The texture of contact: European and Indian settler communities on the Iroquoian borderlands, 1720-1780

David L. Preston

College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences

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APPROVAL SHEET

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

Doctor of Philosophy

David L. Preston

Approved. February 2002

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My gratitude and respect for the many teachers, colleagues, and friends who have shaped my work is ineffable. These terse acknowledgments cannot begin to do them justice. It is impossible for me to imagine a more perfect advisor and mentor than James Axtell. His encouragement, unfailing support, and example as a teacher and scholar have been inspirational. My committee members and mentors, Jim Whittenburg, Kris Lane, and Bill Pencak, greatly improved the dissertation through their insightful and challenging comments. I also offer my thanks to Carol Sheriff, who taught me so much about frontier and western history, and whose example of a professional historian will always be with me. My studies with Mike McGiffert, Melvin Ely, Dale Hoak, Ed Crapol, Ron Hoffman, and the late John Selby also shaped my interpretations.

Many institutions have facilitated my research and writing through generous financial support. The College of William and Mary provided a graduate assistantship, sponsored my forays to archives and conferences, and awarded me three fellowships that enabled me to write the dissertation. In 1999, I received a Larry Hackman Research Grant from the New York State Archives. Until I met Dr. James Folts at the State Archives, I never fully realized how deeply historians are indebted to archivists. He generously shared his consummate knowledge of colonial sources. I also thank the following staff members of the State Archives, New York State Library, and New York State Museum: Bill Evans, Dick Andress, Bill Gorman, Billie Aul, and Steve Bielsinski. A fellowship from the Gilder-Lehrman Institute of American History enabled me to research in the New-York Historical Society’s rich collections in 2001. I especially thank Alyssa Shirley, Michael Ferrer, and Phil Lauer for diligently tracking down manuscripts for me. The staffs of the Pennsylvania State Archives, Pennsylvania Historical Society, and Earl Gregg Swem Library at William and Mary were also invaluable. Andre Sénécal of the University of Vermont graciously shared his expertise on the New France-New England borderlands as we visited sites in Quebec, Vermont, and New York in 2000. I also thank Bob Emerson, Director of Old Fort Niagara, for inviting me to give a public lecture in 2001 and for his family’s hospitality during my visit.

Many friends either read and commented on various drafts or made this a better work through our conversations and friendships: Mike Simoncelli, Pat O’Neil, Jody Allen, Jim Piecuch, Bill Carrigan, Emily Blanck, Paul Moyer, Jeff McClurken, Dan Ingram, Sharon Sauder Muhlfeld, Steve Feeley, Todd Pfannestiel, Christina Barnes, Sharon Romeo, Carla Messenger, James Baker, Cristine Maglieri, Jared and Susan Williams (who provided a home away from home), and my colleagues in the National Park Service. Finally, I wish to thank my beloved parents and brother, whose selfless love, true character, and quiet encouragement and strength have always sustained me. I dedicate this work to them.
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ABBREVIATIONS

**Bouquet Papers**

**CP**

**DHNY**

**DRCHNY**

**ERNY**

**HNAI**

**HSP**

**IIDH**

**ISHLC**

**MPCP**

**NYCM**
New York Council Minutes, 1668-1783 (1895), New York State Archives

**NYCMSS**
New York Colonial Manuscripts, 1638-1800 (A1894), New York State Archives
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<td>NYHS</td>
<td>New-York Historical Society, New York City</td>
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<td>NYSA</td>
<td>New York State Archives, Albany, N.Y.</td>
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<td>NYSL</td>
<td>New York State Library, Albany, N.Y.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMHB</td>
<td>Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography</td>
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<td>WMO</td>
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<td>Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine</td>
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ABSTRACT

"The Texture of Contact" is a comparative study of cultural interactions between European and Indian settler communities along the Six Nations' borders with New York and Pennsylvania from 1720 to 1780. It particularly examines "everyday encounters" between ordinary settlers and Indians—a dimension of colonial social and economic life that has usually escaped historians' attention. Palatine, Scots, Irish, Dutch, and English colonists not only lived close to Indian villages but also frequently interacted with Iroquois, Delawares, Shawnees, and other natives. Frontier farms, forts, churches, taverns, and towns were scenes of frequent face-to-face meetings between colonists and Indians. My dissertation explores the dynamics of settler-Indian encounters and how they changed over time in the Mohawk, Susquehanna, Juniata, and Ohio valleys. Ordinary people powerfully shaped the larger social, economic, and diplomatic patterns of cultural contact through their routine negotiations. Local relationships between Indian and European communities were as important in maintaining peace as formal alliances.

