

Letter to Governor of Boston from Isaac Takayenersere and Gwedethes Akwirondongwas, 1764/11/12, Charles Roberts' Autographs, Library of Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania. I would like to thank Marjory Hinman for calling my attention to this source.

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dinner, the deputies of the Six Nations, with their followers and attendants to the number of 252 arrived in town," marching "in very good order;" these included their "wives, with some small children, [who] rode on horseback."  

A still larger meeting at Albany in 1745 included 87 Tuscaroras, alongside 163 Mohawks, 75 Oneidas, 81 Onondagas, and 56 Cayugas. (Senecas did not come because of a "distemper" that raged in their towns.)

Such large contingents arrived with veritable shopping lists for Europeans to fill. The leader of a Tuscarora delegation that camped outside Fort Johnson in 1756 told the Indian superintendent that "Our young men and women have brought down many things

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A 1742 meeting at Philadelphia hosted:

Onondagas-13 (1 chief Canassateego who is also speaker and 2 councilors)
Cayugas: 19 (2 chiefs)
Oneidas: 14 (2 chiefs)
Senecas: 3 (1 captain)
Tuscaroras: 20 (3 chiefs, 1 captain)
Shawnees: 5 (1 chief)
"Canestogo Indians that speak the Onayiut’s language" 4 (1 chief)
"Canoyias or Nanticokes of Canestogo" 4 (0 chiefs)
Delawares of Shamokin: 6 (2 chiefs)
Delawares from the Forks: 4 (2 chiefs)

to have mended by the smith, and want some new to be made, viz Hoes [hoes], axes, guns, kettles, etc., which we wish you would leave orders to have done.81 In another instance, Tuscaroras went so far as to ask for a smith to return home with them to repair rusted axes and a ploughman with a team of horses to till their cornfields.82 Europeans also distributed pipes, tobacco, razors, combs, scissors, ribbons, and “trifles of Cloathing” for the wives and children.83 Hogs and cattle would be roasted, kegs of rum opened, and bread baked and distributed. Tuscarora women lined up alongside Onondagas and Oneidas in requesting rum to “fulfill some Dreams their People had and some for Christenings Weddings etc.”84

In small quantities such goods might be no more than “trifles,” but, grumbled cash-strapped colonial officials, they added up to a costly flow of wealth from European hands into Tuscarora communities. Officials could easily spend a whole day or more dividing gifts to be shared among the Iroquois participants at treaties.85 Tuscaroras were sometimes so eager for part of the spoils that they angered members of other Iroquois contingents. After the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix, Oneidas complained that the

81 NYCD, 7: 176. See Johnson, Papers, 10: 643-48 for another example of Tuscaroras receiving gifts and repairs of tools since their axes were so rusted that they were “almost reduced to the necessity of burning down trees, (as our Forefathers used to do).” In this case, Johnson answered their request, but also distributed some criticism by blaming their poverty on their indolence.


84 Johnson, Papers. 9, 638.

Tuscaroras had departed with more than their fair share of the presents; they feared that Tuscaroras might also make off with an undue proportion of $10,000 promised for Iroquois lands by Pennsylvania in the treaty.86

For Tuscaroras in times of crisis, such gifts could turn into life-saving necessities; smart officials, in turn, expected to bank a return on their investment in gratitude and dependency. One ailing Tuscarora received money to “pay an Indian Doctor for Cureing him.”87 In early winter, 1758 William Johnson recorded that numerous Tuscarora and Oneida families came begging for food, “having nothing at home,” and in a “Starving Condition crops hav[in]g failed.” The superintendent issued them £48 credit to buy supplies at the nearby Palatine community of Stone Arabia, where some decided to spend the winter -- living off European hospitality.88 As another Tuscarora chief said, two years earlier, “we are very poor and in want of many necessaries for our Families which we hope you will be able to supply us with, as our only dependence at these times is on you."89

Other gifts filled symbolic more than practical needs. Europeans learned to follow Iroquois protocol, understanding that presents could serve as a vital form of reconciliation and allow clear minds to resume diplomacy. Thus, in 1756 Johnson carefully presented a

87 Johnson, Papers, 12: 758-63.
88 Johnson, Papers, 10: 77; 3: 152.
89 NYCD, 7: 150-51. In another instance, the commander of Fort Augustine fed a returning delegation of Delawares (and perhaps Tuscaroras) “3 barrells of flour that they might not dey, untill I knew of the Governour’s pleasure; they thank’d me, and said that they now saw that their Brothers, the English would have Compassion on them.” (PA Archives, 2: 803.)
sculpt and a bundle of goods for each of three recently deceased Tuscaroras: one murdered, another a casualty of the Battle of Lake George, and another named Swegewy, a "Tuscarora who was drowned here a few days ago." Often such gifts consisted of bead belts and darkened strouts. Few gifts carried such weight as prisoners. Within such a context, presenting a prisoner as a gift carried several meanings. Not only could such a presentation serve as a powerful stimulation to join in war, prisoners handed over for torture or adoption were particularly well-suited to cover the grave of grieving communities. When Guy Johnson acquired several prisoners, he planned to "give them amongst the Nations in the same manner which being always done is Expected by them and thought in the greatest light." These he gave to the Tuscaroras, Oneidas, and Onondagas, "in order to replace some of their Friends deceased." Likewise, the Iroquois received a French prisoner at the conclusion of the Battle at Lake George, "with the greatest mark of gratitude and satisfaction, every nation giving the shout of approbation, and then carried off the Prisoners to their respective families." One prisoner went to the family of the recently deceased "Cayadanorong, a Tuscarora." The next day, Iroquois representatives thanked the English for their "goodness in thus settling our minds which were so much discomposed" and reminding them of "that Harmony that has always

90 NYCD, 7: 177-78.

91 Presentations of dark colored cloth apparently reflected a combination of the Iroquoian practice of presenting mourning gifts and European practices of wearing black during times of grief.

92 Johnson, Papers, 4: 367-72.
subsisted between our Forefathers and our Bretheren the English.”93 When live captives were not at hand, “2 french scalps” could do. These Johnson presented at a Tuscarora community which “one of their young men very briskly laid hold of and sung the War Song with them in his hand round” inside the palisade.94

The end of a conference did not necessarily halt gift-giving. Departing Indians, often numbering in the hundreds, sought and received quantities of supplies to sustain them on their way home. Passing by Fort Augusta at the forks of the Susquehanna on their return from a meeting with the governor of Pennsylvania, Tuscaroras were “well pleased w’t the usage” they received from Captain McKee: to each man he distributed plenty of food, four pounds of gunpowder, sixteen pounds of lead, a quart of rum, and “at their departure what Beaff and flour they might want for their Journey.”95 Europeans were not always so well pleased at having to give such supplies, but as a Tuscarora speaker reminded, what Europeans would not freely give, passing contingents would be forced to take, by killing cattle and stealing crops along the way.96 Colonial officials would be better advised to accept such expenditures as the cost of diplomacy with the Tuscaroras and other members of the Six Nations.

Adapting to a New World

93 NYCD, 7: 55.
94 NYCD, 7: 150-51.
95 PA Archives, 2: 789-90.
For most Tuscaroras, treaties or grand councils were less important than the more local experiences of integrating into new communities within and near Iroquoia. Surviving evidence suggests that Tuscaroras established several communities in Pennsylvania during their flight north. Tuscaroras left their name on a valley along the Juniata River, where a small Tuscarora community probably existed as late as 1762. In that year, Tuscaroras who had moved further north wrote a letter to the governor of Pennsylvania asking the "state and behavior of our brethren in Tuscarora Valley," since they intended to "make them a visit." Nineteenth-century oral histories recalled a community near present-day Tamaqua, Pennsylvania, where the migrants lived for about two years before moving on. By 1722, "Charles, a Tuscarora Indian" was well versed enough with his new Pennsylvania surroundings to serve as a guide for traders along the Susquehanna River near Conestoga. Nonetheless, like the community at Tamaqua, most of these communities in Pennsylvania seem to have been small and short-lived. While small numbers of Tuscaroras continued to travel and reside among the numerous Indian villages

97 Quoted in Abraham Guss, "Early Glimpses into the Pennsylvania Interior, the Ancient Juniata and the Tuscarora Indians, the Exploration of the Interior by the Traders," in History of Juniata and Other Counties of Pennsylvania (S.l.: s.n., 18--) 43. Gus also quotes a 1753 letter from Carlisle, Pennsylvania that refers to a "a large number of Delawares, Shawanese, and Tuscaroras [who] continue in this vicinity."

98 "Tuscarora State Park" exists near the site today. Johnson, Legends, 68. Boyce, "As the Wind," 156.

of Pennsylvania’s Susquehanna Valley, most Tuscaroras ultimately settled further north, closer to the Iroquois.100

As in North Carolina, Tuscaroras in New York did not settle in one site; instead they joined towns and scattered hamlets loosely clumped in two main regions. The first, a cluster of settlements south of Oneida Lake, was described in 1752 by a traveling Moravian diarist, John Martin Mack, engaged on a mission to Onondaga. Passing east from Oneida territory, his party reached “a Tuscarora Town” called Ganistagoa—literally “large village.” Aptly named, it contained “almost thirty houses, large and regularly built, with a wide street through the middle of town.” The “Tuscarora chief who lives here came to see us,” Mack recorded; the leader greeted them, explained that he had hoped to accompany them but could not, “being lame,” and discussed the prospects of Christianity among his people.101

Setting out in the morning, Mack’s band “came to a few huts occupied by some Tuscaroras, and in the afternoon to a town of the same tribe” called Ganasaraga. Rather than following the example of several Seneca traveling companions who knew well enough to stop, Mack pushed on and “lodged in a cold and dark wood.” Lesson learned, whenever Mack or his Moravian companions passed again, they were sure to take

100 For examples of Tuscaroras traveling see Johnson, Papers, 6: 114-16; Gus, “Early Glimpses,” 43; Beauchamp, Moravian Journals, 160-62.

101 Beauchamp, Moravian Journals, 113, 150, 154. This town apparently was also sometimes referred to as S’ganates, also mentioned by Mack. It was probably about five miles outside of New Oneida (Samuel Kirkland, The Journals of Samuel Kirkland: 18th Century Missionary to the Iroquois, Government Agent, Father of Hamilton College, ed. Walter Pilkington (Clinton, N.Y.: Hamilton College, 1980), 88.
advantage of the "quashes and pumpkins" and "special fire" sure to be stoked for them at Ganasaraga by inhabitants who always "received us very kindly."\(^{102}\) Although the town’s name—literally "several strings of beads with a string lying across"—may refer to some ceremonial use of wampum, the image is also useful for visualizing the area, which in addition to the main town, consisted of scattered strings of tiny settlements like Shawasreah, Tiachsochratota, Chutenenga, and Tiochrungwe crossed by the main east-west route upon which Mack traveled.\(^{103}\) A short walk the next morning brought them to their destination, the central Iroquois council fire at Onondaga.

Mack’s journey took him through the heart of Tuscarora settlements in the Oneida Lake region. At varying times, Ganasaraga and Ganistagoa have been described collectively or individually as "Tuscarora" or "Tuscarora Castle." (Ganistagoa seemed to have an especially strong claim to these titles).\(^{104}\) Nonetheless, it would be impossible to describe any of these communities as wholly Tuscarora. Located in the heart of Iroquoia and directly on the Ambassador’s Road connecting them to the Onondagas and Oneidas, the fate of these towns’ Tuscarora inhabitants was closely associated with that of their

\(^{102}\) Beauchamp, *Moravian Journals*, 120.


\(^{104}\) Samuel Kirkland, for example, referred in a letter to "Tuscarora (alias Kanadesco)" in a 1791/12/06 letter to Henry Knox, in Kirkland Letters, 142b.
neighbors, who constantly visited for trade or diplomacy or added their numbers permanently to the communities’ populations.\textsuperscript{105}

Such was also the case for Tuscaroras living in the second main area of settlement: the upper reaches of the eastern branch of the Susquehanna River. The largest of these communities was at Oquaga. Like many communities of the upper Susquehanna, this town, whose name meant “hulled corn soup place,” was a mixing pot of cultures: in this case Oneidas and Tuscaroras with a smattering of Nanticokes, Delawares, Mahicans, Shawnees, and Mohawks appearing in the records in different years.\textsuperscript{106} These people shared food and tools, lifted voices together in prayer, cooperated in treaties, and intermarried. Even more than near Oneida Lake, Tuscaroras in this region lived in intimate proximity with neighbors from other cultures.

But behind this mixture, Oquaga was also a town of enclaves of peoples whose hulls did not easily come off. A map drawn by Congregational missionary Gideon Hawley shows that the community would better be considered as a collective of ethnic

\textsuperscript{105} Johnson, \textit{Papers}, 9, 834 for reference to Onondaga Indians living at Ganasaraga.

neighborhoods: two separate Tuscarora suburbs—one upstream and one downstream—bordered a core Oneida settlement. A Delaware group also appeared on the map.\textsuperscript{107} Although often referred to as a single entity in records, with its clusters of ethnic neighborhoods, numerous languages, and separate leaders, Oquaga was far from homogeneous. Moreover, not much farther off, other ethnically diverse Indian communities, some of which included Tuscaroras, such as Shawiangto, Ingaren, Otsiningo, Unadilla, and Chugnut, added to the mixture. A short, steep portage led to the Delaware River and its communities.\textsuperscript{108} Hawley described his post at Oquaga “to be in the heart of Indian country, there are many towns of Indians all round us at about a days journey.”\textsuperscript{109} Tuscaroras had made the upper Susquehanna their home, but they were not alone.

In the years following their flight from North Carolina, the majority of Tuscaroras resettled in one of these two regions. South of Oneida Lake and along the Susquehanna River, they succeeded in relocating as not only individuals but as members of particular

\textsuperscript{107} Original in Hawley Papers. Reproduced in Boyce, “Tuscarora Political Organization,” 51 and Hinman, \textit{Hub of the Border Wars}, 2. The Delawares appear to have been driven out during the Seven Years’ War. Hawley wrote, “This place consisted of three villages of Indians being in a triangle. The middle village was Onoydes and the other two Tuscarores, having different languages, but perfectly understanding my Interpreter who spoke the Cognowanga tongue. They were about 220 souls in all.” (Letter to Belknap describing May-June, 1753, in Hawley Papers. Quotation from below section describing June 4, 1753).


\textsuperscript{109} 1753/06/3, Hawley Papers.
ethnic groups that retained their distinctiveness in culturally diverse settings. Nonetheless, change did occur. Therefore, these communities’ stories do not merely narrate the re-establishment of Tuscarora culture from North Carolina, as if such a thing could be as simple as erasing a name from one part of a map and rewriting it on another; they speak to the ways that Tuscaroras associated and integrated with other Indians to create new communities. Unfortunately, records from the most important period, between about 1714 and 1750 when the first generations of Tuscarora migrants became acclimated, are almost wholly non-existent. Historians are confronted with the problem of watching Tuscaroras disappear into a tunnel carrying one familiar set of cultural traits and beliefs from North Carolina, and then emerge later from the darkness out the other side—still recognizable, but different. Although much of the process is obscured, historians can look at the snapshots from before and after and try to evaluate what happened in between. As has frequently been the case for migrants, the Tuscaroras carefully straddled the line between acculturation among their new neighbors and the maintenance of a separate identity that preserved their own language, leaders, manners, and customs.

Close association began at the Tuscaroras’ arrival. Later statements and the treatment of subsequent refugee groups (including later waves of Tuscaroras) suggest that

Oneidas and other Iroquois offered food, supplies, and access to cleared lands in the first crucial years. William Johnson’s 1753 declarations that the Oneidas had made it their duty to “feed and protect” the Tuscaroras as newborns were not merely political metaphors; they reflected the hard reality of caring for newcomers “reduced to the utmost distress” and delivered into an unfamiliar, and possibly hostile world.111 When additional Tuscaroras arrived from North Carolina in mid-century, Johnson told Oneidas that he expected them to again “act your part by settling them in a proper place and afford them some assistance until they can help themselves.”112 In the short run, large numbers of hungry refugees might have created local hardships and perhaps even tension by eating into local food stores.113 Over the long run, such dependencies meant that whatever changes Tuscaroras underwent while learning to fend for themselves, their neighbors would be nearby asserting influence as allies, guides, and mentors.

The sites upon which the Oneidas “fixed” the Tuscaroras reflected several concerns that would affect their integration. Settlements south of Oneida Lake had the advantages of being convenient to neighborly assistance, able to obstruct invading French armies, or, as Mack found, to act as a handy way station. Nearby territories “assigned” to

111 Johnson, Papers, 9: 47-50, 113; NYCD, 8: 43.

112 Johnson, Papers, 12: 312-313.

Tuscaroras between Oneida Lake and the Susquehanna, and bounded by the Unadilla and Chenango Rivers, were thinly populated and could bear the increased population.\textsuperscript{114} Oquaga’s appeal perhaps echoed in the admiration of Jonathan Edwards who hoped to establish a mission there: it was “as convenient perhaps as any place that can be found . . . a pleasant fruitful country, surrounded by many settlements of Indians on every side, and where the way is open by an easy passage down the river . . . [Oquaga is on] the road by which several of the nations pass as they go to war with the southern nations.”\textsuperscript{115} Strengthening the settlements there would also bolster the Iroquois expansion of influence south into the Pennsylvania backcountry and beyond.\textsuperscript{116}

While strategic, these settings also would have been almost wholly unfamiliar to the first generation of Tuscarora migrants, necessitating many changes. The cultural impact of weather patterns and topography upon a people who were farmers and hunters should not be discounted. The cold winters and mountainous terrain of the Susquehanna Valley and Oneida Lake region were far different from the faintly rolling coastal plains of North Carolina. Around Oquaga, the swift, rocky Susquehanna and adjacent pockets of

\textsuperscript{114} Johnson, \textit{Legends}, 69. Nonetheless, most Tuscaroras continued to live in the more densely settled northern and southern edges of these lands. In 1753 Hawley judged that the Indians around Oquaga did not use above one-fortieth of their land. Hawley Papers, 1753/06/13.


\textsuperscript{116} Mancall, \textit{Valley of Opportunity}, 338.
fertile floodplain hid beneath steep hills upon which crops were unlikely to grow.117 Approaching his future mission site, Hawley described climbing the “ridge of a mountain which gave us a view of other mountains as far as the eye could extend; at another time we were plunged into the depths of a gloomy valley.”118 At a glance, the land around Oneida Lake may have felt slightly more familiar. Ganasaraga’s less steep country was bordered on the north by a several-mile-wide “Great Marsh,” where two fast-moving streams suddenly slowed. Rather than draining into the salty estuaries of the Pamlico or Albermarle Sound, however, these waters emptied into Oneida Lake, a lake far larger than any in North Carolina.119 Both settings entailed entirely different ecosystems with which the Tuscaroras would have to become acquainted.

Weather patterns also would have been unfamiliar. Tuscaroras had little experience living in a region where each winter could bring over a hundred inches of snow; where temperatures dropped so low that Madeira wine froze in its bottles; where rivers often froze from December to April, sometimes into solid blocks of ice, other times into sheets that were deceptively—and dangerously—thin.120 In 1767, A Moravian diarist

117 For the geography of the upper Susquehanna River see Richard Smith, A Tour of Four Great Rivers, ed. Francis W. Halsey (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1906), 29-69; Mancall, Valley of Opportunity; Crevecoeur, Letters . . . and Sketches, 353-380.

118 Hawley Papers, 1753/05/29.


suspected that a group of Tuscaroras, newly arrived from North Carolina to the upper Susquehanna, especially suffered during a sudden blizzard because of their unfamiliarity with the regions' heavy, several-foot-deep snowfalls.\textsuperscript{121}

Thrust into these unfamiliar environments, Tuscaroras could not long depend only upon the handouts and goodwill of Oneidas and other Indians; they would have to learn local knowledge and skills, eventually lessening the cultural distance between them. At first, the unfamiliarity of Tuscaroras to this environment would have accentuated cultural differences between Tuscaroras and nearby Indians. How many times did Tuscaroras bungle tying a snowshoe or stumble over the local pronunciation of a creek? Did Tuscarora newcomers get lost in bewildering mazes of trails, as did European travelers who journeyed without a guide? Over time, however, as Tuscaroras learned to adapt, and acquired local knowledge, the shared challenges of living in these new environs helped draw Tuscaroras and their neighbors together.

Outward changes began as soon as Tuscaroras donned new clothes to ward off wintry blasts. Indians, according to historian Elizabeth Perkins, were “particularly

sensitive to the transformative capacity of personal apparel.” They often forced a captive or newcomer to change clothing as a first step towards assimilation. In the case of the Tuscaroras, a gauntlet of cold and snow forced the issue. John Brickell, who was familiar with Tuscaroras in North Carolina, considered Indian fashions “as different as the Nations to whom they belong so that it is impossible to recount all the whimsical figures that they commonly make by their antic dresses.” He made a sharp distinction, however, between those in North Carolina, which “is a warm country and very mild in its winters,” and those of colder Pennsylvania and New York. “Our Indians' habits,” he concluded, “differ very much from the dresses that are used by the savages that inhabit those cold countries.” In adapting heavier clothes it is uncertain whether Tuscaroras brought their own minute stylistic preferences—a shirt tucked a certain way, moccasins decorated particularly, a preference for certain color shades. They may have brought their own aesthetic from North Carolina, where Lawson noted that Indians incorporated elaborate patterns into clothing which were “extraordinary charming, containing several pretty

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123 Brickell, Natural History, 315.
figures.”\textsuperscript{124} By the nineteenth century, Tuscaroras in New York had acquired a wide reputation for elaborate, skilled beadwork, exceptional even among other Iroquois.\textsuperscript{125}

Getting a bite to eat could also have profound cultural effects. Like one’s dress, how and what one choose to eat could serve as indicators of social belonging or distance.\textsuperscript{126} Moreover, like other Indians, Tuscaroras occupied a majority of their time in North Carolina hunting, gathering, and farming—behaviors that influenced settlement patterns and yearly cycles.\textsuperscript{127} Patterns changed, however, as Tuscaroras in their new homes picked up not only culinary tastes, but also many of the rituals and rhythms associated with these foods. Pumpkins, squash, corn, and beans were familiar enough to Tuscaroras from North Carolina, but where and when to plant would have to be relearned in a region of microclimates and approximately fifty fewer frost-free days. Either by word of mouth, or painful experience, Tuscaroras would have learned that the island downstream of Oquaga where they had some of their “planting fields” were “good

\textsuperscript{124} Lawson, \textit{New Voyage}, 200.


\textsuperscript{127} Byrd, \textit{Tuscarora Subsistence Patterns}. 

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lowland” but “subject to be overflowed.” Seeds for corn, better adapted to the northern climate, would have to be acquired either as gifts or through trade. Eventually Tuscaroras joined their neighbors in planting verdant communities that excited the admiration of curious passersby, and the hunger of attacking armies.

Other foodstuffs would have been less familiar and required greater change. In North Carolina, peaches had been standard Tuscarora fare; these were dried and baked into cakes, “very pleasant and a little tartish,” according to John Lawson who considered them the Tuscaroras’ “only tame fruit.” But these gave way to a taste for apples already prevalent in Iroquoia. They soon acquired a habit of planting apple orchards alongside their fields. A reworking of seasonal calendars occurred when Tuscaroras learned to anticipate the flowing of the maple sap in March. Then, with neighboring

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131 Lawson, New Voyage, 173, 182.

132 Cockburn, “Survey” p. 7 noted a “small orchard” and “an orchard of several good bearing apple trees” upon tracts formerly occupied by the Tuscaroras. While passing the Tuscarora community upstream of Oquaga, Smith noted “Apple trees are seen by some of these huts.” (Smith, Tour, 64.)
Oneidas they would remove together to sugar camps, an event that left Gideon Hawley in Oquaga preaching to a nearly empty church.\footnote{Journal, 1754/03/10, Hawley Papers.} Collecting syrup from northern sugar maples required ladles, cauldrons, and sap buckets, not to mention skills required to properly tap a tree and evaporate the sugar. Along with these, Tuscaroras may have picked up the “maple dance” or “Putting in Sugar” practiced among the Iroquois.\footnote{W. M. Beauchamp, “Iroquois Notes,” The Journal of American Folklore, Vol. 4, No. 12. (Jan. - Mar., 1891), 42; Joseph-François Lafitau, Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times, ed. and trans. William N. Fenton and Elizabeth I. Moore, 2 vols (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1974–77), 2: 153; H. W. Henshaw, “Indian Origins of Maple Sugar,” American Anthropologist, Vol. 3, No. 4. (Oct., 1890), 341-352.}

Hunting and fishing could also contribute to building a sense of community. Richard Smith, who toured the region in 1769, reported at the Tuscarora neighborhood downstream of Oquaga “a shad fishery common to the people of Ahquhaga also.” Every year the community gathered to “tye bushes together so as to reach over the River, sink them with stones and hawl them round by Canoes; all persons present including strangers, such is their laudable Hospitality have an equal Division of the Fish.”\footnote{Smith, Tour, 68. For a discussion of usufruct rights shared by Indian communities at fishing sites, see William Cronon, Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 63-65.} Dragging nets, steering canoes, shouting out instructions to one another—such moments required cooperation and teamwork, probably followed by a feast as they smoked and ate their catch. Unknown is whether during such occasions Tuscaroras also picked up bits of lore...
and local history from Oneidas who, on other occasions, told passing Europeans stories about how local drownings cursed former fishing holes.\(^{136}\)

Tuscaroras and Iroquois already shared a common “hunters’ ethic” that assigned prestige and influence to skilled hunters. Nonetheless, each culture would have carried its own customary rules that dictated the pursuit, division, and consumption of game.\(^{137}\) Passed on and adopted, such beliefs could bring cultures together; rejected, they signaled continuing cultural boundaries. Along the Susquehanna in 1743, the European traveler John Bartram listened as Indians taught him that guests deserved a double share of food, that deer bones ought to be set aside and burned, and that tobacco smoke should be blown into a dead bear’s mouth. Fighting at salt licks was forbidden since it would prevent deer from returning.\(^{138}\) Tuscaroras, explained Nicolas Cusick, likewise learned and acquired hunting beliefs earlier prevalent among the Iroquois: stumbling across a dead deer was bad luck and might mean that a relation would die; hunters should purify themselves before setting out; and menstruating women should not touch venison. A deer that charged a hunter may signal that the hunter’s wife has been unfaithful.\(^{139}\) Despite intermixture,


\(^{138}\) Mancall, *Valley*, 44;

\(^{139}\) Beauchamp, *Iroquois Trail*, 34. The placement of this passage within Cusick’s (at times confusing) narrative seems to suggest that these beliefs preceded the Tuscaroras’ flight to New York, but this is not entirely certain.
persistent beliefs may have contributed to an occasional preference for Tuscaroras and Oneidas to hunt in separate parties. On one occasion, Hawley recorded that virtually all the Oneidas had departed Oquaga to hunt pigeons while Tuscaroras remained closer to town to hunt using fire.\textsuperscript{140}

In a backcountry of uncertain ethnicities, languages, dialects, and accents could serve as cultural boundaries, bridges, or both. John Heckewelder, an experienced Moravian missionary, wrote that "the first and most important thing for a traveler is a competent knowledge of the language of the people among whom he is. Without this knowledge it is impossible that he can acquire a correct notion of their manners and customs and of the opinions which prevail among them."\textsuperscript{141} Although much attention has been given to the importance of interpreters who could bestride linguistic chasms between Indians and colonists, Indians of different tribes likewise had difficulty navigating a bewildering babbling sea of native tongues.\textsuperscript{142} When a group of Nanticokes who

\textsuperscript{140} Hawley recorded that virtually all the Oneidas had departed Oquaga to hunt pigeons at the same time that Tuscaroras remained closer to town to hunt using fire. (Journal, 1754/04/08 Hawley Papers).

\textsuperscript{141} Heckewelder, History, 318.

eventually settled fifteen miles from Oquaga had an audience at Onondaga, they "could not make themselves understood, tho' provided with an interpreter brought near 700 miles" for the purpose. Therefore, they relied upon Conrad Weiser, himself a native German speaker, speaking to him in English which he then translated into Mohawk.\footnote{Bartram, \textit{Journey from Pennsylvania to Onondaga}, 76, 115.}

Inhabitants of Oquaga found themselves in the same situation when, one night in 1754, a group of Delawares rushed in to tell of a murder that had happened downstream, but stood stuttering and misunderstood until the next morning when an interpreter was found.\footnote{Journal, 1754/03/24, Hawley Papers.}

In their relations with Oneidas, Tuscaroras were at an advantage since their languages were related, albeit distantly. Over time, this distance lessened. Looking about their new homes for the first time, Tuscarora migrants literally would have been at a loss for words, lacking vocabulary to describe their settings. Over time they incorporated words from the languages of their guides and hosts into their own speech—evidence of the ways new environments and new neighbors worked jointly upon cultural patterns. Words for hemlocks, tamaracks, yellow birch, white birch, and black ash—all of which were uncommon in eastern North Carolina—entered the Tuscarora language by way of Mohawk or Oneida terminology. When Tuscaroras learned to hunt northern moose or loon, they described their exploits with Oneida words. Tuscaroras chilled by slushy snow likewise borrowed an Oneida or Mohawk expression. Bending tongues around new words also let Tuscaroras wrap their minds around new ideas. The word for large lake—
taken by Tuscaroras from the Oneida—shared roots with other words that linguistically paved the way for understanding Iroquoian notions of government and a cosmology that viewed the world as perched on a swimming turtle's back.¹⁴⁵

Over time, most Tuscaroras moved beyond an expanded vocabulary to acquire a working fluency in Oneida. Tuscaroras near Ganasaraga and Ganistagoa probably also picked up Onondaga and perhaps Mohawk, while their cousins along the Susquehanna likely became acquainted with Delaware and Nanticoke. Samuel Kirkland, a Presbyterian missionary who worked among communities near Oneida Lake, reported that “Indians from seven different villages attend now upon my ministry—and these of three distinct dialects [Tuscarora, Oneida, and probably Mohawk]—but in general understand the Onoide Language.”¹⁴⁶ Nonetheless, Tuscaroras remained most comfortable with their native tongue, preferring it whenever possible. Therefore, Kirkland, added that he was “sometimes obliged to make use of an interpreter for the Tuscarorers.”¹⁴⁷ Similarly, Hawley reported that Oquaga Indians were “perfectly understanding” of his interpreter’s “Cognowanga tongue.”¹⁴⁸ His interpreter, in this case, was Rebecca Ashley, who as a child had been captured from Deerfield, Massachusetts, in 1701 and spent much of her

¹⁴⁵ For changing Tuscarora vocabulary, see, Rudes, Tuscarora-English Dictionary, xvi-xix.

¹⁴⁶ Kirkland to Levi Hart, 1771/1/17, Kirkland Letters, 14a.

¹⁴⁷ Kirkland to Levi Hart, 1771/1/17, Kirkland Letters, 14a.

¹⁴⁸ Letter describing 1753/06/04, Hawley Papers. Hawley relied upon Rebecca Ashley, who as a child had been captured from Deerfield, Massachusetts in 1701, and spent much of her childhood at Kawnawake, a community of Catholic Mohawks in Canada. The Mohawk language is closely related to the Oneida tongue.
childhood at Kahnawake, a community of Catholic Mohawks in Canada. Nonetheless, on occasions where a majority of his listeners were Tuscaroras, he made use of “one who understood English who was of that nation,” preaching “to them in their own language because they could understand it better.”149 On the other hand, when his regular interpreter, Ashley, fell ill, Hawley turned to the services of “John Tuskero” to preach before mixed audiences.150

By incorporating Oneida words and learning the Oneida language, Tuscaroras moved closer to their neighbors, but did not erase barriers completely. Indian listeners kept ears tuned to the “purity or correctness with which a language is spoken” to determine a speaker’s background.151 Within the chatter of mixed communities, Tuscarora accents stood out. According to a nineteenth century visitor to the Oneida Lake region, the Iroquois tended to be linguistic snobs, who valued themselves not a little on their pronunciation. The Oneidas are considered by them as speaking their language in a manner more graceful and mellifluous than the rest of the tribes. All of them use the guttural aspirate. The Tuscaroras terminate a great part of their words with this aspirate, and are laughed at by the rest of their countrymen for the harshness which this circumstance introduces into their pronunciation. The

149 Journal, 1754/04/07, Hawley Papers.

150 Journal, 1753/07/15, Hawley Papers.

151 Heckewelder, History, 327.
Oneidas say that the pronunciation of a Tuscarora is like the noise of the white man’s wagon running down a stony hill.\textsuperscript{152}

Likewise, a witness to a treaty conference felt that Tuscaroras, “speak a language leaving in my ear not the least similitude to the predominant dialect of the Iroquois. They appeared to make an effort to speak—as if they had sticks in their mouth; but it is possible the speaker I heard might be a stammerer.”\textsuperscript{153}

When John Tuskero stood and translated a sermon before a mixed Oquaga audience, the moment might have indicated how close Oneidas, Tuscaroras, and other neighbors had become; the same speech might also have allowed the audience to listen for signs of the differences among them.

Nonetheless, words could not divide some who moved beyond cooperation to courtship and love. Strangers became husbands and wives, turning towns into truly mixed communities. Gideon Hawley recorded that one assistant, Jonah, was born an Oneida but “half-blooded,” with a French captive for a mother. Jonah’s wife was “a Tuscarora and full blooded.” Another of Hawley’s Oneida assistants had similarly “married into the Tuscarora tribe.” Both proved invaluable with their contacts among both peoples.\textsuperscript{154}


\textsuperscript{153} “Description of a Council, 1794,” Pickering, Papers, 259–263.

\textsuperscript{154} Address and Petition, January 29, 1794, \textit{Hawley Papers}. This letter recounts events that took place in 1753. Similar comments are printed in another account contained in \textit{Doc. Hist. N.Y.}, 3:1031–46. The comment that this Oneida was “married into the Tuscarora tribe” reflects the Iroquois practice of tracing lineage through the female line. It raises the potentially unsolvable question of determining how many “Tuscaroras” who appear in the documents were so by marriage or birth.
Hawley described another Indian, a Delaware "who married a Tuscarora woman and has lived more than a year past not further than a mile and a half from my house," and who maintained links among both the Delawares and Tuscaroras.155 Sakwarithra, a prominent Tuscarora chief from Ganasaraga, may have been married to an Onondaga woman, since William Johnson referred to him as having an Onondaga son.156 Likewise, the father of Tyagawehe, a Tuscarora chief who ventured to North Carolina to lead another migration, is referred to as an Oneida in some records.157 Ironically, even as such unions produced offspring, the ratio of individuals considered "Tuscarora" might have decreased. If later migrations are a guide, a greater number of the first newcomers were young men, a ratio that perhaps encouraged them to marry non-Tuscaroras—and descent, in these communities was traced through the mother.158

The stories that family members passed on likely influenced Tuscaroras' perceptions of themselves as a distinct cultural group nonetheless living in diverse communities. Tuscaroras adapted many stories common among other northeastern Indians.159 Other tales, like the Tuscaroras themselves, made the migration from North Carolina and adapted aspects from their new setting into their telling. Tuscaroras told of a

155 Journal, 1756/01/10, Hawley Papers.
156 Johnson, Papers, 12: 168.
157 Johnson, Papers, 9, 943-44; Johnson, Papers, 10: 801.
158 NCCR, 7: 431.
monstrous mosquito that “appeared first among the Tuscaroras along the Neuse river” in North Carolina. Later it flew to “the fort at Onondaga, where it also destroyed many lives,” before it was finally killed and its spurring blood hatched smaller, present-day biting insects.\textsuperscript{160} Members of other Iroquois nations subsequently picked up the tale.\textsuperscript{161}

In the nineteenth century and perhaps earlier, Tuscaroras told stories of more helpful creatures, the U-stru-u. These divine beings, resembling humans but covered with bird-like down, could prophesize warnings about enemies. A first pair, according to legend, had lived with the Tuscaroras in North Carolina; another set appeared once again in New York. For Tuscaroras, U-stru-u were related to the origins of the huskenaw ceremony, an arduous set of puberty rituals characteristic among Indians in the Southeast, and preserved at least in memory among Tuscaroras who came north.\textsuperscript{162}

\textsuperscript{160} Elias Johnson, \textit{Legends}, 57-58; Rudes and Crouse, \textit{Tuscarora Legacy}, 1:9 use internal and linguistic evidence to argue that this tale is not borrowed, but was part of older traditional beliefs regarding the mosquito.

\textsuperscript{161} See, for example, a Seneca version of the story in William W. Canfield, \textit{The Legends of the Iroquois told by “The Complanter,”} (New York: A. Wessels Company, 1902), 59-61. Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine exactly when this story was transmitted.

Some of these tales wove together into a dark shroud of depression that wrapped the Tuscaroras' view of themselves and their place in a world—distinguishing them from their neighbors. The stories of U-stru-u may have been related to another set of tales, told both by Tuscaroras near the Virginia-North Carolina border in 1728 to William Byrd, and by Tuscaroras in New York in the nineteenth century. These stories told of a prophet sent to instruct the Tuscaroras in North Carolina about powerful medicines and "to set a perfect example of integrity and kind behavior towards one another." The U-stru-u and the prophets both also warned of the impending danger of Europeans, who "will treat the Indians rudely and cruelly, and then would eat them." But the Tuscaroras failed, rejecting the warning and the messenger. In one version, young ball-players abused him; in another "young rakes of the Conechta clan . . . tied him to a tree and shot him with arrows through the heart." Furthermore, in the case of the U-stru-u, the young men neglected to feed the creature so "He-holds-Sky appeared and said, you have failed to feed them, so I will take them away."


165 Quotation from "Tuscarora Customs and Beliefs—Tha-Ron-Hya-Wa-Kon," BAE Box 445 in Johnson, BAE Extracts, 98.


167 "Tuscarora Customs and Beliefs-Tha-Ron-Hya-Wa-Kon," BAE Box 445 transcribed in F. Roy Johnson Papers, BAE Extracts, NCSA, p. 98.
An implication of such tales was that the Tuscaroras' own failures made them partly responsible for their woes, forever leaving them cursed. Every man, woman, and child carried the effects of an original sin that doomed them to be cast out from the gardens and fields of North Carolina to wander in a desert of exile. The biblical overtones were not coincidental, since Christianity had influenced some of the tellers, and some of the listeners. The version told to William Byrd was the most explicit in describing the lingering effects upon the Tuscaroras:

their god took instant vengeance on all who had a hand in that monstrous act by lightning from Heaven, and has ever since visited their nation with a continued train of calamities; nor will he ever leave off punishing and wasting their people till he shall have blotted every living soul of them out of the world.¹⁶⁸

Gideon Hawley recorded that the "war of the Tuskaroro . . . seems to be as I am informed something discouraging to this people [,] they are afraid that it will be the occasion of much unhappiness to 'em."¹⁶⁹ Their story was their own. But as Tuscaroras huddled together, at first mostly with Oneidas and other Iroquois, and then increasingly with Nanticokes, Tutelos, Delawares and others who had lost ancestral lands, theirs joined a

¹⁶⁸ Byrd, Prose Works, 304. This version was told by Tuscaroras still living along the Virginia-North Carolina frontier in the 1720s and thus may have reflected attitudes arising from that group's more dire situation. Nonetheless, other versions eventually were told in New York.

¹⁶⁹ Quoted in Boyce, "Tuscarora Political Organization," 167. I have been unable to find this quotation within the Hawley papers.
chorus of laments that the Indians were confined to an "island," sinking under a European tide.\footnote{Hawley wrote that Indians at Oquaga "say now that the white people have [invaded or involged? ] them and they have[,] as they express it[,] only an Island left[--] by and by they wil[,]l they are afraid[,] be quite drove off from their lands." (Journal, 1754/03/16, Hawley Papers). See Hauptman, "Refugee Havens" for the psychological trauma among Indian refugee groups. Twentieth-century ethnologists have similarly tried to quantify the effects of this collective mental injury upon the Tuscaroras (Anthony F. C. Wallace, \textit{The Modal Personality of the Tuscarora Indians as Revealed by the Rorschach Test}, Bulletin, U.S. Bureau of American Ethnology, 150 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1951); David Landy, "Tuscarora Tribalism and National Identity," \textit{Ethnohistory} 5, no. 3 (1958), 250-84; Thomas H. Hay, "Personality and Probability: The Modal Personality of the Tuscarora Revisited" \textit{Ethos}, 4, No. 4 (Winter, 1976), 509-524. Unfortunately these twentieth-century studies do a poor job of directly relating contemporary attitudes to eighteenth-century events; later hardships may also have informed their attitudes.}\footnote{170}

But if in fleeing north Tuscaroras had hoped to find safe haven from Europeans behind an Iroquois shield, they did not succeed—at least not for long. In the 1710s and 1720s, the lands to which the Tuscaroras relocated were relatively remote from European contact. The upper Susquehanna remained a blank spot on maps, only lightly traveled. Diplomats, missionarues, and traders passed more often through the other area of Tuscarora settlement, south of Oneida Lake, on their way to and from the Great Lakes and the powerful Onondagas and Senecas; few, however, remained for long. During the first half of the eighteenth century, the French and English engaged in a complex diplomatic dance with the Iroquois that left both courtiers jealously protesting any intrusion by the other. Even the Jesuits, once a common and powerful force for conversion in Iroquoia, largely disappeared, more content to work with the native congregations they had succeeded in luring to the St. Lawrence Valley in New France.
Nonetheless, as the century proceeded, traders and missionaries increasingly did
make their presence felt. And they were not completely unwelcome. Despite anger and
distrust towards Europeans, Tuscaroras never turned their backs completely on the
material advantages of European culture. Even during the height of the Tuscarora War,
Tuscaroras had claimed only that they wanted to end trade abuses, not trade itself. They
were too entrenched in a lifestyle that depended on guns, metal knives, pots, hoes, and
woolen cloth. The Iroquois likewise had experienced their own consumers' revolution in
the seventeenth century and felt much the same.171

Therefore, in addition to the diplomatic gifts Indians carried home from
conferences and treaties, a steady stream of trade goods reached Tuscarora settlements.
By the early 1720s, traders had established a post at Oswego on the southeast shore of
Lake Ontario. Traders could easily reach the site, largely by water, by traveling west from
Albany, from the Mohawk River to Wood Creek via the "Oneida Carrying Place," and
from there along Oneida Lake to the Oswego River. On one hand, the post limited the
number of western Indians who would pass through the Oneida Lake region to sell their
furs at Albany, curtailing any chance for the region's Indians to play middleman.172 On the
other hand, the route ensured nearby Tuscaroras and Oneidas access to passing traders.
Soon, traders also turned to the upper Susquehanna in pursuit of untapped markets.

171 James Axtell, "The First Consumer Revolution: The Seventeenth Century" in Natives
and Newcomers: The Cultural Origins of America (New York: Oxford University Press,
2001).