The dissertation establishes a new vantage point by exploring northeastern North America as the "Iroquoian borderlands" rather than as the Middle Colonies' frontiers. It also employs comparative history to highlight the structural similarities and differences of the Six Nations' borders with nearby colonies. Both Pennsylvania and New York enjoyed a common alliance with the Six Nations that sustained a period of peaceful relations in the early eighteenth century. But Pennsylvania's rapid expansion sparked a triangular contest over land between natives, European squatters, and distant proprietors that resulted in native dispossession by the 1750s. During the Seven Years' War, Delawares, Shawnees, and other natives inflicted tremendous destruction on Pennsylvania's defenseless settlements. Chronic warfare on Pennsylvania's and Virginia's borders set in motion processes such as aggressive European settlement expansion and racial violence that the American Revolution merely exacerbated.

The Six Nations' border with New York, by contrast, was free from open warfare for most of the eighteenth century. In the Mohawk Valley, strong personal, religious, economic, social, and military ties enabled Indian and colonial communities to coexist for most of the eighteenth century. The New York-Iroquois borders reflected cultural relations in New France, where French-Canadian habitants lived in relative harmony with réserve Indians in the St. Lawrence Valley. It was not until the American Revolution that New York experienced the same destructive and racially charged warfare that Pennsylvania, Virginia, and other British colonies had experienced in the seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries. The Revolution overturned the patterns of accommodation that prevailed between the Iroquois and the New York colonists. It uprooted the British-Iroquois alliance and led to dispossession for many Iroquois in punitive postwar treaties with the United States. The comparative context more precisely reveals the means whereby the permeable Iroquoian borderlands of the early eighteenth century were transformed into juridically and racially defined state and national borders by the 1780s.
THE TEXTURE OF CONTACT:
EUROPEAN AND INDIAN SETTLER COMMUNITIES
ON THE IROQUOIAN BORDERLANDS,
1720-1780
INTRODUCTION

INDIAN AND COLONIAL COMMUNITIES ON THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY IROQUOIAN BORDERLANDS

In 1734, Mohawk Iroquois sachems sent a petition to the governor of New York complaining of encroachments on their lands near the headwaters of Schoharie Creek, a tributary of the Mohawk River. The Mohawks' neighbors and former enemies, the Mahicans, had sold 6,000 acres of land that they claimed to three European colonists who obtained letters patent for the vast tract. The overlapping claims of Mahican, Mohawk, and later, Dutch, Palatine, and English settlers illustrate the nebulous nature of boundaries on the Six Nations' eighteenth-century borderlands with European colonies. The map that the sachems drew to define their particular claims provides a revealing glimpse of the Schoharie Mohawks' mental world. The network of creeks, rivers, and waterfalls framed the Mohawks' travel, trade, hunting, fishing, and warfare. Prominent hills and Catskill Mountain ridge lines were landmarks that held spiritual, territorial, and emotional significance. But one of the most revealing features of the Mohawks' map is its juxtaposition of the “Schohary Wiqwams” and the Palatine villages at “Schohary.” The Mohawks' settlements on the east (and west) side of Schoharie Creek resembled the Haudenosaunee's eponymous longhouse with a central fireplace, while the natives represented their Palatine neighbors inhabiting four small houses with smoke billowing from the chimneys. What was life like in the eighteenth-century Schoharie-Mohawk valleys, where Mohawks were said to have “lived intermixed with the Christians” and
“daily resort to the Christians Houses”? How did the Mohawk and European communities interact from day-to-day? What was the character of their relationships?