172 Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, 249-254;
William Johnson cut his teeth as a young fur trader around Oquaga in 1739. In that year, he wrote to his uncle, requesting

the good mentioned in the Invoice, wh. Are mostly Indian truck, and fitt to trade wth. To a place called Oquago to the Southward from this on Suscahannah River . . . where I intend if yu. Think proper to make a tryall this fall wth. Abt. 200 punds worth of Goods Wh. I am Credible informed by those that Came from thence that I can to advantage dispose of them to the Indians there better than at Oswego because there are to many traders go there.\textsuperscript{173}

In addition, George Croghan, one of William Johnson’s later deputies, earned much of his wealth trading with Oquaga Indians from his post at Otsego Lake at the head of the Susquehanna.\textsuperscript{174}

Through such traders, and to a lesser extent the missionaries who sometimes accompanied them, a wide assortment of goods reached Tuscarora communities. Jelles Fonda, a trader with extensive contacts in the Mohawk Valley in the 1760s, recorded in his ledger the debt of “Swangaroris a Tuscarora Indian” for two steel traps and a “French blanket.”\textsuperscript{175} Fonda’s records furthermore included invoices for dozens of knives (some “yellow handled Indian knives” and others “fine inlaid brass handled”), casks of varying


\textsuperscript{174} Jelles Fonda Collection, Indian Book, Col. Croghan’s Account, 1769-1772; Smith, \textit{Tour}, 36-37.

\textsuperscript{175} Jelles Fonda Collection, Indian Book, 23. Fonda likely traded with other Tuscaroras, but he did not always label the ethnicity of his clients.
size shot, barrels of gunpowder, bundles of "small wht beads" and "black wampum," dozens of tea pots, and numerous strips of calico and cotton check cloth.\textsuperscript{176}

Although their main goal was to market the rewards of Christian salvation, missionaries also carried their share of earthly goods. Gideon Hawley had reached Oquaga in the company of a rum trader aptly named George Winedecker.\textsuperscript{177} Hawley condemned Winedecker's rum and the violent drunkenness left in its wake, but soon went about dispensing other goods.\textsuperscript{178} Hawley's expense account included entries for "roles of ribbons . . . to give to the Indian youths," vermilion paint, a "small quantity of tea to [give to] Indian women," a pair of shoes given to an Indian for bringing "a cow as far as Tuskarahroroh," blankets for Indian paddlers, and surprisingly, several gallons of rum.\textsuperscript{179} Samuel Kirkland, who always entertained visions of carefully introducing the best aspects of European lifestyles, in addition to Christianity, offered an even more extensive set of accounts for his mission "to the Onoides and Tuscarores" near Oneida Lake. His expenses included allocations for plows, axes, hoes, and scythes, along with clothing and provisions for the poorest of his congregation.\textsuperscript{180} With such opportunities, Indians acquired ever-expanding tastes. These ranged from a desire for trading posts, plowmen,
and gunsmiths to the hunger expressed in the touching postscript of a note from an Indian at “Tuscarora Castle:” the sender’s wife desired “the favour of a little Chocolate if you please.”

These changes altered the material terrain upon which Tuscaroras and their native neighbors met. Even before Tuscaroras relocated, Indians throughout eastern North America had already begun to depend upon European trade for a vast amount of their possessions. The resulting similarity in trade and material culture narrowed the gulf between the two cultures, partially easing previous distinctions. Indian purchasers did not necessarily lose their “Indian-ness.” They maintained a reputation for demanding goods of particular specifications and for modifying these to suit individual and cultural tastes. Nonetheless, Indians’ European-made tools, pots, clothing, and weapons grew increasingly similar across regions and ethnic lines, creating what might be called a mass-market appeal. Eleazer Wheelock, master of an Indian school and Kirkland’s former mentor, struggled to find even a “small specimen” of a native artifact that was “without the least Mixture of any foreign Merchandise.” Instead, he discovered, as had missionaries before him, that the Iroquois were “in some measure like those in New England . . . as to their Custums, their Dress, and their Impliments.” Observers of Indians across eastern North America might have said much the same. In the case of colonists, historian T. H. Breen has argued, such a shared consumer culture allowed puritanical New

181 Doc. Hist. N.Y., 4: 312. The missionary Edward Johnson wrote the note to William Johnson on behalf of an Indian named Isaac, whose role among the Tuscaroras will be discussed later at length.

Englanders and Virginia cavaliers to overcome antagonistic cultural backgrounds to gain shared trust, cooperate, and fight a revolution together as "Americans." Likewise, Tuscarora newcomers and their native neighbors found themselves adapting together to the same new world of consumer choice.

European goods repeatedly appeared at the intersection of Tuscarora and Iroquois lifestyles. When Tuscaroras set about digging the soil to plant new crops, they did so with numerous manufactured hoes, or with plows shared with nearby Oneidas. Tuscaroras raised some hogs in North Carolina; in New York they joined Iroquois and other Indians in learning to keep "Cows, Hogs, Fowls, and Horses" for sale to colonists. The absence of fences among Tuscaroras (and colonists) had aggravated tensions over roaming livestock with settlers in North Carolina. In New York, their communities included fences, even if they were "miserable" by European standards. Tuscaroras adopting new foods nonetheless cooked them in European-made "large brass kettles" and "iron pot[s]" that had been available for at least a generation in North Carolina. With the advent of metal ware that replaced homemade Cashie-ware pots, Tuscaroras did not carry their distinctive pottery style north; nor did they have much motivation to learn Iroquois pottery methods. Tuscaroras donning heavier winter clothes may have looked to Oneida fashions.

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185 Account of Expenses, 1772/08/09, Kirkland Letters, 32d.

186 Smith, *Tour*, 67.

187 *Oneida and Tuscarora Losses*. 

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but cut them from European cloth. Although many European products had been available to both Tuscaroras and Iroquois before their merger, as the century proceeded, the rate of changes they caused increased. The result was a material culture that to contemporaries and later archeologists blurred easy classification.

The architecture employed by Tuscaroras in the Northeast reflected this dual encounter with European and Iroquois influences. Against lengthy New York winters, Tuscaroras began to build homes modeled after the Iroquois longhouse. On a tour of the Oneida Lake region in 1794, John Belknap, an Indian school benefactor, passed a Tuscarora village and “viewed a house which our interpreter . . . said was a complete specimen of Indian architecture.” It consisted of two rows of posts nailed into the ground supporting a roof of withes and bark. Inside, bays of “raised platforms, on which they sleep” flanked several firepits. Each end had a “separate apartment; one of which served as an entry, the other as a store-room.” Neither Belknap nor his interpreter commented on the irony that this example of Iroquois architecture had likely been built by Tuscaroras whose use of the form went back less than eighty years. Moreover, even this “complete specimen” of Iroquois architecture contained European influences. A “pig’s trough” crowded the entryway; inside were a “few other things of little worth,” which probably included European goods.  

By the late eighteenth century, such structures became a rarity as Tuscaroras joined their native neighbors in incorporating even greater numbers of European features into their homes. An account of losses from a mixed community at Oneida Castle during

the American Revolution listed several “bark houses” for the Tuscaroras—but also a “plank house” valued at twenty dollars, and a hybrid “Indian bark house-planked at the beds.” Such innovations may have been stirred by Kirkland’s construction in 1773 of a church using European carpenters and sawyers assisted by Indian labor, and a rectory raised by Indians alone. “The whole town, both men and women, with several adjacent villages”—probably including Tuscarora communities—“assembled in the morning” for the task. “My people improve much in husbandry and are inspired with a noble ambition for comfortable dwelling houses—two already erected—one of them 35 by 18 feet—seven or eight more are upon hand,” Kirkland boasted. Offering more than motivation, Kirkland “furnished them with a number of carpenters tools” for which he hoped to be reimbursed by Boston backers.

Similar architectural changes occurred along the Susquehanna Valley. In 1764, nearby Delawares and Shawnees occupied “3 large Towns of 130 Good and well built houses of square timber chimney’s etc with . . . little out Settlements . . . along the River on both sides [and had] . . . Cows, Hogs, Horses.” At Oquaga in the Susquehanna Valley, missionaries built homes, soldiers constructed a short-lived fort, and religiously

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189 Oneida and Tuscarora Losses.

190 Samuel Kirkland to John Thorton, 1773/06/05 in Kirkland Letters, 42b. To aid in the project, Kirkland also helped the Indians construct a sawmill. Kirkland to Ebenezer Pemberton from Kanonwarohare, 1771/03/25 in Kirkland Letters, 16a. He also had a “loghouse” built for use as a temporary school shelter (Samuel Kirkland to Ebenezer Pemberton, 1771/07/01, Kirkland Letters, 18a).

191 Johnson, Papers II: 159. A force from Oquaga destroyed these communities during Pontiac’s Uprising.
minded Indians modified one of its blockhouses into a church. The result was a great deal of architectural variability, with a trend towards European influences as the century proceeded. Smith, who visited Oquaga in 1769, described longhouses “composed of clumsy hewn Timbers and hewn Boards or Planks” filled with “a Row of Stalls or Births,” each of which “contains an entire Family so that 6 or more Families sometimes reside together.” A bark roof pierced by several smoke holes covered these structures. Several years later, Crevecoeur saw there “50 odd houses, some built after the ancient Indian manner, and the rest of good hew’d logs properly dove-tailed at each end.” In 1778, Col. William Butler, at the head of an American army, wrote in admiration of the community he had just destroyed: Oquaga was “the finest Indian Town I ever saw; on both sides the River; there was about 40 good houses, square logs, shingles and stone chimneys, good floors, glass windows, etc.” Migrants had come to live in homes whose influences were not entirely Tuscarora, Iroquois, or European.

Rather than allow their economic destinies to be determined entirely by European colonists, Tuscaroras, Oneidas, and other nearby Indians did their best to direct the flow

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194 Smith, Tour, 65.


196 Clinton, Papers, 4, 222-228.
of trade for their own benefit. When, during the Seven Years War, traders were hesitant to venture down the Susquehanna, a delegation of Oquaga Indians, (including a Tuscarora leader named Rudt) approached William Johnson to complain that “it is too tedious and hard for most of our People to come such a great way [to Cherry Valley] with our Skins wherefore we entreat you to send Traders to Aughquaga with such Goods as suit us.” In turn they promised to “all take care that such Traders shant be touched or hurted.”

Beyond satisfying their own needs, savvy Oquaga leaders recognized that with much of the backcountry in turmoil and off limits to traders, such a store would attract the business of “Indians from all parts within 100 miles of us.” Similarly, in 1767, Sacquarrisa from Ganasaraga convinced Johnson against the wishes of his superiors to send a trader to purchase ginseng collected by Tuscaroras.

But if at times these communities were eager for traders, they were not so desperate that any trader would do. Rum traders, in particular, caused complaints among town leaders, who lamented that “when we heard of Canoes coming down the River, which at first sight much comforted our Hearts, but when we came to look into it we Saw

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197 Johnson, Papers, 9, 804-808.

198 Johnson, Papers, 9, 391-92, 568-69. Inhabitants at Ingaren, a small Tuscarora settlement of “five or six houses but a good deal scattered” about fifteen miles downriver of Oquaga, had a tannery—probably to cure hides coming upriver from other Indian groups—and would have benefited from such a store. (Frederick Cook and George S. Conover, eds., Journals of the Military Expedition of Major Gen. John Sullivan Against the Six Nations, (Auburn, N.Y.: Knapp, Peck & Thompson, 1887), 24. Oquagans likely also hoped that Indians drawn by such a store would add to the defensive strength of the community during these perilous times.

199 Johnson, Papers, 12:168.
nothing but a heap of Caggs and Barrels filled with Rum, which at once made us tremble."\textsuperscript{200} Frequently, such requests bore the mark of missionaries, such as the letter Hawley helped pen on behalf of Oquaga leaders immediately upon his arrival, and shortly after nearly being shot in the head by a drunken Indian.\textsuperscript{201} In it, Oneida and Tuscarora headmen begged Johnson to intervene with the "great men" at Albany, Schenectady, and Schoharry, that "we would have them send us no more rum."\textsuperscript{202} Oquaga leaders, moreover, went so far as to blame William Johnson directly, since "yr battoe is often here at our place and brings us rum that has undone us."\textsuperscript{203}

Rather than being confined to European traders, the sale of rum increasingly fell into the hands of Indian middlemen, as had been the case among Tuscaroras in North Carolina. Passing through Ganasaraga on his return from a diplomatic mission to Onondaga, the interpreter Conrad Weiser bought several quarts of rum from the inhabitants.\textsuperscript{204} "There has been no white man at [Oquaga] who has disposed of any strong liquors . . . for more than a year and a half," bemoaned Hawley in 1756; instead "they bring it themselves in small kegs from Schoharry."\textsuperscript{205} The establishment of Indians

\textsuperscript{200} Johnson, \textit{Papers}, 7: 348


\textsuperscript{202} Description of Journey, ca 1753/06/12, Hawley Papers; for discussions of the rum trade see Peter C. Mancall, \textit{Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America} (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

\textsuperscript{203} Description of Journey, ca 1753/06/12, Hawley Papers.

\textsuperscript{204} \textit{MPCP}, 5: 478.

\textsuperscript{205} Journal, 1756/12/09, Hawley Papers.
as traders, however, did little to alleviate the potential for abuses, leaving Oquaga leaders to complain that "when we had White Traders, Goods Seemed to be Something reasonable and right; but Indians devour us, they extort from us every thing we get with great pain and labour in the Woods, for little or nothing."206 Ending the trade had its own costs, however: Tuscaroras (and Cayugas) complained that the French and other Indians "laugh at us because there is no Rum allowed to be sold at our Castles."207 While helping to establish a hybrid culture among Tuscaroras, Oneidas, and their other Indians neighbors, trade also had the possibility of creating new divisions.

To a certain extent, trade's effects can be quantified using an inventory written to reimburse wartime losses suffered at Oneida Castle, which was destroyed by Tory Iroquois in July 1780. The document is not a perfect catalog, since it focused on livestock, homes, and trade goods valued by Europeans. The list did not reflect the claims from smaller, predominantly Tuscarora communities nearby, nor address the losses of Tuscaroras who had relocated to new settlements in western New York in the intervening fourteen years. Therefore, only eight Tuscaroras appear alongside about one hundred Oneidas.208 Nonetheless, the claims offer a valuable glimpse into one eighteenth-century mixed community. Like their neighbors, Tuscarora homes at Oneida Castle contained an

206 Johnson, Papers, 7: 348. Sakwarithra, a leader at Ganasaraga, was also opposed to drinking (Beauchamp, Moravian Journals, 92).

207 NYCD, 7: 242.

assortment of European cooking-ware including large brass kettles, pewter basins, frying pans, kettles, and fireplace trammels. Tools included several varieties of axes, hoes, iron wedges, and handsaws. Steel traps indicated that at least one Tuscarora had probably purchased his goods with furs. Other Tuscaroras cared for livestock, including horses, milk cows, and a young heifer—at least some of which were probably housed in a “log stable” that had been destroyed. The median value of their possessions, twenty dollars, put the typical worth of Tuscaroras only somewhat below that of their Oneida neighbors, whose possessions had a median value of thirty dollars. Their mean property value would have been far below that of the average white freeholder in the Middle Colonies, and even less than a third of that of Indians at the Mohawk upper castle.

All the Tuscarora claimants had possessions comparable to the most typical Oneidas; no Tuscarora claim exceeded fifty dollars. Striking, however, is the absence of any Tuscaroras comparable to certain wealthy Oneidas: Hon-ye-ry, who owned a veritable herd of cattle, a new wagon, and a “framed house, made by white people;” Lodwick

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209 These figures must be used with great caution, especially owing to the small sample size of the Tuscaroras. I chose to calculate median as opposed to mean (used by Wonderley) as a better estimate of “typical” worth (median could be skewed by a few rich individuals). Median calculated for 99 Oneida property loss claimants and 7 Tuscarora property loss claimants (i.e. claims for meritorious service, etc. were excluded.) Numbers were calculated using the document’s third column which reflected adjustments by Pickering and conversion to New York dollars at a rate of 2.5 per pound sterling. Mean for Oneidas was about $75 (converted to dollars at the above rate from the figure in pounds in Wonderley, “Oneida Community,” 26) and nearly $28 for Tuscaroras. *Oneida and Tuscarora Losses.*

210 Wonderley calculates the mean Oneida claim for property worth at about 30 pounds, compared to 180 pounds for male free-holders in the middle colonies, 108 pounds at the upper castle and 180 pounds at the lower castle of the Mohawks. (Wonderly, “An Oneida Community,” 26.)
Gaghsaweda, who owned a “pleasure sleigh,” or several other Oneidas with extensive claims. Such Oneidas had acquired possessions that raised their property values above those of most Oneidas and all of the listed Tuscaroras. Kirkland, who lived in the community before its destruction, may have unwittingly verified differences in material culture when he referred to “these rough unhewn barbarous Tuscarorers” and “these rough, savage Tuscarorers.”

Within these communities of Tuscaroras, Oneidas, and other Indians spread across separate regions of Iroquoia, ties of loyalty tugged in multiple, sometimes competing directions. Tuscaroras functioned as a “nation” within a league-based structure that operated at treaties and councils. Moreover, an incident that affected one Tuscarora might resonate particularly strongly with other Tuscaroras across Iroquoia. In 1756, after a Tuscarora named Jerry unwisely boasted to members of the 44th regiment in Schenectady that he had killed one of their comrades at Braddock’s defeat on the Monongahela River, the soldiers executed him, hoisting his head onto a spike on the ramparts. In response, Tuscaroras throughout Iroquoia exploded into grief and rage. A group at Johnson Hall “foamed, and Gnashed their teeth” and considered marching against the troops. Months

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211 *Oneida and Tuscarora Losses.*

212 Kirkland to John Thorton, 1771/02/06, Kirkland Letters, 15a; Kirkland to Levi Hart, 1771/01/17, Kirkland Letters, 14a. Since such wealth tended to gravitate towards individuals perceived to have influence within their communities and among the Iroquois, these differences may reflect a lower status.

213 For example, representatives from both the Oneida Lake and Susquehanna regions appeared together at the 1768 Fort Stanwix Treaty (*NYCD*, 8: 113).


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later, the "Murder of Jerry," reported Johnson, "sticks in the stomachs of the Tuscaroras" and threatened to tip the nation towards the French—a serious threat during the Seven Years' War.\footnote{Johnson, \textit{Papers}, 9, 824-827.} Only well-chosen gifts and expensive concessions by William Johnson, who "left no measures unessay'd to settle this unhappy Affair," prevented the incident from broadening into violence against the English.\footnote{In addition to "scalps, belts of wampum goods etc," Johnson ordered workers "with all possible dispatch" to visit Ganasaraga to built fortifications for which the Tuscaroras had long petitioned. (\textit{NYCD}, 7: 185-6; Johnson, \textit{Papers}, 9, 496-497) }

Although at such times and at treaties and councils Tuscaroras often acted collectively, at other times local considerations intervened, causing Tuscarora communities to take separate courses.\footnote{Boyce, "Tuscarora Political Organization," 64-73 draws upon some of the same examples to likewise makes an argument for "differential involvement" within Iroquois political affairs based upon geography. A key source for arguments regarding local politics in Iroquois history is William N. Fenton, "Locality as a Basic Factor in the Development of Iroquois Social Structure," in \textit{Symposium on Local Diversity in Iroquois Culture}, ed. William N. Fenton (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian, 1951), 35-54.} At the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, William Johnson had lobbied hard to convince far-flung Tuscaroras and Oneidas to resettle together in a single, compact, and easily defendable settlement. Tuscaroras who lived near Oneida Lake eventually convinced Oneidas near them to agree to the scheme.\footnote{Johnson, \textit{Papers}, 9: 332-334.} Oneidas at Oquaga also initially agreed. Tuscaroras at Oquaga, however, refused to cooperate with their northern brethren, perhaps feeling, as they did a decade later when the plan was revived, that "incensed foolish people" would destroy "our settlement cattle, grain, etc. So that when the troubles were over, we should return naked and destitute of every}
Tuscaroras knew what it was like to lose everything and become refugees—they did not want to repeat the experience.

Several factors contributed to the tendency for communities near Oneida Lake and the Susquehanna to follow separate courses. Of the two regions, Oneida Lake was far more integrated into the politics of the Six Nations. The location of these Tuscarora communities along the Ambassador’s Road between the eastern Iroquois nations and Onondaga ensured that Tuscaroras were well-connected to councils and discussions between the other five nations. Tuscaroras could either talk to diplomatic delegations who stopped for food or rest, or easily attend councils themselves. Kanadesco was about a day’s journey from Johnson Hall; Ganasaraga was even closer to Onondaga. As John Martin Mack had prepared to depart towards Onondaga from the Oneidas, four Oneida chiefs told him what more experienced diplomats already knew “that on our way we must pass through several towns, among the first [most prominent?] two Tuscarora towns, where we should tell the chiefs that the Oneidas knew of our going to Onondaga. At the last town a chief would go with us and hear our proposals.”

William Johnson followed this pattern when, en route to Onondaga to investigate a possible Seneca conspiracy in 1761, he paused for an “interview” with Sakwarithra, the Ganasaraga chief. In another instance, rather than traveling on to Onondaga, William

219 Journal, 1754/03/16, Hawley Papers; Johnson, Papers, 9: 371.

220 In 1768, a large passing delegation of Onondaga Indians consumed the Ganasaraga chief’s only cow. (Johnson, Papers, 12: 670-71.)

221 Beauchamp, Moravian Journals, 113.

Johnson held a conference on the banks of a stream outside Ganasaraga.\textsuperscript{223} In meetings with Europeans and councilors from other Iroquois nations, inhabitants of these towns were most often the face of the Tuscarora nation.

The geographic setting of communities on the upper Susquehanna, on the other hand, worked against such frequent participation. Travel to Onondaga, Oneida, or Johnson Hall entailed a several-day journey that during winter months went from uncomfortable to dangerous.\textsuperscript{224} The distance and difficulty often left Indians from that area feeling isolated from affairs of the Six Nations. In 1746, a delegation from Oquaga complained:

\begin{quote}
We live at Oghquago, the news that is sent from your Excellcy [Governor Clinton of New York] through the Six nations is not brought truly to us, nor the news that the Governour of Canada Sends to the Said Nations, we have not been taken notice of nor acquainted that your Excellcy was to treat with the Six Nations till the Interview was near over . . . . We have Received different news from the Six Nations at times . . . .\textsuperscript{225}
\end{quote}

Whereas at times these Indians could complain of their isolation, at other times their setting allowed them to pursue their own political course. "They are a Flourishing and increasing People," wrote William Johnson, "as many of our Friend Indians amongst the Six Nations who are disgusted with the ruling Politics of their People leave their Castles..."

\textsuperscript{223} Johnson, \textit{Papers}, 12, 368- 372.

\textsuperscript{224} See in particular Journal 1756/01/04-1756/01/10, Hawley Papers.

\textsuperscript{225} Quoted in Boyce, Tuscarora Political Organization," 66.
and go and settle at Oghguqgo.” Some Europeans went so far as to consider the community at Oquaga as “though they were a very despicable company, a kind of renegades, scarcely to be reckoned as of the Six Nations, being out of the country of those nations”—although Jonathan Edwards considered this a misunderstanding of those Indians’ status. Instead, by voting with their feet, such Indians may have reduced daily confrontations, preventing a formal break with the Six Nations.

Proximity, however, offered no guarantee of harmony since divisions also occurred within local communities, even though cooperation was always the ideal. Typically, at councils with Europeans, mixed communities operated as a single entity even as their delegations contained leaders from different nations. In 1757, for example, Thomas, Nicholas, Rut, Peter, Joseph, Peepy—all “chiefs of Oquaga”—appeared at Johnson Hall to speak on behalf of the “Aughquagas and our Bretheren of the 6 nations extending as far as Chucknut.” Rut and Thomas—a Tuscarora and Oneida, respectively—worked together as a pair on another occasion to bring the Pennsylvania governor, “by the hand,” to a council at Lancaster. In a letter to William Johnson, the inhabitants of Oquaga

226 Johnson, Papers, 9: 824- 27. This politically independent attitude may even have partially ameliorated anger after the killing of Jerry.

227 Edwards, Letters and Personal Writings, 582; William Johnson asked them to convince the other Six Nations to favor the English on his behalf, but they declined stating that they lacked the necessary influence (Johnson, Papers, 9: 714- 716).

228 Parmenter, "At the Wood's Edge."

229 Johnson, Papers, 9: 804-808.


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described themselves as “both nations together under one head.” Hawley, concurring, described the community as several towns “united as far as I can say to a man in the same things, certainly their principal men are.” At other times, however, even at Oquaga, Tuscaroras and Oneidas formed distinct groups who met with William Johnson separately, even as they ultimately agreed on similar points. At Oneida Lake, inhabitants usually sent distinct Tuscarora and Oneida delegations, but these tended to operate in such close conjunction that Europeans like William Johnson typically paired them in the same breath.

Nonetheless, such apparent local harmony could and did break down. At their most inconsequential, divisions might be little more than a communication failure that left two Tuscarora leaders from Oneida Lake arriving to a conference a day later than their Oneida counterparts. Divisions emerged in another case when, after being scolded by English officials for repeatedly crying wolf in apprehension of an invading French army, the Oneidas, wrote Johnson’s envoy, “gave me to understand that they believed they were imposed upon by the Tuscaroras.” At Oneida Lake, the worst splits occurred not along ethnic lines but over questions of alliance. Attempting to determine whether these communities would favor the French or the English, William Johnson observed in 1758 that the Tuscarora and Oneidas there were “very much divided amongst themselves and

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231 Account, ca 1753/06/12, Hawley Papers.

232 Account, ca 1753/06/13, Hawley Papers.

233 Johnson, Papers, 11: 181-82.

234 Johnson, Papers, 10: 65-76.

that there intestine Broils took all their Attention.

The fact that "the greater part are neutral" prevented greater divisions from occurring.

At Oquaga, the sharp divide between the unity they espoused, and the division they sometimes practiced sent Hawley into a confused spiral of doubt. Hawley's mission unfortunately coincided with the early years of the Seven Years' War. As was the case in Oneida Lake, the inhabitants around Oquaga were uncertain what course to take in the conflict. On one hand, William Johnson expected his long history of trade and diplomatic relations to ensure the community's loyalty to the British. If that would not hold them, perhaps a fort, two small blockhouses, and a small garrison of soldiers would. On the other hand, Oquaga's location ensured that its inhabitants had close relations with Shawnees, Delawares, and other Indians downstream who were disaffected with English and Iroquois claims of authority. These Indians intermingled with the inhabitants of Oquaga, trying to cajole them to join with them, and if they refused, threatening them (causing some of the inhabitants to request the fort out of fear). One Delaware Indian, who was married to a Tuscarora at Oquaga, arrived with five English scalps and tried to "stir up the Tuscaroras against the English" telling them "they must remember" the Tuscarora War and that this time they would be "able to drive the English all into the

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236 Johnson, Papers, 9: 903- 906.


238 Johnson, Papers, 9: 903- 906.

239 Journal, 1756/02/05, Hawley Papers. Johnson built a fort with two small blockhouses at Oquaga in 1756 (Johnson, Papers, 9:568-69; 644).

Earlier, Hawley reported "not one Tuskuhrora" and "but few Onoydas" at his sermons because they were "prodigiously alarmed" by reports of attacking settlers. But they were not all innocent victims—he also remembered seeing English plunder among his congregants, including a gentleman's watch which was offered to him. This he rejected in horror, but it seemed the clock was ticking. Should he stay or should he go? In the depths of winter in 1756, fearing for his life, Hawley finally decided to flee.

That decision had been hard enough and the wintry flight had almost cost his life, but the real confusion came nearly a year later. Hawley had received a letter from some of Oquaga's inhabitants purporting to invite him back, but its contents puzzled him. He finally had the opportunity to unravel the letter when he encountered the person who penned it for the Indians—Benjamin Ashley, husband of his former interpreter, and who had remained in Oquaga. Hawley, asked about the letter's origin and recorded the ensuing dialogue:

*Ashley:* Three or four of the head-men got together and tho't best to send for you to return to them. It was about the time when the Delawares were gone to General Johnson's to make peace. They advised you to leave them in the spring because of the Delawares, you know, and now they tho't that, as that matters was going to be settled again, you might come back to them.

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241 Journal, 1756/02/10, Hawley Papers.

242 Journal, 1755/11/02, Hawley Papers.

243 Letter apparently written about 1806/01/16, Hawley Papers.
But something in this answer did not satisfy Hawley; the letter’s framework ran contrary to his conviction that Oquaga invariably operated by unanimous consensus:

_Hawley:_ But was there but three or four only who joined in that message—
I remember that there were Shexrich, Jonah, and Isaac named at the bottom of the paper, but supposed that they all conversed in the message—
you know that it is a very unusual thing for two or three to transact any publack affair how small soever its consequence, except they are chosen and impowered by the rest after a council upon the affair, from which they received their instructions. If two or three act for the rest without a delegation (you know what I mean) from the whole it is of no force.

Indians are as exact about such things as any people I know or have read of. And were Shemmick Jonah and Isaac the only persons who sent me that message which you wrote me?

_Ashley:_ I don’t know of any others.

_Hawley:_ Strange! That two or three should desire advise and urge my return—they after deliberating in a full meeting upon the affair advised me to leave them in the spring; and now if any of them tho’t it advisable for me to return, a Council ought to have been held, and the opinions of the rest consulted upon an affair of so much importanace and it is not agreeable to indians customs to act otherwise you should have objected against sending such a message to me or at least told them, that it was best for them all to meet and take the affair into publack consideration first, and
see whether they would not all concur in sending to me. And seeing you
did write you’ld have done well to have explained it to me. . . . Did they
any of them send now, desiring and advising my return?

Ashley: Yes

Hawley: Who?

Ashley: Shemmick and Jonah

Hawley: Nobody else?

Ashley: No.²⁴⁴

The answer to the puzzle was simple; it just ran counter to everything that Hawley
thought he understood: the inhabitants at Oquaga were divided. Only a few Indians truly
wanted him back. Some feared that the region was still unsafe for an Englishman; others
disliked the notion of a white preacher among them once more. One prominent leader,
Adam, had moved his family into Hawley’s home and did not relish giving it back.
Puzzled and disappointed, Hawley wrote a letter to the town and then departed. He soon
after took up a new post preaching to the Mashpee Indians on Cape Cod.

²⁴⁴ Journal, 1756/12/10, Hawley Papers.
CHAPTER NINE

ROADS BETWEEN:

SHAPING TUSCARORA IDENTITIES AND THE BACKCOUNTRY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

At a time when English colonies on the coast were overcoming their initial isolation from one another, the native backcountry was tied together by groups of Indians constantly visiting each other on worn valley paths hidden behind Appalachian ridge lines—routes later shared and eventually taken over by European migrants. For displaced Indian groups, these communications helped ensure the survival of a broad sense of community. But rather than continually fostering harmony and goodwill, such interactions could also provoke tension and unease that ultimately refashioned their sense of identity.

Such was the case for the Tuscaroras in the eighteenth century: defeated by colonists, enemy Indians, and their own internal divisions during the Tuscarora War,

they were, according to one observer, "scattered as the wind scatters smoke."\(^2\) A large segment continued to live in North Carolina where they squeezed into "Indian Woods," a small reservation in present-day Bertie County.\(^3\) Nearly two thousand others had fled to New York and Pennsylvania's upper Susquehanna Valley where they planted new roots and were adopted as the Sixth Nation of the Iroquois. As has often been the case for refugees, the Tuscaroras carefully straddled the line between acculturation among their new neighbors—Iroquois and white—and the maintenance of a separate identity that preserved their own language, leaders, and customs.

But despite dispersal, they remained a nation, partially owing to the persistence of contacts between Tuscaroras in North Carolina and Iroquoia that demonstrated and in turn strengthened their common bonds. Such travels made possible the survival of a broad sense of Tuscarora identity. And yet these same contacts were unable fully to bridge the alienation and splits that arose out of the groups' different experiences. Indeed, they showed just how large the gaps had grown. Meetings let Tuscaroras marvel as much at their differences as appreciate their commonality. Visitors greeted with smiles might more joyfully be sent packing. Once hopeful reunions that soured showed that while Tuscaroras remained a family, sometimes it was a dysfunctional one.


\(^3\) The name "Indian Woods" did not enter into common usage until the nineteenth century, but I use it here as a convenient label.
where old conflicts resurfaced and new tensions emerged. Nonetheless, Tuscaroras clearly valued such contacts and "would no longer be put off" from visiting, according to one official who tried to intervene.4

These exchanges between bands of Tuscaroras in Iroquoia and those remaining in North Carolina flowed in two distinct streams. One, south from New York and Pennsylvania, consisted of war parties of young men who traveled along the so-called "Warrior’s Path" to strike traditional Catawba enemies in the Carolinas. These parties often paused at the reservation of the southern Tuscaroras in North Carolina to recoup, re-supply, and rekindle old relations. But the arrival of such parties, who often stirred trouble with white and Indian neighbors and challenged the authority of local tribal leaders, could test the limits of traditional hospitality.5 That these Tuscaroras from New York usually arrived accompanied by warriors from the other Iroquois nations enforced tendencies among some North Carolina Tuscaroras to see the visitors as cultural "outsiders."

The second major stream consisted of bands of Tuscarora migrants who, sporadically over the course of nearly a century, traveled north from the Carolinas to rejoin their kin who had already settled among the Iroquois in New York and Pennsylvania. Among these was a group of 166 Tuscaroras who left North Carolina in

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5 For tensions between colonial officials and these war parties, see especially Matthew Lawson Rhoades, "Assarigoa's Line: Anglo-Iroquois Origins of the Virginia Frontier, 1675-1774" (Ph.D. diss., Dept. of History, Syracuse University, 2000).
1766, some of whom begged shelter that stormy winter at Friedenshütten. Rather than
simple flight, these Tuscaroras who chose to leave North Carolina just over fifty years
after the first wave of refugees were lured by the entreaties of their northern kin who
had sent a delegation the previous year. The departing Tuscaroras’ experiences reveal
that the concept of “chain migration”—typically applied to European migrations to
describe the “pull” that initial immigrants exerted upon succeeding generations to
follow—equally applied to Native Americans in the colonial era. By coming north,
they escaped the confines of their reservation and gained greater control over their
lives. Their arrival helped their northern cousins sustain their population, preserve
their language, and retain a distinct ethnic identity. But as refugees in an unfamiliar
land, the newcomers also found themselves particularly vulnerable to manipulation and
entanglement in new types of dependencies.

Although not as dramatic as their initial expulsion from North Carolina in
1713, with their burning forts at their back and slavers on their heels, links that
developed were equally important in shaping the Tuscaroras’ experience in the
eighteenth century. Interactions with other Indians, negotiations with surrounding
settlers and colonial officials, their sense of identity locally and as members of a
broader Tuscarora nation all reflected the persistence of contacts. Conversely, these
contacts depended in part upon tapping into other networks among other Indians,
settlers, and officials. Far from being of concern only to Tuscaroras and incidental to
other lives on the frontier, connections between scattered groups were one of the
backcountry’s central features. For the Iroquois, connections fostered by adoptees
from scattered nations shaped policy, both in the ways that the confederacy conducted wars abroad, and conceived defense at home. By adding their numbers to the Indian migrants who settled the upper Susquehanna valley, Tuscaroras contributed to a survival strategy of the Iroquois as important as that confederacy’s famous neutrality between Britain and France.6 As colonial officials tried to direct and order migrant flows through treaties, passports, and selective aid, they exercised and strengthened the bureaucratic apparatus of an expanding empire even while gaining a better understanding of its weaknesses.

Gangs of New York

“...and now the Northern Indians and Tuscoruros begin again their customary incursions.”

--Alexander Spotswood, Governor of Virginia, 17187


There are also two French Indians . . . that went out a fighting two years ago towards Virginia by way of Cayouga, and have their abode among the Tuskarores that live near Virginia and go backwards and forwards.”

--Iroquois Speaker in Albany, 1722

Despite the near-frantic efforts of colonial governors that culminated in the Albany Treaty of 1722, Tuscaroras who fled north to Iroquoia frequently joined Iroquois raids south along the Warrior’s Path throughout the first half of the eighteenth century. Ranging hundreds of miles from Iroquois country, war parties struck against Catawbas and various tribes of the Carolina and Virginia piedmont. These southern wars were an important part of the Iroquois “mourning-war complex,” in which members of the Confederacy responded to natural and violent deaths by redirecting anger, grief, and suspicion at outside nations in the form of raids aimed at acquiring scalps, or better yet, captives who could be distributed for torture or adoption. For these nations of the Longhouse, warfare abroad helped ensure peace within.

By joining the raiding parties, Tuscarora warriors were participating in a political and cultural ritual that helped solidify their place within the Iroquois

8 NYCD, 5: 660.

Confederacy. It was no coincidence that Tuscaroras first gained recognition as the sixth nation during diplomacy regarding these raids. Multiethnic raiding parties gave young Tuscarora men a chance to cooperate, form friendships, and show off their martial skills with Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas, Mohawks, and Shawnees—to list the nationalities of just one 1717 raid.\textsuperscript{10} For Tuscaroras, whose nation had been adopted as metaphorical infants lashed to the cradleboard of the confederacy, such excursions offered an especially valuable opportunity to prove their manly vigor and to improve their personal and national stature by striking against longstanding Iroquois enemies.\textsuperscript{11}

Nonetheless, Tuscaroras also undoubtedly brought their own particular understanding of raids that allowed them to nurse national grudges and settle old scores against Indians who had cooperated with South Carolina slave traders against

\textsuperscript{10} Observers, especially in Virginia and the Carolinas, usually lumped the participants vaguely as “Senecas” or “northern Indians.” This multiethnic band was described by Virginia sources, as a “Seneca” war party (Rhoades, “Assarigoa’s Line,” 91). See Severance, “Our Tuscarora Neighbors,” 322, for descriptions of a 1726 raid that included “Mohawks, Senecas, and Canada Indians” in cooperation with Tuscaroras.

\textsuperscript{11} The first time that the Tuscaroras appear in documents as the “sixth nation” occurs within the context of a 1722 treaty to discuss such incursions into Virginia. That meeting ended with “six shouts—five for the Five Nations and one for a castle of Tuscaroras, lately seated between Oneyda and the Onnondage” (NYCD, 5: 672). Demonstrating the importance of warfare in attaining political and masculine stature in Iroquois symbolic discourse, an Iroquois complained to the English: “Look at the French, they are Men, they are fortifying everywhere—but we are ashamed to say it, you are all like Woman bare and Open without any Fortifications” (Doc. Hist. N.Y., 2: 581).
them during the Tuscarora War. Besides offering an opportunity to strike back at
a traditional enemy, for Tuscaroras who had escaped north, embarking on the
Warrior’s Path meant a chance to return to their North Carolina homeland and kin.

But the trip stretched across several seasons and a variety of terrain. Rather
than roving a hungry wilderness where clothes and moccasins wore thin, where
shelters had to be hastily erected against sudden storms, and only meager supplies of
 parched corn or a hunter’s lucky shot warded off hunger, they preferred to depend
upon the hospitality of communities along the way. Setting off in late fall or early
winter, the same time that Iroquois men might otherwise embark on the winter hunt,
mixed bands of warriors ranging from over a dozen to over a hundred men paddled
down or trudged along the banks of the Susquehanna River, pausing at Conestoga,

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12 Richter, “War and Culture,” 303; Merrell, “There Very Bones,” 118. Governor
Hunter of New York blamed increased southern raids upon the influence of the
Tuscarora refugees who “have quickly found credit or favor among you” (Leder,
noticed that the Iroquois used to go to war “towards the South West against Indians
settled upon or near the lower Branches of Mississippi, but of late They seem to have
relinquished that Path . . . [and now] their Course and Projects of War is now
generally bent against the Indians who are in Amity with Virginia and Carolina” Keith
blamed the French, but it is likely that the Tuscaroras also played a role in this shift
(MPCP, 3: 99). For participation of the Catawbas in the Tuscarora War, see Joseph
Barnwell, “The Second Tuscarora Expedition,” South Carolina Historical and

13 For shelters, see Byrd, Prose Works, 393; for thefts of clothes, see Henry R.
McIlwaine, ed., Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia, 6 vols.
(Richmond, Va.: Virginia State Library, 1925), 4: 139 (hereafter EJCCV) and William
Shamokini, and numerous smaller riverside villages.\textsuperscript{14} These multiethnic communities with their rapidly changing populations of Delawares, Shawnees, Iroquois, and numerous smaller tribes were all loosely—sometimes grudgingly—associated with the Iroquois Confederacy.\textsuperscript{15} Besides filling bellies, visiting war parties at the towns deepened diplomatic ties and added weight to often-flimsy claims of Iroquois sovereignty over the region.\textsuperscript{16} Sometimes they sought similar hospitality at the doorways of the rough new cabins of German, English, and Scotch settlers—a bid that brought violence and racial tension as often a warm bed and hot meal.\textsuperscript{17}


Leaving behind the Susquehanna Valley at its great eastward bend near its juncture with the Juniata River, passing narrow Pennsylvania and Maryland valleys, and ferrying the Potomac River near a stream still known as “Tuscarora Creek,” a warrior could expect to reach the rolling Virginia piedmont sometime between March—“when the Turky Cocks gobled”—and May.\(^{18}\) Turning east, with the Appalachians at his back, and following the Roanoke River into the North Carolina coastal plain brought the warrior to his final and most important way station—and if he happened to be a Tuscarora, to his former homeland.\(^{19}\)

Between about 1717 and the early 1740s, numerous war parties stopped at “Indian Woods,” the North Carolina reservation of the southern band of Tuscaroras. Despite encroachment by white settlers and adoption of European trade goods, many practices at Indian Woods remained little changed at mid-century. Visiting warriors slept in airy houses different from their substantial longhouses in the north, witnessed

\(^{18}\) See Leder, *Livingston Indian Records*, 69, for an Indian map of the route between the upper Susquehanna and the Juniata and estimated travel times. The journey to this point varied from approximately a week to ten days of continuous travel. Tuscarora Creek meets the Potomac near Leesburg, Virginia. Travelers may have also crossed near Frederick, Maryland where there are two Tuscarora Creeks (Rhoades, "Assarigoa's Line," 31) or further west near Cherry Run (Wallace, *Indian Paths*, 168). For quotation about the turkeys in May, see Leder, *Livingston Indian Records*, 70. For examples of war parties arriving during this season see Leder, *Livingston Indian Records*, 135; *EJCCV*, 4: 368-70.