MAP 1: SCHOHARIE MOHAWK MAP [1734]

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"The Texture of Contact" is a comparative study of cultural interactions between European and Indian settler communities on the Six Nations' borderlands with New York and Pennsylvania in the eighteenth century. It particularly focuses attention on the "everyday encounters" between ordinary European and Indian frontier inhabitants, a dimension of social and economic life that has largely escaped historians' attention.2 This study thoroughly explores the entire spectrum of intercultural negotiations—from frontier farmers' contacts with natives to colonial officials and Indian leaders' diplomacy. Palatine, Scots-Irish, Dutch, English, and African settlers and slaves not only lived close to Indian villages but frequently interacted with Iroquois, Delawares, Shawnees, and other native peoples. Frontier farms, forts, churches, mills, taverns, and towns were scenes of frequent face-to-face meetings. Ordinary people powerfully shaped the larger social, economic, and diplomatic patterns of cultural contact through their routine negotiations. Indeed, the local, face-to-face relationships between Indian and European communities were as equally important in maintaining peace as formal alliances.

Historians have long explored the political, diplomatic, military, and imperial contexts of the Six Nations' relations with Dutch, French, and English colonizers. Recent scholarship has mainly focused on Iroquois diplomacy and political structures.3 The

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Iroquois “Covenant Chain” alliance with New York and the “Chain of Friendship” with Pennsylvania sustained a period of peaceful coexistence that lasted for most of the eighteenth century. As Francis Jennings argues, the New York-Pennsylvania-Six Nations alliances were examples of “accommodation and cooperation between peoples of different ethnicity, different cultures, and different social and political structures.”

But as I read the major works on Indian-European relations in early America, I wanted to know more about the texture of human contact in the eighteenth-century—the threads in the tapestry of daily life that are largely absent from recent backcountry and ethnohistorical studies. With a few notable exceptions, backcountry/frontier studies do not bring the settlers' nearest neighbors and enemies—the Indians—into their stories of settlement, land disputes, economic culture, and agrarian rebellions. On the other hand, ethnohistorical studies only address the common farmers and settlers of the backcountry.


4 Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 374-75.


insofar as their "Indian hating" and violence affected larger diplomatic relations. Scholars have frequently typecast European frontier settlers as land-hungry, violent, and ethnocentric catalysts of conflict with Indians; such casual characterizations are often based on an uncritical acceptance of colonial elites' representations of frontier settlers and their attitudes toward Indians, land, law, and government. Moreover, recent ethnohistorical work remains focused on the empires, diplomacy and foreign policy, trade, and the perspectives of "cultural brokers"—the politically important sachems, interpreters, and colonial officials who helped to structure formal alliances.7

This dissertation contributes to recent scholarship in many ways. First, it thoroughly explores how ordinary European and Indian frontier inhabitants shaped their worlds at a local level, how they negotiated with one another, and how they understood and misunderstood their cultural conversations. It specifically investigates the contacts between European and Indian settler communities and how they changed over time in the Mohawk, Susquehanna, Juniata, and Ohio river valleys. Those four river valleys were notable in that Indian and European settlers co-inhabited them for extended periods of the

eighteenth century. They were the main avenues of European settlement expansion in New York and Pennsylvania. With rich alluvial soils, forest resources, and emotional and spiritual significance, they were hotly contested in numerous land disputes by native and non-native settlers, land speculators, provincial elites, and imperial officials. Each of the following chapters begins with an ethnographic sketch of a particular Indian or European settlement or neighborhood and the rhythms of life on the frontier. As Richard White emphasizes, ordinary peoples inhabited an atomized "village world" that belies historians' simple triangulation of the "French," "English," and "Indians." Without reference to these communities, it is impossible to appreciate the complexity and character of Indian-European settler interactions in the eighteenth century. I use the term "community" loosely to describe those river valleys where natives and newcomers were "living in face-to-face association and occupying a common location, either permanently or seasonally."9

8The Hudson, Wyoming, and Delaware valleys are also strong candidates for closer inspection and I have included analyses of and evidence from those areas. But I am focusing on areas where Indian and European communities coexisted for long periods (and areas that typified the experiences of most frontier inhabitants). While the land disputes over the Wyoming Valley were crucial developments, New England and Pennsylvania colonizers never coexisted with the resident Indians for any substantial length of time. I include references to the insular religious Moravian mission communities in the Delaware Valley that were established later in the colonial period. But these religious communities were aberrant; there is a great interpretive danger in conflating Moravians' experiences with other European-Indian encounters.