\(^{19}\) In 1727, Nathaniel Harrison warned the Catawbas of “a great body of Sinnica Indians [that] were dayly expected down Roanoke River in Perriagues to the Tuskaroras.” (BPRO/CO 5/1321, ff.1, 2, 2v., 4v.-9v in Va. Colonial Records Project, reel M-241) The region where the Roanoke River meets the Appalachian mountains has several “Catawba Creeks”—evidence of the dueling war parties that passed this way.
local styles of face painting and hairdressing, and could try to keep up with dances, “keeping exact time” and carefully employing their arms “into a thousand menacing postures.”\footnote{Shannon Lee Dawdy, “The Secret History of the Meherrin” (Master's thesis, Dept. of Anthropology, College of William and Mary, 1994), 104-5; Byrd, \textit{Prose Works}, 218. The quotation actually describes dances at a Nottoway Village in 1728, but probably holds true for their Tuscarora neighbors.} At meals, did northern Tuscaroras and the other Iroquois warriors follow their hosts’ taboo against mixing turkey and venison in the same pot?—probably, although sources do not say.\footnote{Byrd, \textit{Prose Works}, 390.} Around meals, cousins—real and fictive—shared news and passed political instructions, sustaining a communication network effective enough to enable Tuscaroras from Indian Woods to tell one New York official that “although we have lived at a considerable Distance from you . . . yet your Name, and Words reached us, as though you was but close by.”\footnote{Johnson, \textit{Papers}, 12: 273-74.} Eligible bachelors struck up more personal relationships.\footnote{Byrd’s visit to the Nottoways indicates that the practice of offering “trade girls,” to visitors—noted by John Lawson among the Tuscaroras earlier in the century—survived into the 1730s in a truncated form. Although Iroquois men esteemed abstinence during war, these restrictions likely loosened during lengthy stays among friendly hosts. Byrd, \textit{Prose Works}, 218-19; John Lawson, \textit{A New Voyage to Carolina} (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina Press, 1967), 190, 194-95.} The appearance of the surname “Seneca” among individuals at Indian Woods hints that at least some of the visitors remained and married, strengthening blood-ties to Iroquoia.\footnote{\textit{NCCR}, 25: 507-9. Such marriages may have been a useful tool of expanding the reproducing population of the reservation.}
Most Tuscaroras at Indian Woods had less romantic reasons to welcome the parties. Upon arrival, the war parties found a limited yet eager body of recruits among the young men of the reservation hungry to retaliate against Catawba raiders that frequently harassed Indian Woods.25 "Last fall some [Catawba] Indians came to the head of new river and killed Capt. Jack and wounded one more of their people," explained William Blunt, the reservation's "intended King" in 1731. His people's response was typical: "a party of Seneca's coming to their Town to go against the Catabo's they went out with them."26 At the expectation of another Catawba attack, "Alliance and Amity" with the Iroquois, who promised, supposedly "to assist them with a Thousand men part of which are already come into this province," bolstered confidence at Indian Woods. Among colonists, rumors of such alliances increased the southern Tuscaroras' military and political importance beyond their small numbers, and put North Carolina officials into a panic.27

Ties established through northern cousins to Iroquois warriors able to "bring on a war with the English in General," made North Carolina Tuscaroras—despite

25 For examples of the harassment of the Tuscarora reservation by Catawbas, see NCCR, 4: 1311-14; 11: 11-12. Immediately after the Tuscarora War, the North Carolina Tuscaroras had been allowed to remain along the Pamlico and Neuse Rivers. In 1717 they petitioned to move slightly north, to Indian Woods along the Roanoke River, partially to escape potential Catawba attacks (NCCR, 2: 288-89). For southern Tuscaroras fighting alongside Iroquois, see NCCR, 2: 305; 3: 202; 11: 10-16.

26 NCCR, 11: 11.

27 Boyce, "As the Wind," 162; NCCR, 3: 202. A thousand men is probably an exaggeration. It is impossible to determine if this number was inflated by the Iroquois, or by Tuscaroras at Indian Woods seeking to increase their clout with North Carolina officials.
defeat in the Tuscarora War—enough of “a matter of consequence” that North Carolina’s governor took the extraordinary step of appointing members to his executive council based solely upon experience in Indian affairs.28 This prop to Tuscarora confidence extended to affect daily relations with settlers who ringed Indian Woods. During a trip from Pennsylvania to North Carolina to scout for future Moravian mission sites, Bishop August Gottlieb Spangenburg noted that usually the Indians were “treated with great contempt” by settlers who took their land, poached their livestock, and blocked them from using ferries.29 But anticipation of a war party’s arrival turned the balance of power. Here was a chance for young Tuscarora men to tap into the “feeling of animosity” that lasted decades after the war; here was a chance to throw off the cloak of helplessness and defeat, puff up with pride, and swagger with an “insolence” that shocked Spangenberg.30 In Pennsylvania “the Indians are not feared at all unless they are drunk,” he wondered. But “here [in North Carolina] they conduct themselves in such a way that the whites are afraid of them. If they enter a house and the man is not at home they become insolent and the poor woman must do as they command. Sometimes they come in such large Companies that even the man is sorely put to it if compelled to deal with them.” This bullying he linked to the recent discovery nearby of “traces of Seneca Indians.”31

28 NCCR, 3: 153, 205.
29 NCCR, 5: 1.
30 NCCR, 4: 1313-14.
31 NCCR, 4: 1313-14.
Besides augmenting each other’s military strength, war parties gave second and third generations of northern Tuscaroras a chance to become reacquainted with the topography of a homeland they would otherwise know only through stories passed on by their forebears. One suspects that northern and southern Tuscaroras traveling in the Carolinas who passed cairns memorializing ancient battles or tragedies would have paused to add a stone or sweep aside a twig and remember the site’s story—actions echoing those of Tuscarora travelers a century before. Expeditions also enabled the joint creation of new sites upon the mental landscape, whether of victories, such as at the “craggy cliffs” of the Huwara River “made famous” as the site of a gorily successful ambush upon a Catawba war party, or defeats, as at a cave that Tuscarora guides showed to a band of surveyors where nine Toteros fended off a “great host of northern Indians and at last obliged them to retire.”

Although their limited population did not allow southern Tuscaroras to offer great numbers of recruits, their well-earned reputation for knowing “the most secret and shortest avenues in the very heart of the country” gave raiding parties an added


33 NCCR, 19: 848; Byrd, Prose Works, 387.
In 1752 southern Tuscaroras sent a threat to the Catawbas that “they could come and go there in 20 days . . . the way to Catawba Town could soon be found.”

Two years later when a Catawba woman who had escaped from the Iroquois reported grimly that the Iroquois “knew where the Catawbas fetched their Water and Wood and they would utterly destroy them,” she was probably accurately summing up Tuscarora expertise and intent. Knowing when to strike could be as valuable as knowing where. Only hours after a Catawba peace delegation surrendered their guns during parleys with Virginia officials, a joint war party descended upon the defenseless camp. Distraught officials afterwards attributed the onslaught’s murderous precision to intelligence gleaned from local traders by southern Tuscaroras.

That attack and numerous others like it, enabled by bonds between southern and northern Tuscaroras that helped channel Iroquois warriors, reshaped the political,  

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34 *NCCR*, 4: 472. The region between Indian Woods and the Catawbas had once been inhabited by the Tuscaroras. It was still used as a hunting ground for much of the eighteenth century. War parties accompanied by Tuscaroras would sometimes journey to the head of the Wacamaw River and then go downstream (*NCCR*, 11:11). They also sometimes traveled further east along the coastal plain through the swamps of the Peedee River (*Virginia Gazette*, January 7, 1737, page 3 column 2).

35 *NCCR* 4: 1311-14.

36 Quotation in Merrell, “Their Very Bones,” 130.

37 *EJCCY*, 3: 442-4; *NYCD*, 5: 490-91.
military, and cultural character of the Virginia and North Carolina backcountry. Particularly hard hit was Virginia’s system of ordering its frontiers by relying on “tributary” Indians resettled on strategically placed reservations to alert and defend against intruders, capture escaped slaves, and serve as a way for governors and their council to direct and limit settlement. At the outbreak of the Tuscarora War in 1711, Virginia governor Alexander Spotswood had “seized that critical time” to attempt to strengthen the tributary system and enlarge it by including the Tuscaroras living near his borders.  

But despite the colonists’ victory over the Tuscaroras in 1713, instead of being strengthened, the tributary policy that tied local Indians to Virginia’s government descended into a several-decade chaotic blood bath. The war had backfired. What went wrong? Tuscaroras who remained in the region, balking at Spotswood’s onerous demands, reneged on promises to relocate to Virginia, and instead chose to remain as tributaries just miles over the border in North Carolina. That colony, perpetually disorderly, locked in boundary disputes with Virginia, devastated by the recent war and fearful of its return, was unable to enforce strict discipline upon settlers or Indians.  

38 Byrd, Prose Works, 220.

39 In 1719 Virginia officials requested that the North Carolina governor send the “Chief man of the Tuscaroras” to Williamsburg to discuss problems caused by his hosting the war parties from the North. North Carolina’s governor replied that he would try, “but could not promise of their Complying therewith” (EJCCV, 3: 517). Again, in 1727 Virginia’s governor complained that it appeared that the North Carolina governor “has very little authority over them [the North Carolina Tuscaroras]” (EJCCV, 4: 132-33).
had fled to the Iroquois in the panicked final days of the war, returned south, now as
comrades-in-arms of the Iroquois—despite near-frantic efforts of colonial governors
that culminated in the Albany Treaty of 1722.

Spotswood had had good reason to worry. The Tuscarora-Iroquois
combination wreaked havoc upon the best-laid plans of Virginia officials by re-shaping
cultural alliances in the region. Until this time, the tributary Indians had almost
invariably been prey to Iroquois forays: the possibility of sheltering from an Iroquois
storm in the lee of gun-toting Virginians had been one of the few draws of being a
tributary. But the Tuscaroras, who had strong cultural ties with several of these
tribes—particularly the Nottoways and Meherrins—bridged old gaps and negotiated a
newfound amity between the former hunters and hunted. Virginia officials were
essentially accurate when they grumbled in 1732 that “the Nottoway Indians frequently
entertain at their Town parties of the Tuskarooro’s inhabiting in No Carolina and

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40 For example, Iroquois warriors attacked the Nottoways in 1704, killing several and
capturing their headman (Rhoades, “Assarigoa’s Line,” 69).

41 EJCCV, 3: 517. Dawdy, “Secret,” 96. For cultural ties see Douglas W. Boyce,
“Iroquoian Tribes of the Virginia-North Carolina Coastal Plain,” in Bruce G. Trigger,
under Colour thereof do receive among them divers of the Six Nations under the Government . . . of New York . . .”

But the Iroquois and Tuscaroras had not slogged eight hundred miles only to make friends. The young warriors demanded scalps and captives for prestige and to soothe the grieving women of death-stricken families awaiting them in their villages. Often the parties did not bother to march the extra twenty days from Indian Woods into well-defended Catawba territory and sought easier proxy targets closer at hand. Only “a small daies march” from Indian Woods, some of the Virginia tributaries were friendly with the Catawbas—particularly the Saponis, Tutelos, and remnants of the Occaneechees who shared a loose cultural affiliation with the Catawbas as “Siouans.” Besides, Iroquois beliefs did not brook neutrality lightly: Tuscaroras had already learned firsthand that any tribe not in the shadow of the League’s Tree of Peace could be its enemy. To all this the Tuscaroras added their own long-standing hostilities against the Saponis. Conversely, Catawba retaliatory raids rarely reached all the way back to Iroquoia; a several-hundred miles abattis of intervening towns made such an undertaking nearly suicidal. Instead they lashed out against groups in

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42 EJCCV, 4: 291. The source actually states that the “Tuskarooro’s inhabiting in No Carolina and under Colour thereof do receive among them divers of the Six Nations under the Government of North Carolina and under Colour thereof do receive amongst them divers of the six Nations under the Goverment of New York . . .” but I suspect that the italicized portion is an error [my italics].

43 CSP, Item 243, vol.29 (1716-17) pp. 142-144.


45 MPCP, 3: 96, 100.
North Carolina and Virginia, obeying the maxim that the friend of mine enemy is mine enemy. In 1727 the Catawba “King of the Sugers” explained to a Virginia agent that his people had come “to assist the Saponis to take revenge on the Tuskaroroes who had killed many of them last winter.” But instead they attacked the Meherrins, after hearing from two settlers that “the Meherrins and Tusks were all one and were always together.”

To avoid being ground to dust between Catawbas colliding with Iroquois and their Tuscarora allies, the smaller tributaries were forced to choose sides and participate. The grim result was an ever-repeating arabesque of revenge curling into further revenge—all mocking Virginia’s efforts at order. In 1719 Virginia’s Council extracted from tribal leaders a list of eight Nottoways and twelve Meherrins who “did joyn the Senequas and Tuscoraros and attack the Saponies” outside Fort Christanna.

Again, several years later, the Nottoways admitted that “in conjunction with some French Indians [Iroquois] and Tuscaroroes” they had chased several Indian enemies to a settler’s home. When the fleeing Indians ducked inside, the pursuers opened fire, killing the inhabitants. The pattern continued into the 1730s and 1740s. Even former student-hostages, protégés of the tributary education program at the College of William and Mary and supposedly schooled in the arts of civility, joined in the uncivil behavior. As he lay dying, the son of the Totero king accused “Hickory, a Nottoway

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47 EJCCV, 3: 520.

Indian with whom he was acquainted at the College” of braining him with a
tomahawk—amid the crime’s confusing circumstances Virginia’s Council thought they
sniffed the taint of Tuscarora and Iroquois influence.49

In addition to constant appeals directed toward the Iroquois and New York,
Virginia also strove for a solution closer to home. Tuscarora interference left Virginia
in the awkward position of trying to corral troublesome tributaries without further
alienating them. To stem the tide of violence and return the tributary system to a firm
footing, Virginia’s councilors, governors, and agents tried everything—arrests,
tongue-lashings, curfews, unannounced inspections, requiring travel passes—and
failed.50 The real blame, officials felt, could be traced back to the interloping of
“divers foreign Indians” who fought out their own conflicts in Virginia’s backyard.
After a 1732 outbreak of skirmishes between the Nottoways and Saponis, officials
declared that the “Nottoway Indians are for the future to forbear entertaining at their
Towns or giving encouragement to their coming into this Colony any of the said
foreign Indians on pain of being made accountable for any Mischief or Injury the sd
Tuscaroras or other foreign Indians shall do either to his Majesties Subjects or to the
Saponies . . . .”51

49 EJCCV, 4: xvii, 186.
50 EJCCV, 4: 121.
51 EJCCV, 4: 291.
The Saponies for their part were similarly enjoined to keep out "any of the Cattabaw Indians [or] their Confederates." The threats failed; three years later Virginia was once again calling up the militia to scare off or arrest "the Tuskoror and other Northern Indians" at Nottoway town.53

Although already weakened by years of white encroachments, it was the withering strain of living in a dangerous battle-zone perpetuated by the southern Tuscaroras' proximity that ultimately disintegrated Virginia's tributary Indians.54 So, too, collapsed the frontier system that depended upon them. In 1728, "for fear of the Catabas," the Meherrins "deserted their ancient town" to move closer to the dubious safety of English settlements.55 The Nottoways, faring little better, cowered behind their town's ten-foot palisade.56 Saponis, casting about in desperation, disappeared as separate entities from Virginia's archeological record, fleeing first to the Catawbas in

52 EJCCV, 4: 291.
53 EJCCV, 4: 365.
55 Byrd, *Prose Works*, 213. The presence in the Tuscaroras' New York nineteenth-century reservation of a "non-Tuscarora element" whose name, Cowinchawkon, is "essentially identical" to name of the Meherrin town in Virginia indicates that some Meherrin probably migrated to Iroquoia in the eighteenth century. Their "rapid assimilation" indicates that the "Meherrin were quite similar in language and culture to the Tuscarora" (Blair A. Rudes, "Cowinchahawkon: The Meherrin in the Nineteenth Century," *Algonquian and Iroquoian Linguistics* 6, no. 3 (1981): 32-34). For an examination of the persistence of the Meherrin in the region, see Dawdy, "Secret History."
1730, three years later considering joining the Tuscaroras, finally throwing in their lot with the Iroquois around 1740 and resettling along the Susquehanna River. To a House of Burgesses always eager to limit spending, dubious of supporting even allied Indians, and suspicious of the whiff of monopoly that came with the governor and council's strict regulations, the benefits the tributaries offered did not seem worth the effort required to support them against encroaching settlers, protect them from outsiders, and prevent them from attacking each other. Instead, Virginia accelerated its dependence upon yeoman, white, Protestant, "foreign" settlers of Scotch-Irish and German descent to settle and protect its western frontiers, encouraging them to push westward to create a new, all-white, western buffer that eventually led to claims as far west as Ohio. Such yeomen were likely to discourage, not attract and shelter, visiting war parties. Ironically, over the long run, this change would merely shift friction with Iroquois war parties away from tributaries and onto European settlers.


58 Spotswood, Official Letters, II: 282. Moreover, after the settlement of the long-standing boundary dispute with North Carolina, several of these tribes were found to be outside of Virginia's jurisdiction.

Virginia blamed its troubles on the welcome that raiding parties received from the North Carolina Tuscaroras; however, not everyone at Indian Woods embraced the arrivals. Reunions that demonstrated and strengthened ties between separated bands could also revive old conflicts and allow new ones to emerge—calling into question exactly what it meant to be a “Tuscarora.” The sudden appearance of a troop of armed young men, hungry from the trail, put a strain on the small, impoverished reservation and tested the limits of traditional hospitality. “I can not understand that Blount [the head of the Tuscaroras at Indian Woods through the 1730s] is so desirous of so many of the . . . [raiding groups] coming among them and spending up their provision,” wondered one North Carolina official; perhaps, “[he] can not help it, and is obliged to keep in with them.”

Part of the obligation was cultural. Several decades earlier, the North Carolina surveyor and explorer, John Lawson, described the strong cultural impulse among Tuscaroras to feed and entertain visitors. To do otherwise was tantamount to an expression of hostility—a hard lesson learned by white settlers who rebuffed this Iroquoian belief that “friends eat out of the same bowl.”

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60 NCCR 2: 305. Oddly, the official does not connect the presence of these bands with the Tuscaroras’ wars against the Catawbas despite the fact that in the same document he records that King Blount was requesting an increase in bounties against that tribe.

61 Lawson, New Voyage, 243-45.

many North Carolina Tuscaroras would have secretly sympathized with a Saponi leader who complained to the Indian agent, Nathaniel Harrison, that he had no choice but to host the Catawbas, that “they did not desire their company but were afraid to tell them so, because it would make them angry and they were too powerful to pretend to quarrel with.” Repercussions reverberated throughout Iroquoia because, at towns along their return home, war parties recounted “the most minute details . . . telling where they had been treated kindly or badly by Indians or Europeans.”

By cooperating, though, southern Tuscaroras faced other quarrels when the war parties left. “They side with the Six Nations against the Catawbas, but suffer from this relationship very much,” concluded an observer weighing the consequences. Revenge, and South Carolina’s reward for “bringing Tuscarora Indians dead or alive,” inspired Catawbas to go “out in quest of them,” sometimes picking off stragglers on the trail, other times striking Indian Woods directly. The result was a split personality: the North Carolina Tuscaroras exuded bravado in the war parties’ presence, in their absence, crippling terror. Nervous Tuscaroras watched for clues of the Catawbas who haunted them: tell-tale tracks, mysteriously slaughtered cattle and

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Pennsylvania Indians along the warriors’ route faced a similar dilemma (MPCP, 3: 100).

64 Beauchamp, Moravian Journals, 171.

65 NCCR, 4: 1313.

66 Virginia Gazette, Sept.22, 1736, page 3 column 1.
hogs, the shadows spotted by "some of their children going for wood." 67 When William Byrd hired a pair of panicky Tuscaroras as hunters and guides, they were scared to near uselessness, "so fearful of falling into the hands of the Catawbas that they durst not lose sight of us all day" and so killed nothing—leaving the party to a meager dinner of cold bread and cheese.68

Besides angering Catawbas and other Indian allies of the English, the North Carolina Tuscaroras' cousins stirred up unwanted conflict with nearby whites—killing cattle, harassing slaves, stealing horses, threatening settlers, and in one case taking shirts off clothes lines69—leaving governments to "look on their Nation as Accessory."70 In the atmosphere of suspicion, North Carolina sent spies "on another pretense" to Indian Woods to discover any "evil designs against the government."71

When murders were committed in South Carolina, the Tuscaroras earned blame based

67 NCCR, 11: 11-12.

68 Byrd, Prose Works, 390.

69 For thefts, see NCCR 11: 11-15. For examples of northern war parties causing tensions, see William P. Palmer, ed., Calendar of Virginia State Papers and Other Manuscripts, 1652-1781, 11 vols. (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1875-1893) vol. 1: 210-11 (hereafter referred to as CVSP); NCCR 2: 305; Johnson, Papers 4: 260; 12: 123, 137-38; Severance, "Our Tuscarora Neighbors," 321. A North Carolina official complained of visiting Iroquois' "rudeness" towards settlers at Wekocanaan (a north-south path that crossed the Roanoke River not far from Indian Woods) theorizing, "it is either natural for them to be so, or else they have a mind to drive away the people from their settlements there it lying in their way to Blount's town [Indian Woods]" (NCCR, 2: 305).

70 EJCCV, 3: 446.

71 NCCR, 2: 304-5.
upon the slender evidence that the perpetrators "bent their way northward." Against similar accusations in Virginia in 1727, Blount stood fast by his alibi that the murders were "committed by the Tuscaruroes now living under the protection of the five nations; and that he was sure if those were tax'd with it they would not deny it." His envoys even volunteered to remain hostage in Williamsburg until their innocence could be proven.

On the other hand, the Tuscaroras of North Carolina were hardly blameless. Whenever they could, they passed off guilt, using northern Indians as scapegoats. In doing so they blurred the line between unity with and distinction from the northern warriors. When encountering settlers during one raid in 1730, North Carolina Tuscaroras masqueraded as Iroquois who could not speak English until spotted by a trader who recognized them. Later, when accused on the same raid by a South Carolina official of stealing slaves and killing livestock, several southern Tuscaroras answered that "they knew nothing of it . . . as to what was done now the Senecas who did it must pay for it." Finally, confronted with proof, they admitted being present—but only as bystanders. The official interviewing them was flabbergasted. Earlier

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73 *EJCCV*, 4: 132-33.

74 *EJCCV*, 4: 139.

75 Boyce, "As the Wind," 163; *NCCR*, 3:153.

76 *NCCR*, 11: 12. During a raid in South Carolina in 1726 there occurred a similar incident, in which two Tuscaroras among a party of twelve Indians, "called themselves Sinnekeras" (*NYCD*, 5: 793).

77 *NCCR*, 11: 11-15.
"[you claimed] the Seneca's and Tuskerorer's were all one yet now you make a
difference and lay all the blame upon the Senecas's though you yourselves own that
you come down into our settlements," he sputtered, "No, I am not come so far to hear
and believe lies." 78

The inhabitants of Indian Woods were not above using deception. But closer
examination reveals a more complex truth that the Tuscaroras could not quite explain
and the official could not quite understand. While the Tuscaroras of North Carolina
and New York often cooperated in general, in specific behaviors they could be at
cross-purposes. The North Carolina Tuscaroras freely admitted to joining the war
party to retaliate for recent murders. They admitted shooting into a Catawba fort at
night. For much of the expedition they probably enjoyed the camaraderie and the
sense that "they were all one" with their Iroquois and northern Tuscarora fellows. But
these southern Tuscaroras were also keenly conscious that they lived surrounded by
white settlements and would not, in the end, return to homes nearly a thousand miles
distant. Therefore they sought a situation that would "let them that were Indians alone
to make war against Indians without . . . [whites] meddling in it" and acted
accordingly. 79 Present when northern members of the party had stolen a slave, the
North Carolina Tuscaroras claimed to have "tould them it was not good for them to
do so and that they must not meddle with Slaves." 80 They had similarly protested

79 EJCCV, 11:14.
80 EJCCV, 11: 10. See NCCR, 2: 536, 570 for another example of North Carolina
Tuscaroras blaming Northern Indians for taking slaves.

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when, "before the white people's face," the party "in a very rude way" stole shirts that were in the wash, and again when the party had killed cattle and shot a horse.

These tensions lurking within the war parties may have been sharpened by deeper misgivings between the North Carolina Tuscaroras and the Iroquois. Within living memory, the Tuscaroras had been victims of Iroquois raids that only stopped in 1710 when a delegation journeyed to Conestoga to beg for mercy.\(^8\) The Tuscaroras who journeyed to Iroquoia after the Tuscarora War and were adopted as the confederacy's "sixth nation" forgave past trespasses. Reconciliation for the Tuscaroras who remained in North Carolina was more rocky: implicitly, they had rejected the Iroquois. After the Tuscarora War's conclusion, several Tuscaroras hiding in Virginia's hills told Spotswood that Iroquois messengers came to demand that they "submit themselves to the Senecas" and "made them large offers of Assistance to revenge themselves on the English, upon condition of incorporating with them."\(^8\)

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\(^8\)^ MPCP, 2: 510-13. Before 1710 some Tuscaroras may have been striving for a peace. According to Lawson "If you go to persuade them [the Iroquois] to live peaceably with the Tuskeruros, and let them be one People, and in case those Indians desire it, and will submit to them, they will answer you, that they cannot live without War, which they have ever been used to; and that if Peace be made with the Indians they now war withal, they must find out some others to wage War against . . . ." (Lawson, New Voyage, 207.) For mention of negotiations between the Iroquois and the Tuscaroras see also "Minutes, 31 July 1710," mss., Penn Papers, Indian Affairs, 1:34 available in William Sumner Jenkins, ed., Records of the States of the United States of America [Microform Collection] (Washington D.C.: Library of Congress Photoduplication Service, 1949-1951): Pa.M.1a Reel 1, Supplement 1687-1756 (m-13919).

\(^8\) Boyce, "As the Wind Scatters the Smoke," 161; Spotswood, Letters, 2: 42.
After rejecting the offer, fears lingered for several years that the Iroquois would attack, years that overlapped with the war parties’ first visits.83

Suspicions and fears were probably smoothed by the frequent presence of Northern Tuscaroras amid the visitors. But the two groups of Tuscaroras had their own history of cultural and political differences.84 As leader of Indian Woods, King Blount and his successors struggled to lead their people in an accommodationist policy towards colonial governments that would retain a measure of autonomy and avoid a return to war. In the later days of the Tuscarora War, Blount’s accommodationist faction had even skirmished with the most bellicose part of the Tuscaroras—the same group who formed the core of the initial migrants to New York.85 Even while some Tuscaroras departed northward, Blount had used the post-war reconstruction to secure his own authority among those who remained.

83 See, for example, the fourth provision of the 1713 Treaty of Peace between the Virginia and the Tuscaroras (CSP, Item 603 I, vol.27 [1712-1714], pp.306-310) and rumors of an impending attack in 1723 (EJCV, 4:33).

84 Based upon linguistic evidence, Blair Rudes suggest that Tuscaroras who initially migrated to Iroquoia were probably from around the Contentnea basin, had a slightly different linguistic base, and probably associated more often with southern Pamlico tribes as opposed to the Upper Tuscaroras who often associated with the Nottoways and Meherrins and formed the bulk of Blount’s faction that remained in Indian Woods—a conclusion largely corroborated by documentary evidence (Blair Rudes, personal communication, October 4, 2003, Rensselaerville, New York).

85 In 1712, Blount delivered Chief Hancock, a leader of the Tuscarora uprising, to North Carolina officials who promptly executed the prisoner (NCCR, 1: 883, 891, 896.)
Now these migrants' return on the Warrior's Path provoked a power struggle within the reservation that often played out along age lines. In 1723 Blount informed the North Carolina government "that he has certain Intelligence of several of the Northern Indians that design to make him a Visit this fall with an Intent to seduce the young men of his nation from him in order to Comit mischief on him and on the white people." Several years later, despite Blount's apparent opposition, several of his men joined with a group of northern Tuscaroras in a night attack against a Saponi hunting party's camp on the Roanoke River. Afterwards English settlers spotted among the war party some of their familiar Tuscarora neighbors toting their trophies of "divers scalps that they were carrying home to their town." An Indian slave at Indian Woods testified that they brought back more: an unfortunate Saponi whom the townspeople joined in torturing. Frequently referred to by maps and colonial records as "Blount's Town," at such times the town was not his to control. Again, several years later, Blount complained that recent crimes had been committed by "Northern Indians that had Revolted from him, and now lived as Pirates and Robbers;" even at that moment there was one such "Indian in his town, named York, who was formerly

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86 There may also have been a splits along lines that corresponded to villages that existed before 1713 since at the end of the Tuscarora war, several villages had forced to combine into one under Blount's sole leadership, losing their former village councils and chiefs (Boyce, "As the Wind Scatters the Smoke," 160-61).

87 NCCR, 2: 496.

88 EJCCV, 4: 126.

89 EJCCV, 4: 132-33.
of the Tuskarooroe Nation."\(^{90}\) Arrival in the company of other Iroquois may have increased the sense that the returning Tuscaroras were meddling outsiders.

Blount's protests may have had ulterior motives: complaints that "some of his people are disorderly and throwing off their obedience" could actually strengthen his grip upon the reins of the town as the sole conduit to colonial authorities. At his request, officials issued proclamations "commanding all the Tuscaroras to render the said Blount Obedience otherwise they will be looked upon as Enemies to the Governement."\(^{91}\)

But the persistence and ire in Blount's language raises questions about the Tuscaroras' views of each other and their own identities that have no easy answers—in matters of ethnic and social boundaries, which are of course fluid, relational, and situational, there never are.\(^{92}\) As members of the war parties coming south, the northern Tuscaroras probably felt that they were returning to a collectively remembered homeland where (through their contacts, language patterns, and collective memory) they would be insiders more than their compatriots among the other Iroquois.

\(^{90}\) CVSP, 1: 210-11.

\(^{91}\) NCCR, 2: 570-73; this took place in the context of a dispute about incursions by northern Indians and the a slave who was possibly held in the town. Blount even negotiated for the construction of a fort in his town to be built by North Carolina. This structure would have served to ward off both northern Indians and attacking Catawbas, and reinforced Blount's authority. The colony agreed, but no records show that it was ever actually constructed (NCCR, 2: 496).

nations. Such contacts helped facilitate a broader sense of what it meant to be a "Tuscarora"—one that encompassed members of two groups living and adapting in widely divergent geographical, environmental, and political circumstances, but nonetheless who cooperated politically and militarily and shared an "aura of decent." At the same time, because of the northern Tuscaroras, the inhabitants of Indian Woods gained new connections and were able to place themselves as members of a broader community that included their former Iroquois enemies. Cooperation on the warpath between northern Tuscaroras, southern Tuscaroras, and other Iroquois encouraged and necessitated trust during "high risk situations" that built upon and added to a sense of sameness and common identity.

But, anthropologists have noted, this commonality is a fragile thing: "differences, even minor ones like the absence of situationally defined clothing, raise suspicions about basic character that are not easily allayed." In the case of the Tuscaroras, differences ran deeper. Blount's blistering language gets at these misgivings: that these "revolted" and "former" Tuscaroras who had moved away, that had thrown in their lot with the Iroquois were somehow inherently untrustworthy. These were not prodigal sons to be welcomed joyfully back into the family, but scoundrels abusing weakened blood ties. Or, were his railings merely those of an

94 Williams, "Class Act," 407.
95 Williams, "Class Act," 407.
angry old man trying to create and delineate a boundary among his people that did not exist? The northern Tuscaroras' repeated visits to the reservation and the real likelihood that they could "seduce" young warriors there all reveal continued identification as a single nation, albeit one under contestation. Even as contacts continued, they bred new rifts.

Around 1740, the frequency of contacts via the Warrior's Path and the complaints they provoked decreased. Blount's death shortly before 1739 silenced the most vocal critic at Indian Woods. At nearly the same time, the long-running efforts of Virginia's governors to prevent the "constant excursions of the said five nations . . . and their correspondence and frequent marches to and from the Tuscaroras" through diplomatic maneuvers aimed at extending a buffer of land and white settlers past the Shenandoah Valley began to pay off, coming to fruition at the Treaty of Lancaster in 1744. At that conference, an Iroquois spokesperson announced that "there lives a Nation of Indians on the other side of your Country, the Tuscaroraes, who are our Friends, and with whom we hold Correspondence; but the Road between us and them has been stopped for some time on Account of the Misbehavior of some of our Warriors." The treaty had "open'd a New Road for our Warriors [west of the Blue

96 NCCR, 4: 345.

97 Quotation in EJCCV, 3: 451. For an account of Virginia's diplomatic efforts to shift the routes of Iroquois war parties (which unfortunately underestimates the role of tributary Indians and the Tuscaroras in Virginia's conception of the frontier), see Rhoades, "Assarigoa's Line," particularly pp. 123-169.

98 MPCP, 4: 734.
Ridge] and they shall keep to that; but as that would be inconvenient for Messengers going to the Tuscaroraes we desire they may go the old Road." 99 The speech ended with a desire to increase the number of messengers between the two groups, but without the incentive of using Indian Woods as a military staging ground, war parties no longer beat a path to the southern Tuscaroras. By 1752 the Tuscaroras of Indian Woods found themselves off the Warrior’s Path. On an “old road” grown faint with disuse, they hurled threats to the Catawbas that they could not enforce, ignorant that the Six Nations and Catawbas had recently negotiated a separate peace. 100

Migration North: Push and Pull

“The Tuscaroras . . . are very desirous to bring away their People from the Southward [and] would no longer be put off”

—William Johnson, 1765 101

99 MPCP, 4: 734. Ironically, even as Virginia officials were trying to compel the Iroquois to cede land over to them to create a buffer zone, the Iroquois in part based their claim to this territory in the western portion of what became Virginia, upon their “conquest” and later adoption of the Saponis and Tutelos that came as a consequence of their raids based out of Indian Woods (Rhoades, “Assarigoa’s Line,” 157-8; Jennings, History and Culture, 181.)

100 NCCR, 4: 1313. Warriors from the northern and southern Tuscaroras would later, however, cooperate together alongside British troops during the Seven Years War (Johnson, Papers, 12: 270- 76).

101 Johnson, Papers, 4: 849.
With the redirection of war parties west, contacts between the bands of Tuscarora did not end, but they did decrease in frequency and change in nature. Sporadically over the course of the eighteenth century, bands of Tuscarora migrants traveled north from the Carolinas to rejoin their kin who had settled among the Iroquois in New York and Pennsylvania. Most such groups, especially smaller ones, slipped through the records and perhaps consisted of little more than a few hardy souls who joined a war party returning to Iroquoia. An exception is a group of 166 migrants who left North Carolina in 1766 and rejoined their kin around the town of Oquaga in the upper Susquehanna Valley. These Tuscarora migrants joined a broader current of Nanticokes, Tutelos, Conoys and other groups that departed Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas. By one count, members of fifteen tribes relocated to Iroquoia in the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{102} They filled a space left by an outflow of other groups, particularly Delawares and Shawnees, who felt impinged upon by Iroquois claims of dominion and settlers' claims of land and sought to maintain autonomy by retreating to Ohio country.

In examinations of Indian migrations, like that of the Tuscaroras who left North Carolina in 1766, it is tempting to focus on the "push" factors—the wars, disruption, and encroachment—that made homelands untenable. The opposite side of the equation also deserves attention.\textsuperscript{103} This secondary migration in mid-century—five

\textsuperscript{102} Hauptman, "Refugee Havens," 129.

\textsuperscript{103} For attention to this issue see, Michael N. McConnell, \textit{A Country Between: The Upper Ohio Valley and Its Peoples, 1724-1774} (Lincoln: U. of Nebraska Press, 1992), 1-46, esp., 29.
decades after military defeat expelled the first generation of migrants—reflected the
“pull” of circumstances and social factors in New York. Able to ponder their decision
in advance, the members of this 1766 group were not “refugees” in the same sense as
their forebears in 1713 had been. Those first desperate survivors of the Tuscarora
War had narrowly escaped slaughter and enslavement when an army of South
Carolinians and enemy Indians captured and burned their stronghold Fort
Neoheroka. Instead, the carefully planned departure of the 1766 group better fit
what other historians have termed a “community model of migration.” Such
movements “combined a basic satisfaction with a way of life and a deep dissatisfaction
with present opportunities for living that life. It was fueled by the belief that people
can improve their own condition by seeking new opportunities elsewhere. People
involved in this kind of migration organized their trip around existing kinship and
community ties.”

This “chain migration” displayed the strength of ties between the separated
groups decades after their original separation. Tuscaroras chose to leave North
Carolina lured by the entreaties of their kin, the promises of assistance from officials,
and the prospect of new opportunities in Iroquoia. By coming north, they escaped the
confines of their reservation and gained greater control over their lives. Their arrival
strengthened existing Tuscarora communities. But as refugees in an unfamiliar land,

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104 Paschal, "Tuscarora Indians," 107; Barnwell, "Second Tuscarora Expedition."

105 Richard White, “The Transformation of Western Society: Migration,” in "It's Your
Misfortune and None of My Own" A History of the American West (Norman: U. of
the newcomers also found themselves particularly vulnerable to manipulation and entanglement in new types of dependencies. Reliance upon sponsorship by colonial officials and uncertain status as newcomers left them vulnerable—susceptible to the machinations of imperial officials, and exposed to Indians and missionaries embroiled in sectarian squabbles. The newcomers traded old problems for new. To fully understand the experiences of such immigrants requires a broadened focus that also examines the ways that others sought to use them for their own agendas.

Blount had led a neutral course during the Tuscarora War, and despite sporadic participation with northern war parties, his people generally continued to seek survival through accommodation. But the reservation offered little protection. Squatters settled on their land, felled their timber, and drove stock onto their fields even as the southern Tuscaroras’ usefulness as tributaries, able to patrol the frontier against runaway slaves and enemy Indians, declined.\(^\text{106}\) In an increasingly plantation-based society where alliances were perceived in terms of black and white, neighbors repeatedly accused them of harboring and conspiring with runaway slaves.\(^\text{107}\)

\(^{106}\) *NCCR*, 5: 785; Boyce, "As the Wind," 162; Paschal, "Tuscarora Indians," 137. For discussion of a case in which a settler “violently assaulted and beaten and broke the arm of an Indian belonging to the Tuscarora Nation” see March 13, 1722 Court Order in Indians: Treaties, Petitions, Agreements, and Court Cases (1698-1736), Colonial Court Records, Box 192, NCSA.

Departure—or its threat—offered some reprieve. In February 1740, North Carolina’s governor reported that “I found our Indians last summer highly discontented and even threatening to leave the province.”\textsuperscript{108} The threat hit home. The timing may have signaled a rapprochement with the Tuscaroras’ northern kin owing to Blount’s recent death. More importantly it also happened to coincide with the outbreak of the War of Jenkin’s Ear, which escalated fears of French- and Spanish-inspired Indian attacks. “I cannot forbear desiring you to consider what mischievous consequences might happen,” warned the governor to the assembly, if the Tuscaroras, with their knowledge of the local countryside, should be allowed to fall under hostile influence.\textsuperscript{109} Better to keep potential enemies close. Therefore, the threat to abandon the colony brought Tuscaroras temporary concessions: leave “to hunt on all People’s lands,” provided they were “behaving themselves orderly” and did not burn too close to homes nor poach livestock, recommendations to traders “in the Strongest Terms” to be “Just and Reasonable,” an order for surveyors to record the boundaries of Indian Woods and hand over a copy of their findings to its Tuscarora inhabitants.\textsuperscript{110} But all that was good did not last. The Indian population continued to plummet, dropping to approximately three hundred by mid-century.\textsuperscript{111} In 1757 Tuscaroras complained that

\textsuperscript{108} \textit{NCCR}, 4: 472.  

\textsuperscript{109} \textit{NCCR}, 4: 472.  

\textsuperscript{110} \textit{NCCR}, 4: 492, 507, 539, 592.  

another surge of squatters laughed off the carefully preserved, yellowing title as “good for nothing.” These tensions may have contributed that year to accusations against a Tuscarora for murder.\textsuperscript{112}

If there were many broad, long-term factors pushing Tuscaroras to consider leaving Indian Woods, the timing of one group’s decision in 1766 owed to the arrival of a delegation of nine Tuscaroras from New York in that year. By mid-century, Tuscaroras living along the upper Susquehanna had several reasons to welcome, and indeed to seek out, immigrants. Among a people who kept their own language, sachems, and villages even as they integrated into multiethnic neighborhoods around Oquaga, an infusion of new blood would have been welcome. While the overall population of the Iroquois Confederacy saw a small resurgence during the eighteenth century, reaching about seven thousand by 1760, the Tuscaroras themselves were losing numbers.\textsuperscript{113} Hawley reported that in 1756 a few of the “first settlers” to come from North Carolina around 1714 were still alive in Oquaga, but these were mostly women and “the oldest Indians I ever saw in those parts.”\textsuperscript{114}

\textsuperscript{112} NCCR, 5: 785-86. For the murder see records of the Supreme Court of Oyer and Terminer, October 13, 1757 in Indians: Treaties, Petitions, Agreements, and Court Cases (1698-1736), Colonial Court Records, Box 192, NCSA. Other small Indian groups in eastern North Carolina were similarly facing land pressures at this time. See Joh[n] Carr to Gov. Arthur Dobbs, Aug. 10 1756, Arthur Dobbs Papers, NCSA.

\textsuperscript{113} For Iroquois population, see Preston, “Texture of Contact,” 15. Boyce, “Tuscarora Political Organization,” 54 cites William Johnson claiming that the Tuscaroras had a total population of about 1,000 in 1770. \textit{NYCD}, 4: 427, 1093.

\textsuperscript{114} Hawley to Cooper, December 25, 1770, Hawley Papers.
Turmoil during the Seven Years' War and "Pontiac's War" added pressures upon Oquagans to seek greater strength in numbers at mid-century. Located on Iroquoia's periphery, its inhabitants, who generally sided with the British, felt exposed and constantly feared reprisals from neighboring Delawares, Nanticokes, and Shawnees. In 1756 some inhabitants had successfully petitioned for reinforcements and the construction of a small fort but resented the "common soldiers" who came with it because the women could not "go out to get wood without being ravished by them." But without assistance, they were left with "nothing to fight with but sticks, stones, and fists." \[1\]

Nearby, the founders of Ganeghwaghtai, a small town of Oneidas and Tuscaroras newly created in 1763 mid-way between Oquaga and Oneida Lake, also sought settlers. \[1\] In 1764 one of the town's Tuscarora sachems petitioned

\[1\] In this instance the petitioner's solution was to request Christian soldiers: "such men as fear God and hate Iniquity." As shall be shown, however, one of the authors, Isaac Takayenersere, became involved in the attempt to bring in Tuscarora migrants as a similar religious endeavor at around the same time. Isaac Takayenersere and Gwedethes Akwirondongwas to 'Governor of Boston', November 12, 1764, Charles Roberts' Autographs, Library of Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania. I would like to thank Marjory Hinman for calling my attention to and providing a copy of this letter. Also see NYCD, 7: 50-53. In the same year, inhabitants of Oquaga asked for a trading house to be built that would "draw Indians from all parts" and "encrease our numbers." William Johnson assented, but wanted to wait until after tensions in the region subsided, thereby side-stepping its purpose (NYCD, 7: 73-74).

\[1\] Johnson, Papers, 10: 643-48. The need arose for this town out of fears that the geographical remoteness of the upper Susquehanna communities from the rest of the Iroquois Confederacy and their numerous ties to other belligerent communities in Pennsylvania would make them susceptible to influence by hostile tribes. The Oneidas "appointed" Taawaghsachquo, a saches of the Wolf clan to "assist . . . in the management of . . . affairs" but in practice two Tuscaroras, Gaghswangarora and his son Tyagawehe appear as the spokespeople for the community. Johnson, Papers, 10: 643-48, 801; 11: 80-85, 160.
for a fort "for their protection as they lye much exposed;" the superintendent's denial only bluntly restated the problem: "there are but a few Families there."\textsuperscript{117}

The scheme to draw additional Tuscaroras north appears to have been born primarily out of these New York events, rather than being conceived in North Carolina. Only four months after Ganeghwaghtai's creation in 1763, two of the town's Tuscarora sachems approached Sir William Johnson, the Northern Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and "earnestly requested . . . [his] assistance in getting and bringing all their People from the Southward."\textsuperscript{118}

Northbound: 1766-67

The original exodus of Tuscaroras to New York after 1713 had been a fait accompli, achieved before poorly informed and ill-coordinated colonial governments could muster more than half-hearted sputtering in response; the circumstances surrounding the migration to occur in 1766 would be far different, reflecting a backcountry under greater imperial supervision.\textsuperscript{119} Gaghswangarora and his son Tyagawehe, the Tuscarora sachems who approached Johnson in 1763, promised in

\textsuperscript{117} Johnson, Papers, 11: 160, 185-6.

\textsuperscript{118} Johnson, Papers, 10: 801.

return for assistance in moving their kin north to abide "by such road as I should judge best," recorded Johnson.\(^{120}\) Fearing that a migration would fan the flames during a time "now troublesome and dangerous, owing to the Rash, and unnatural proceedings of the Senecas & others" involved in Pontiac's uprising, Johnson stalled two years, but eventually acceded and set into motion the wheels of the expanding British imperial government.\(^{121}\) He issued passports, hired interpreters, and wrote letters to governors, fort commanders, magistrates, and his southern counterpart, John Stuart. If, as Johnson muttered, Tyagawehe and his father "would no longer be put off," at least the governments would stay informed.\(^{122}\) Armed with bundles of documents and accompanied by an interpreter and eight companions, Tyagawehe set out in early September 1765.\(^{123}\)

Events continued in this official vein after the envoys' arrival in North Carolina the following spring.\(^{124}\) Tyagawehe fell ill with the mumps after the long journey and recovered his health in the home of Gov. William Tryon, whom he charmed with his polished manners. "I found him not only humanized but civilized," wrote Tryon to Johnson, describing the meals at which the sachem and the governor worked over the legal steps and bureaucratic maneuvers necessary to facilitate the migration.\(^{125}\) This

\(^{120}\) Johnson, Papers, 10: 801.

\(^{121}\) Johnson, Papers, 10: 801.

\(^{122}\) Johnson, Papers, 4: 849.

\(^{123}\) Johnson, Papers, 4: 849.

\(^{124}\) Parkman, Papers, 27: 417-18; NYCD, 7: 880-83.

\(^{125}\) NCCR, 7: 218-20.
time, unlike when Tuscaroras threatened to depart in 1740, no officials raised objections. The French were gone, expelled from the continent by the Treaty of Paris at the end of the Seven Years' War, leaving the Tuscaroras irrelevant as either enemy or ally; influential planters crowded to purchase the land; officials eyed the increase in quit-rents.\footnote{NCCR, 6: 989, 1232-4, 1284, 1287, 1294; 7: 248, 300, 304-7, 339, 354, 358, 368-69, 371, 373, 420, 431; 25:507-9.}

That autumn the colonial legislature assembled and passed laws legalizing the sale of eighteen hundred acres of Indian Woods (approximately half of the total land).\footnote{J. Bryan Grimes, Statement of the State's Position on the Claims of the Tuscarora Indians to Reversionary Rights in Bertie County, Treasurer's and Comptroller's Papers, Indian Affairs, Box 17, North Carolina State Archives.}

The transaction earned departing Tuscaroras £1,200 to buy a supply train of wagons, horses, and provisions for the journey.\footnote{Technically, the land was leased for a rent of 150 years with an annual payment of one peppercorn on the Feast of St. Michael. NCCR, 7: 248-49; 25: 507-9.}

Obscured behind these public transactions were private debates and deliberations that occurred within Indian Woods as some Tuscaroras decided to stay and others to leave. The deliberations’ outcomes would ultimately depend in part upon the strength of the ties between the Northern Tuscaroras and the Tuscaroras of Indian Woods. Europeans who faced similar questions about whether to migrate, perhaps even contemplating the same region of Pennsylvania and New York, relied upon nationally distributed pamphlets and broadsides besides personal letters and
conversations with their relations.\textsuperscript{129} The Tuscaroras had no such printed material; but while Tyagawehe negotiated with Tryon, his eight companions remained in Indian Woods sharing information about Iroquoia.\textsuperscript{130} Word on “transportation routes” and the destination could do much to “counteract the frictional effects of distance,” easing the choice to leave.\textsuperscript{131} The links involved in such “chain migrations” could enable movement over huge areas to particular destinations that would otherwise be too difficult to reach and too unknown to be attractive.\textsuperscript{132} But such decisions necessitated, among other things, trust—trust in the words of the eight envoys and reliance in their word that their kin would be able to grant them a better situation upon the migrants’ arrival in New York. Not everyone reached the same conclusion.

Local issues also played into the equation. Political discontent with chiefs, who, backed by North Carolina’s government, single-handedly attempted to sell off tribal lands may have influenced some dissidents to depart.\textsuperscript{133} Age and gender were also factors: a greater percentage of young men, wrangling against diminished opportunities to hunt, plant, or trade in Indian Woods and better able to make the


\textsuperscript{130} \textit{NCCR}, 7: 218-20.

\textsuperscript{131} Anthony, "Migration," 902.

\textsuperscript{132} Anthony, "Migration," 903.

\textsuperscript{133} Boyce, "As the Wind," 163.
arduous journey, chose to depart. Ultimately, 166 decided to head north, leaving behind 104 of their townspeople.

Such choices, though, could not have been easy, especially since the ramifications of each person's decision reverberated among their townspeople, affecting the dynamics of the households and the community of those who remained behind. The sale of much of their land and the departure of many of their most vigorous members left those who stayed, predominantly the very old and very young, struggling to fend off encroachments, particularly in light of the government's belief that what land they still held constituted "a large proportion for their numbers." "We are mostly old men, unable to hunt, our young men having gone to the Northward with the Northern Chief, Tragaweha" complained a delegation from those who remained.

The migration left those who remained dependent on the charity of North Carolina's government, even while it contributed to a local version of the widespread "myth of the disappearing Indian"—that the Tuscaroras of Indian Woods would inevitably die off or depart. If in succeeding years the remaining Tuscaroras of Indian Woods lacked land and therefore "neglected Hunting [and] Planting," or

134 NCCR, 7: 361.
135 For the number remaining see NCCR, 7: 431.
136 Thompson, Mobility and Migration, 9.
137 NCCR, 7: 431; Paschal, "Tuscarora Indians," 139.
138 NCCR, 7: 361.
139 NCCR, 24: 171-73.
turned to alcohol for solace, it was partially the emigrants' fault.\textsuperscript{140} Though difficult for most, for some who remained the migration opened new doors. Whitmell Tuffdick's name appeared among lists of "chief men" for the first time immediately afterwards.\textsuperscript{141} In the next decades, his name came to appear at the head of most deeds and petitions, often alongside others bearing the same surname.\textsuperscript{142}

The 166 Tuscaroras who chose to depart also faced a difficult road, despite considerable preparation. From a hazy distance, the long train of carts and livestock winding north along the valleys of Virginia and Pennsylvania may have resembled those of the predominantly German and Scotch-Irish settlers who also sought new homes on the edge of this "best poor man's country." They may even have employed the vaguely boat-shaped, covered "Conestoga Wagons," predecessor to the "prairie schooners" of the Great Plains and already driven by German settlers in the Susquehanna Valley. But similar appearances did little to endear incoming Tuscaroras

\textsuperscript{140} Quotation from Johnson, \textit{Papers, 12}: 273. \textit{NCCR, 24}: 171-73.

\textsuperscript{141} \textit{NCCR, 7}: 361.

\textsuperscript{142} Thirty-six men signed their name to the act confirming the lease of lands in Indian Woods. A comparison to the petition for aid after the migrant's departure (which contains 11 names) gives a rough picture of individuals who stayed and departed. Interestingly, using this method, no individuals with the surname Tuffdick departed, perhaps suggesting a familial component to attitudes towards departure (\textit{NCCR 7}: 361; 25: 507-9). The only name I have been able to tentatively trace to New York is that of Thomas Howit—"Hewitt" becomes a predominate name on the Tuscarora reservation in New York in the nineteenth century. For examples of later appearances of Whitmell Tuffdick's name see leases by the Tuscaroras dated 9/7/1777, 2/11/1782, and 7/20/1787 in Miscellaneous Papers, 1697-1823, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina, pp. 47, 51, 54. The name indicates the close relationship with Thomas Whitemeal, a wealthy "trader among them, [who] understands their language and speaks it quite fluently" (\textit{NCCR, 4}:1313).
and the prospect of Indian settlement to European frontiersmen in the wake of a
decade of border warfare. When Tyagawehe and his companions had first come south,
they were "ill used" in York County, Pennsylvania: only Johnson's hired escort
narrowly prevented "several attempts made to murder them." An equally menacing
reception met the caravan headed north. Outside Paxton, earlier site of the infamous
Paxton massacres by vigilantes angry at a Pennsylvania's conciliatory Indian policy,
settlers attacked the group and robbed them of supplies and their horses. The
Tuscaroras brandished "ample passes from the Governments" but few guns.

Though not all were friendly, inhabitants along the route, both European and
Indian, were vital to the expedition's survival. Pre-existing networks ensured that the
migrants would not be thrown upon their own resources with only each other to
survive. The Tuscarora migrants departed in mid-August, probably waiting only long
enough to harvest their corn. This timing meant that they would embark well-stocked,
be able to re-supply from the larders of other communities along the way, and reach
their new homes in time for spring planting. But the timing also meant taking a
gamble against the harsh Pennsylvania winter on the trail. Despite precautions, records
consistently refer to the migrants as hungry and wretched. Apparently the migrants
split into two groups (with smaller parties keeping communications between): hunger
and fierce winter weather forced one band to shelter with Moravian missionaries and
their Indian charges at Friedenshütten (present day Bradford County), another

143 Johnson, Papers, 12: 231-32.

wintered further south, begging for ammunition, tools, and forty bushels of Indian corn from royal officials at Fort Augusta.  

These European establishments overlaid pre-existing networks of Indian communities that were long essential to travelers as way stations. Now these native communities did their best to shuttle the Tuscarora migrants up the Susquehanna. John Jacob Schmick, a Moravian diarist, recorded:

On the 18th [November, 1766] two chiefs, Newollike and Achkolunty, came down with others from Schechschequanik in 5 canoes. They brought a message from the Six Nations for our Indian Brethren to this effect: the Six Nations have received news by a Tuscarora messenger that a number of their people are on their way, but they do not know how they are to make out and provide for themselves. The Six Nations, therefore, request the Indians everywhere along the Susquehanna to receive these poor Indians, and send canoes from place to place for them, and provide them with corn so that they may get

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146 Fort Augusta, for example, was built in the winter of 1755-56 upon the site of Shamokin. Merrell, "Shamokin."
along all right. Our Indians, accordingly, as soon as they hear of their arrival at Lechawachneck [present-day Pittston] will send 10 canoes for them . . . 147

The final leg of the Tuscaroras’ journey may have resembled a convoy of Nanticoke migrants who had settled downstream from Oquaga fourteen years earlier. “As far as the eye could reach you could see one canoe behind the other along the Susquehanna,” recorded David Zeisberger and Henry Frey, two Moravians whose canoe brought up the rear of the twenty-six boat fleet. Along the way some of the Nanticokes drove cattle along the shores, others shot pigeons, others cut sheets of bark to build shelters for the evening. Upon arrival, the Nanticokes quickly overcrowded the few existing homes. So they built huts and to the astonishment of the missionaries, “in an hour’s time a whole city had arisen”—though these would have been a far cry from the assortment of sturdy longhouses and cabins that marked more permanent settlements. Soon, a delegation of Tuscarora and Oneidas arrived from Oquaga and a council was convened to greet the Nanticokes. They “walked around in a circle, shook hands with every one, and solemnly welcomed them saying: Brothers we are glad to see you here.” The Tuscaroras in the delegation presented the Nanticokes two strings of wampum, one to welcome them, another to tell them what “land lay open to them.” Then they presented several sacks of seed corn to the

newcomers—a gift of real value to an uprooted people, and one symbolic of permanence. Within two days, the entire community was busy planting corn.\footnote{148 "Diary of David Zeisberger and Henry Frey" in Beauchamp, Moravian Journals, 160-66.}

Perhaps under similar circumstances the Tuscarora travelers finally reached Oquaga in early spring of 1767, after nearly an eight-month journey. Tyagawehe, who had organized the expedition, probably hoped to steer them even further to reinforce his rough new settlement at Ganeghwaghtai. But sheer exhaustion, the lure of plentiful “very good . . . open country on the river,” and well-established Tuscarora communities already at Oquaga conspired to keep them from moving on.\footnote{149 Letter to Revd. [Ivery? or Jefry?] from Onohquaga, June 13, 1753, Hawley Papers; Johnson, Papers, 12: 623-24. In 1769 some Tuscaroras considered returning back down the Susquehanna River to settle near Friedenshütten (Fliegel, Moravian Missions Index, 3: 1052).} Home as last, their journey was complete.

Newcomers in 1767 had to experience and learn many of the same lessons as their predecessors generations earlier. This time, however, they could draw on the advice and assistance of Tuscaroras who had already made the trek. Tuscaroras already long settled throughout the region continued to provide assistance with supplies to the newcomers for at least a year and a half.\footnote{150 Johnson, Papers, 12: 670-71.} In the autumn of 1768, Tuscaroras seeking extra provisions for their
cousins even made off with a majority of the gifts distributed at the Treaty of
Fort Stanwix—a maneuver that raised the ire of other Iroquois nations.  

After the hardships of the journey, most of the recently arrived Tuscaroras
embraced their new surroundings. In lavishing praise on this long-awaited promised
land, however, they sometimes disparaged their former homeland and those who
stayed behind. Here, among the Iroquois, they would “live much happier than we did
there [in Indian Woods],” declared one Tuscarora representative. Another newly
arrived Tuscarora cast aspersions upon his former fellows where “they live but
wretchedly being Surrounded by white People, and up to their Lips in Rum, so that
they cou’d not turn their heads anyway but it ran into their mouths. This made them
stupid, so that they neglected Hunting, Planting, etc.—We are since our arrival . . . last
Fall, become wiser and see our former folly.”

The speaker’s overt blame is upon surrounding whites, but the subtle shift in
the language from “they” to “we” hints at deeper splits: “we” who chose to flee are
“wiser” for it, “they” who remain still wallow in rum and their own “stupid” “folly.”


152 Johnson, Papers, 12: 360-61.

153 Johnson, Papers, 12: 273. This interpretation is made more complex by the fact
that the speaker for the newly arrived Tuscaroras may have actually been a Northern
Tuscarora, Aucus (alias Kanigut) one of Tyagawehe’s eight companions. It appears
that Aucus is a follower of Isaac—privately he tells of Johnson about tension with
some of his brethren as he tries to personally give up alcohol and remain loyal to
Johnson. This speech, then, might be a mini-triumph for Isaac, in that it follows
Isaac’s complaints about immorality of the newcomers and elicits an injunction from
Johnson to follow the leaders in Oquaga who show “readiness to instruct you in the
principles of morality.”
The Tuscarora Trail acted as a safety valve, offering those most discontented with lifestyle on the reservation a chance to escape by migrating north.\textsuperscript{154} But by concentrating malcontents in the north, this flow probably acted to increase splits between the regions. Some Tuscaroras thought that to save their culture, they had to move it.

Iroquois and Tuscaroras already established in the region, however, did not always welcome their new neighbors back. Migrant groups flooding into Iroquoia in the eighteenth century discovered that the process by which they became fully accepted was not rapid. For example, the Nanticokes who were linguistically unrelated to the Iroquois and preserved the habit of carrying the disinterred rotting corpses of their ancestors on their migrations, acquired a reputation for poison and witchcraft. Among Indians, as well as colonists, such accusations often signified an up-welling of barely restrained distrust and ostracism—a demonization of outsiders.\textsuperscript{155} The Tuscaroras, who shared ancient, distantly remembered historical connections with the Iroquois, did better than many groups, but they too encountered prejudice. A Moravian noted in 1750 that “it is plain to be seen that although the Tuscaroras are

\textsuperscript{154} Boyce, “As the Wind,” 163.

\textsuperscript{155} Cusick notes that “it is supposed that the Skaunratohathihawk, or Nanticokes in the south first founded the witchcraft” (in Beauchamp, \textit{Iroquois Trail}, 29; see p. 78 for corpse transport). This may also show the ways that newcomers had strange things to teach of their own: new magic, or different medicinal plants. Alfred A. Cave, “The Failure of the Shawnee Prophet's Witch-Hunt,” \textit{Ethnohistory} 42, no. 3 (Summer, 1995): 445-75, esp. 450. Wallace, \textit{Death and Rebirth}. For comments on the adoption of the Nanticokes, see Diary of David Zeisberger in Beauchamp, \textit{Moravian Journals}, 30.
counted as belonging to the Five Nations, yet they are not as highly esteemed as the other nations and bear a bad character among them.”156 The incorporation of greater numbers of newcomers might garner added esteem for the Tuscaroras’ strength, but culturally clumsy outsiders could do little for the perception of their character. This process may have contributed to the lingering sense, generations after the initial adoption of the Tuscaroras in 1713, that all the Tuscaroras were newcomers. As late as 1771—six decades after the Tuscaroras’ initial migration—the Indian superintendent, William Johnson, who was as attuned to Iroquois culture as any European, wrote in a letter describing the different Iroquois cultures: “The Tuscaroras, I omit as they are a southern people not long introduced . . . .”157

Tuscarora newcomers would have noticed differences between themselves and their predecessors owing to the latter’s longer history of interaction with the Iroquois. The influx of Tuscaroras from the south helped preserve the Tuscarora language in Iroquoia, but over time northerners incorporated Iroquois terms and pronunciations. By 1802, southerners found that their brethren “spoke a dialect considerably different] from theirs.”158 Divergences extended into the broader realm of symbolic discourse. In their dealings with whites and each other, Tuscaroras—like the other five nations—employed a litany of condolence rituals, symbolic adoptions, and exchanged treaty belts. Generations of Tuscaroras growing up among the Iroquois internalized

156 “Diary of David Zeisberger” in Beauchamp, Moravian Journals, 30.
158 Quotation in Boyce, “Tuscarora Political Organization,” 149.
these complex political rituals and its metaphorical language from an early age.\textsuperscript{159} But for Tuscaroras newly arrived from the south, this etiquette would have to be learned. When Tyagawehe had negotiated the Tuscaroras’ departure with Governor Tryon in North Carolina, he presented several belts of wampum and bestowed upon Tryon an Indian name—procedures absent from the governor’s dealings with Tuscaroras in his own colony, but typical in the north.\textsuperscript{160}

The Tuscaroras who came north in 1766 had escaped the confines of their reservation and gained greater control over their lives. Nonetheless, as strangers in a new land, they found themselves vulnerable to manipulation and entanglement in new types of dependencies.\textsuperscript{161} In 1767 “a number of Tuscaroras who lately came from Carolina” approached William Johnson, pleading “we are very poor having brought nothing from whence we came” and begged for hatchets, hoes, powder, and lead. They assured Johnson of their “sincerity and attachment,” and called him “father.”\textsuperscript{162} Their patriarchal choice of kinship terms, a deviation from the normal practice of using the more equal “brother,” might have signaled a newcomer’s unfamiliarity with the


\textsuperscript{160} Johnson, \textit{Papers}, 13: 390-91. Unfamiliarity with the intricacies of these rituals may partially explain why Tuscaroras who were frequently present at treaty conferences often only acted as silent participants.

\textsuperscript{161} Anthony, "Migration," 904.

\textsuperscript{162} Johnson, \textit{Papers}, 12: 360.
precise etiquette of the covenant chain, or a weaker position owing to their recent arrival and impoverished state.\textsuperscript{163} 

Despite initial annoyance at the costs and effort of assisting “a few people of little importance,” Johnson soon recognized that he held in his hands a tool to extend his authority and to reshape imperial frontiers.\textsuperscript{164} Charity had its price. “I rejoice with you at the increase of your Confederacy by the considerable Number of Tuscaroras who joined you lately,” declared Johnson at a conference in 1767. He elaborated his role in issuing “passports and some assistance on their arrival, such as provision, arms, and some implements of husbandry.” In return for having “done so much for the strengthening of your confederacy,” he expected adherence to his plan “recommending to You the Assembling All your scattered friends together:” namely, bringing in the remnants of other tribes according to the model just established by the Tuscaroras. Towards this end he gave letters and passports to the Nanticokes, Conoys, and Delawares to approach their respective colonial governments and to sell their


\textsuperscript{164} Johnson, \textit{Papers}, 5: 77.
remaining eastern lands to fund their removal to the Six Nations, "as the Tuscaroras did who left North Carolina." 165

Concentrating the Indian nations together would breath life into Johnson's long-running efforts—spelled out in the Proclamation of 1763 and at Fort Stanwix—to create a general boundary between Indian and colonists. East of the line, voluntary removal would eliminate potential trouble-spots of remnant Indians peacefully and cheaply. Barring robberies such as occurred at Paxton, the Indians would even conveniently pay their own way. Then, resettling dependent groups just west of the line within the Six Nations would help curb unregulated expansion by white settlers eager to flood into lightly inhabited areas and ease friction with more hostile westward peoples. 166 Nanticokes, Montauks, and Canoys heeded his advice. Eventually, however, the strategy backfired by increasing tensions on the frontier. During the American Revolution, New York's frontiers would explode in racial violence.

Johnson was not alone in welcoming Tuscarora newcomers as potential pawns in broader power plays. The Tuscaroras coming north in 1766 found themselves among kin who took a different stances towards Christianity and were not averse to manipulating the new arrivals toward their own religious ends. Moravians had recorded that the Tuscaroras who passed their missions in the winter of 1766 absolutely "refuse to hear religion." 167 The initial group of migrants to flee after the

166 The treaty line "came up to the Tuscarora village" upstream of Oquaga (NYCD, 8: 549-55).
167 Severance, "Our Tuscarora Neighbors," 326.
Tuscarora War had been similarly reticent. In 1716, when one missionary in New York “offer[ed] to talk to them about Religion,” they mocked him; “when he proffered to go to their Abode, they absolutely forbade him.”¹⁶⁸ But by mid-century, the persistence of a steady stream of missionaries paid off, earning several Tuscarora communities in New York—including Oquaga—a reputation for evangelical fervor. The resulting differences in faith could add a sour note to reunions.

Moreover, confusing the situation, Oquaga itself was bitterly divided into religious factions.¹⁶⁹ The arrival of Tuscarora immigrants in 1767 in part resulted from and exacerbated these disputes. On one side of the contest was a series of New Light Congregational and Presbyterian missionaries who targeted their evangelical efforts upon Oquaga for three decades in the mid-eighteenth century.¹⁷⁰ Their chief opponent was an Oneida known occasionally as “old Isaac” or “Isaac of Oquago.” To his enemies, who found him “vain and conceited” and “very much puffed up with pride,”

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¹⁶⁹ Calloway, "Oquaga," 108-128. Boyce, “Tuscarora Political Organization” (p. 72) notes that “Christianity had unified some Tuscarora and Oneida, but it had also created new bases for fragmentation.”

¹⁷⁰ These included: Gideon Hawley, who made inroads before fleeing mid-winter snowstorm in the turbulence of the Seven Years’ War, Eli Forbes who scratched a journal in tiny letters in margins of an almanac one summer and dreamed of establishing a bigger school (Johnson, *Papers*, 10: 515-18), Aaron Crosby who wrote confidentially of success to his superiors and at night wept privately at his failures, and most famously, Samuel Kirkland, former protégée of Wheelock credited with steering the bulk of the Tuscaroras and Oneidas to the American cause during the American Revolution, and later attempting to found an academy of native scholars.
he was Isaac "the Pharisee." He preferred "Isaac, the minister." 171 His beliefs included a mixture of native practices—in addition to dancing and shooting guns at healing ceremonies, some of his followers were accused of being "carried by the spirit out of themselves into Beasts." These combined with a stern Christianity that held childhood baptism and strict adherence to the Ten Commandments as sufficient to earn salvation from a redeeming Christ.172

In towns like Oquaga, comprised of disparate peoples and cultures, traditional hierarchies of sachems, League politicians, and councilors often took a secondary role to the leadership of influential religious figures who could approve or condemn every facet of life. During the Seven Years' War, when missionaries fled Oquaga, Isaac had taken over preaching to the congregation there and first tasted power.173 For the next twenty years, after the missionaries' return, it was a status he sought to regain.

Religious fervor may even have influenced the formation of Tyagawehe's plan to retrieve Tuscarora migrants from North Carolina in 1766. When Tyagawehe had established the town of Ganeghwaghtai in 1763, Isaac had briefly joined him there,

171 Isaac is most well-known as the father-in-law of Joseph Brant. His role in converting Brant, who had been schooled by Wheelock, to Anglican leanings, deserves further study. This is briefly hinted in Isabel Thompson Kelsay, *Joseph Brant, 1743-1807, Man of Two Worlds*, (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1984), but I feel that Kelsay greatly misportrays Isaac's character.


173 See in particular, Hawley, Journal December 10, 1756, Hawley Papers.
proclaiming, "as there is a division amongst themselves" in Oquaga, "it would be
proper for them that follow" his brand of Christianity "to live by themselves" in the
new town.\textsuperscript{174} Tyagawehe's father, a fellow sachem of the town, promised to guide
"our people religiously."	extsuperscript{175} Perhaps the two men also corroborated in the plan to
escort the Tuscaroras, with Isaac hoping to snatch them up as new followers.

Subsequent events bear out this theory. By the time the Tuscarora immigrants
reached Oquaga in 1767, Isaac had returned and immediately sought to establish
religious authority over the newcomers.\textsuperscript{176} He rushed to Johnson before the
Tuscaroras could make their own formal appearance and bewailed that with the arrival
of "our Brethren of Tuscarora from Carolina," he had at first "rejoiced in the hopes I
had of encreasing the number of hearers of the word of god, but how great was my
Concern on finding them averse to it, well knowing they can never be true, and firm
friends to us, or the English whilst they remain in the present state." Johnson, an
Anglican who often favored Isaac as a counter to Presbyterian influence, enjoined the
Tuscaroras, and all of Oquaga, to follow Isaac's message.\textsuperscript{177}

\textsuperscript{174} Doc. Hist. N.Y., 4: 312. Tyagawehe's father, a fellow sachem of the town, had
promised to guide "our people religiously." (Johnson, Papers, 11: 80-85.)

\textsuperscript{175} Johnson, Papers, 11: 80-85.

\textsuperscript{176} Perhaps Isaac's presence helps explain why the Tuscaroras did not proceed to
Ganeghwaughtai.

\textsuperscript{177} Johnson, Papers, 12: 270-76. Johnson, who engaged in land speculation, also
suspected that the missionaries were secretly competing for ownership of lands along
the Susquehanna River (Doc. Hist. N.Y., 397-98).
Despite this preemptive strike, Isaac did not win an immediate victory over the hearts and minds of the Tuscaroras. Instead, for the next decade, Isaac and various Presbyterian missionaries engaged in a protracted war, one aspect of which was continued jostling for the support of the Tuscarora newcomers. In one instance, the missionary Aaron Crosby accused Isaac of “using all his cunning to separate” the Tuscaroras “and persuade them” to journey to Schoharie where they could receive an Anglican baptism. To counter, Crosby put aside his usual practice of enforcing upon converts a lengthy probation and determined that “it appeared expedient to baptize them, for the promotion of religion, and also to keep them together” with the rest of his congregation.178

Another battle centered around reading, writing, and language. Isaac drew much of his authority and prestige from his ability to read and preach from a Mohawk-language version of the Book of Common Prayer.179 The Tuscaroras applied to William Johnson to have one printed in their own language and to send pens and paper so they could learn to read it. Johnson recognized the end run buried within this apparently innocuous request. He replied that the current books were “sufficient . . . for your purpose at present” and pressed them to be more obedient.180

Just before the revolutionary war, these disputes reached a climax when “the old man Isaac” sought to expel Crosby from Oquaga. In defense, the beleaguered

178 Kirkland, Letters, 47c.

179 NYCD, 8: 549-555; Kirkland, Letters, 53b.

180 Johnson, Papers, 12: 1110.
missionary protested to Guy Johnson (William Johnson's nephew, son-in-law, and administrative successor) that most of the settlement “had entered into fixed resolutions in his favour, and particularly mentioned the Tuscaroras.” Johnson shot back that he “presumed the Tuscaroras, who were a people lately received from principles of humanity by the rest, would not dictate to them in matters of Religion”\textsuperscript{181}—another example of the hold that Johnson and Isaac attempted to exert upon the Tuscarora newcomers.

The Tuscaroras who came north in 1766 achieved better material circumstances and more autonomy than did their brethren who remained in North Carolina. But owing to the disputes in which they found themselves enmeshed, they never enjoyed complete harmony in Oquaga. Nor did they call the area home for long. Less than ten years after their arrival, in 1775, a majority of the Oneidas, frustrated by religious controversy, concluded that “we have no hope of making peace among ourselves while we live together” and departed to Oneida Lake at Aaron Crosby’s and Samuel Kirkland’s urging. Most of the Tuscaroras, apparently including the newcomers, followed their lead.\textsuperscript{182} Those few who remained were driven out during the American Revolution by the rampaging armies of the Sullivan-Clinton campaign.

But if the Tuscaroras who came north to the upper Susquehanna in 1766 remained only briefly and their numbers were small, their significance to the region was still considerable. The experience faced by the Tuscaroras show that the

\textsuperscript{181} NYCD, 8: 549-555.

\textsuperscript{182} Kirkland, Letters, 54a.
immigrants were not merely incidental to life along the upper Susquehanna, but were one of its central features. They had to be taken into account whether one sought to shape broad imperial policy or local religious squabbles. Not merely broad “forces” but the actions of particular individuals, most notably Tyagawehe but also William Johnson and Isaac, shaped the departure and arrival of the Tuscaroras from Indian Woods. Similar decisions were being faced by other groups debating whether to come to the region. By acting as a blueprint for others to come, they helped set the stage for further immigrations that gave a distinct cast to the region. By acting as a catalyst in disputes, they added to the polarizing divisions there. The appearance of newcomers was one of the region’s shaping forces; the repercussions were felt by all of its inhabitants.

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For much of the eighteenth century, travels north and south helped ensure the survival of a coherent Tuscarora identity, even while provoking an undercurrent of tension and unease when members of the two groups reunited. By the end of the century, however, war parties along the Warrior’s Path became increasingly rare, and gradually ended altogether. Colonial governments had long opposed the raids for the disruptions they caused among settlers and sought to end them, or barring that, reroute them farther west, away from settlements. Even before the last raids, Indian

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183 Merrell claims the southern raids ended because “For the Iroquois there were too many settlers in the way, too few Catabas left—less than five hundred—to make the journey worthwhile, and, after 1775, too many problems closer to home to worry about” (Merrell, “Their Very Bones,” 132).
Woods, impoverished, surrounded by European settlers, and able to offer few recruits, fell from the Warrior’s Path. The last great migration along the Tuscarora Trail occurred in 1804 when almost the entire population of Indian Woods journeyed north. The resulting increase in population and the money from selling the remainder of the land in Indian Woods were vital to the survival of the Tuscaroras in New York, who faced invasive Indian policies from the young state and national governments. Those few who remained in North Carolina, cut off from their people in the north, and their reservation sold, disappeared from the consciousness of a southern society that recognized only two races, black and white. Only recently, have people claiming to be their descendents still living in North Carolina, attempted to regain recognition as the southern band of Tuscaroras.

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184 It is impossible to determine when the last party stopped at Indian Woods, but a small number may have passed by as late as the late 1760s or early 1770s.

185 Rountree, “Indians of Virginia”; For reference to contemporary suspicions that Tuscaroras were colluding with slaves, see Crow, “Slave Rebelliousness,” 98.
CONCLUSION

The trails traveled by the Tuscaroras were long and varied. In some ways the Tuscaroras were unusual; in others they typified the experience of Indians during the period roughly between 1700 and the outbreak of the American Revolution, when they were forced to navigate a new political and demographic landscape. The days were passing when locally powerful Indian groups confronted individual colonial governments that were as lonely and remote from one another as from the halls of power in London. No longer isolated outposts uneasily clinging to the eastern littoral. European colonies grew increasingly interconnected into a nearly unbroken line of settlement. Previous efforts to link the colonies, such as Edmund Andros's attempt to create the Dominion of New England, had stumbled, but the handwriting was on the wall. For Indians, such changes meant profound shifts in the way they interacted with settlers and their governments.

Tuscaroras had inhabited one of the last regions along the eastern seaboard to experience these changes. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, their homes, in what would become North Carolina, occupied a final shrinking gap between areas of consolidated colonial control. In 1709 John Lawson described a world where numerous Indian communities existed uneasily alongside growing numbers of settlers and traders. Tuscaroras and their native neighbors welcomed the new technologies.
and trade goods offered by Lawson's ilk. If the arrival of such newcomers brought uncomfortable new dependencies, Tuscaroras could take some comfort in the fact that at least briefly, nearly all the colonists—like Lawson, himself—relied on Tuscarora guidance and goodwill. The governments of North Carolina or Virginia could grumble at their relative lack of authority and scheme to make changes, but in the end they could accomplish little.

Only a few years later Lawson was dead and the world he described was gone—indeed, by killing the surveyor and author, the Tuscaroras had signaled the start of the war that permanently altered their place in colonial America. In some ways, the Tuscarora War (and to a certain extent, the closely-related Yamassee War) was the last of the localized conflicts that characterized the previous century, especially the Powhatan uprisings of 1622 and 1644. Like those conflicts, the Tuscarora War represented an attempt by members of locally powerful Indians to reassert influence in the face of growing numbers of newcomers.

But if the causes felt familiar, the way that the war was fought and its aftermath had a distinctively different feel, one more characteristic of the broader Indian wars of the eighteenth century. Begun locally, the war quickly took on a trans-regional cast. Owing to their location between South Carolina and Virginia, and because of their ties farther north to the Iroquois, Tuscaroras found themselves facing not just whatever makeshift militias could be mustered among settlers along the Albemarle and Pamlico sounds, but also confronting leaders of several colonies armed with different blueprints for cultural and political control of the frontiers. The war
profoundly altered the contours of the region for Indians and colonists alike. Even those Tuscaroras who had tried to remain neutral or cooperated with colonists felt the effects of the war. Therefore, although the military outcome of the Tuscarora War was decided by the destruction of Neoheroka in 1713, establishing a clear cultural and political conclusion would take much longer and be far less certain.

The 1710s and early 1720s found the Tuscaroras standing at a crossroads between several colonial worlds, struggling to decide which path to take. All were dangerous. Some led to submission as colonial tributaries, others to a precarious existence on the edge of the deerskin- and slave-trade economy. Still others led to long-distance relocation and possible assimilation among other Indian groups. To a greater or lesser extent, most Indians of eastern North America in the eighteenth century found themselves confronted by similar decisions as old worlds crumbled and new colonial spheres of influence and control rose in their place. Like other Indians who found themselves disrupted and defeated, Tuscaroras confronted tough choices, but choices did remain.

Some Tuscaroras set out in pursuit of captured kin in South Carolina, temporarily establishing a community on the periphery of that society’s slave- and deerskin-trading economy. Others briefly wandered the hill country of the North Carolina and Virginia borderlands, hungry refugees on the edge of a territory they had once dominated. Virginia’s government, led by Alexander Spotswood, struggled to insert these Tuscaroras into a network of tributary Indians that patrolled and protected the colony, but he failed. The complex cultural and political identities of these Indian
groups defied manipulation. Moreover, even in defeat the Tuscaroras maintained a
degree of autonomy that would continue to frustrate officials for much of the rest of
the century.

Many Tuscaroras gravitated to Indian Woods, a community in North Carolina
under the leadership of “King” Tom Blount, one of a new breed of leaders whose path
to power became increasingly common among Indians on the periphery of the British
colonies. During the war years, Blount had attempted to carve out new authority for
himself by becoming first spokesperson and then the sole leader of the Tuscaroras in
the eyes of colonial officials. By positioning himself as a fulcrum between competing
interests, Blount wielded influence locally among Indians and Europeans alike. Never
colonists’ pawn, Blount played a dangerous game, balancing against one another the
threat of renewed Indian hostilities on one hand, and deadly colonial retribution on the
other. In the 1720s, Blount’s maneuvers took on a new dimension, as he again
positioned himself, this time to play off Europeans against troops of Tuscaroras and
Iroquois Indians who began to arrive from the north. Even a master like Blount,
however, could not sustain this act indefinitely. Over time, Blount, and—after his
death—his successors at Indian Woods struggled against decline into irrelevance.
Carefully selling or renting off parcels of land to colonists, employing themselves as
slave-catchers and guides, and volunteering for colonial wars could slow the slide, but
not stop it.

Greater numbers of Tuscaroras, afraid of colonial retribution and wary of
Blount’s authority, abandoned old homes altogether and made their way north to areas
near Oneida Lake and along the Susquehanna River. There they found shelter among the Iroquois Confederacy and eventually were adopted as that league's sixth nation. Increasingly, over the eighteenth century, they found themselves living side-by-side with other groups of Indians who made similar choices to relocate in the shadow of the Iroquois. Indeed, the Tuscaroras' successes partially served as a model for groups such as the Tutelos, Conoys, and Nanticokes who followed the trail to Iroquoia.¹ Moreover, across eastern North America, in places such as the Ohio Valley, the Susquehanna Valley, around the Great Lakes, and in the interior Southeast, Indians devastated by disease, war, and encroachment similarly relocated and formed new attachments with one another to better confront colonial threats. In Indian country, alliances and mergers, often spanning great cultural and geographic distance, became the new norm.

To a large degree, these maneuvers were successful for the Tuscaroras. No other group of migrants attained such status and recognition among the Iroquois. As the "Sixth Nation," Tuscaroras who moved north achieved a degree of influence in treaties and trade that was quickly eroding among their kin to the south. Rather than slipping into obscurity, Tuscaroras achieved renewed prominence in colonial records, albeit as part of the Six Nations. Moreover, Tuscaroras achieved close community ties with neighboring Indians, especially the Oneidas with whom they often settled, hunted, fished, farmed, and prayed.

Nonetheless, such realignments came at a cost. By the mid-eighteenth century, Tuscaroras in the north rarely appeared in colonial records acting as an independent entity. Some colonial observers thought they detected a hint of derision towards these newcomers in Iroquois society. Moreover, even though Tuscaroras maintained a distinct cultural identity among the Iroquois, as they picked up new speech patterns, manners of dress, styles of housing, and political habits, they seemed ever more foreign to kin who had remained in Indian Woods. Across eastern North America, Indians struggled to adopt and adapt to new political and cultural environments. For better or worse, old cultural habits died hard, leaving persistent fault lines in new Indian coalitions. Indian country simultaneously became more heterogeneous, as bands of refugees and migrants took up residence in each others’ communities, and more homogeneous, as cultural patterns and lifestyles diffused across old group boundaries.

Thus, even as Tuscarora migrants found their way in Iroquoia, they never forgot their homelands or their kin who remained there. Richard White once described Indian communities shattering like broken glass, but in reality the breaks were never so complete.² Old ties still remained. The result was an Indian country laced with trails connecting divided Indian populations. Despite great distances, Tuscaroras never truly lost contact with one another. Tuscaroras journeying south from Iroquoia as part of multi-cultural war parties to strike at traditional enemies visited Indian Woods;

Tuscaroras from North Carolina traversed the same networks as they visited or immigrated to Iroquoia.

Throughout these changes, the Tuscaroras' fate, like that other Indians, was inexorably tied to the actions of colonial governments. Therefore, the story of the Tuscaroras is also the story of officials like Thomas Pollock, Robert Hunter, Alexander Spotswood, and William Johnson. At every step, officials attempted to assert authority. Governments in South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New York attempted to create tributaries, regulate new alliances, limit movements, and control patterns of settlement. Colonial governments viewed disruptions among the Indians as an opportunity to experiment with new forms of authority along colonial frontiers. But if the fate of colonial governments and Indians like the Tuscaroras went hand in hand, it was often unclear who led the way. Colonial officials liked to imagine a day when they would wield control over orderly frontiers. But that day never seemed to come. Instead, officials looked aghast as every failed plan to direct Indians' lives gave way to further chaos, sparking wars, spurring refugee movements, and upsetting alliances. It often seemed that the harder colonial officials squeezed, the more control slipped from of their hands. Despite these failures, officials did make their presence felt. Tuscaroras traveling in the 1760s carrying passports, accompanied by escorts, and stopping at military posts, presented an image far different than their original unsupervised flight half a century earlier.

The Tuscaroras had traveled many trails by the 1770s, but their journeys were not yet at an end. Although it seemed that they might find respite among the Iroquois,
their sojourn was short-lived. That decade saw the Tuscaroras again suffering
disunion and dislocation. The effects of the Revolutionary War fought between the
colonies and Britain soon made their way to Indian country. Once again, Tuscaroras
faced invading Anglo-American armies, this time as forces led by the American
generals John Sullivan and James Clinton marched through the heart of Tuscarora
communities along the Susquehanna River and near Oneida Lake. Once again,
Tuscaroras faced disunion as the Iroquois confederacy itself, torn by competing ties of
political and religious loyalty, split to side either with the Americans or the British.
Most Tuscaroras, following the lead of Oneida neighbors and feeling the influence of
missionaries like Samuel Kirkland, sided with the Americans, but such divisions were
by no means entirely clear-cut. Former allies found themselves on opposing sides, and
occasionally attacking one another.3

3 For Iroquois and Tuscarora experiences during the American Revolution, the best
source remains Barbara Graymont, The Iroquois in the American Revolution,
(Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1972). See also Colin G. Calloway, "Oquaga:
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By the war's end, most Tuscaroras were again uprooted, some gravitating to a new reservation near Niagara Falls, others establishing themselves in other Iroquois communities.⁴ New boundaries, now the border between Canada and the United States, added to divisions.⁵ In Indian Woods, Tuscaroras had likewise faced hardship, selling off further lands, cultivating relationships with influential neighbors, and carefully avoiding conflict. Still, old ties remained. In 1804, after a visit by Tuscaroras from New York, a majority of those Tuscaroras who remained in North Carolina sold their remaining lands and traveled north to rejoin their distant relatives, once more following old trails of kinship.⁶

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