Second, my work demonstrates how peace and stability were often sustained locally by Indian and European communities. From the Delaware or the Iroquois perspectives, peace was “primarily a matter of the mind”: it was not simply a “negotiated agreement backed by the sanctions of international law and mutual self-interest. It was a matter of ‘good thoughts’ between two nations, a feeling as much as a reality.” The Anglo-Iroquois alliances joined together entire peoples, not simply political entities. When the Delaware sachem Sassoonan spoke before assembled colonists and Indians in the Great Meeting House in Philadelphia in 1728, he wished that “they may all know that the Christians & Indians ought to have but one Head, one Heart, & one Body; that he looks on them all as one People.” Indian peoples scrutinized the behaviors and attitudes of nearby European settlers for tangible signals and evidences of the alliance’s vitality. Scholars have long recognized that “words and good thoughts were tremendously important, for only if everyone shared in the climate of good will could peace be preserved.” But historians have not yet begun to explore thoroughly how local relations between Indian and European communities sustained or undermined the larger alliances.10

In diplomatic exchanges with colonial officials, Indian sachems frequently emphasized the importance of their local relationships with frontier settlers. Whenever they decried land frauds, murders, assaults, or inhospitable usage, the Indians especially protested the sinister motives and feelings that such actions betrayed. In 1767, for

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10MCP 3: 319 (Sassoonan); Richter, “Ordeals of the Longhouse,” in Beyond the Covenant Chain, 18; John Philip Reid, A Better Kind of Hatchet: Law, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Cherokee Nation during the Early Years of European Contact (University Park, Pa.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), 10, 16.
example, an Onondaga sachem expressed his “uneasiness” over British officials’
hardheartedness to Indian complaints. As William Johnson recounted, the sachem cited as
evidence the “hostile behaviour of [the British settlers] these 2 years past.” Such behavior
aroused Iroquois suspicions and apprehensions that the settlers “were not so Sincere as
[Johnson] always represented.” In 1761, a mulatto woman made a few Mohawk Indians
drunk and cajoled them to sign a deed to lands. Mohawk sachems “in a violent passion”
protested not merely her unjust actions, but “the deceitfulness, and unbrotherlike
behaviour of the white people towards them.” In the Mohawks’ view, the mulatto
woman’s malicious motives “seemed to aim at their entire extirpation” and betrayed the
Mohawks’ past faithfulness and good-will toward her.11

Third, a close analysis of the everyday relations between Indian and colonial
communities diffuses the “cultural broker” model that has predominated in ethnohistorical
studies for nearly twenty years. An outgrowth of the world-system theory and social
network theory, the model explains how local Indian villages, for example, were
connected to the world system through “brokers” or “mediators” who are the only “nodes
of communication” between cultures. As Daniel Richter explains, without cultural
brokers’ savoir faire, “peoples with vastly differing political structures, economic systems,
and cultural beliefs could hardly talk to each other, much less work together.” James
Merrell’s recent work on the Pennsylvania frontier, for example, primarily focuses on
politically important negotiators; in his interpretation, official negotiators were solely

11For examples of the importance Indians placed on local settlers’ attitudes, see SWJP vol. 12:
responsible for averting conflict between two cultures that stood apparently always at an apocalyptic precipice. My research builds upon the analyses of cultural brokers by showing how ordinary Indians' and colonists' everyday lives were elaborately interwoven. Ordinary people carried on cross-cultural conversations independent of, and just as skillfully as, the official mediators. They frequently communicated, traded, negotiated over land, and even conducted their own forms of diplomacy separate from colonial governments or Indian councils. Indeed, colonial leaders frequently complained of the frontier settlers' unauthorized "intermeddling" or "tampering" with Indians under their assumed jurisdiction.

One of my goals is to renew historians’ interest in the ethnography of ordinary Indian and European peoples. If I were writing thirty years ago, a definition of "ordinary people" would have been superfluous. But for accuracy’s sake, I define common European settlers as the middling to poor farmers and their families who peopled the river valleys and who lived closest to the natives. These frontier inhabitants knew each other more intimately than even some cultural brokers did. A group of Europeans living near the Mohawk settlement of Canajoharie emphasized that "none of your Yorck Gentlemen knows the way of the Indians yet as we that lives amongst them." Along with the farmers who constituted the vast majority of the European frontier inhabitants were small


13Colden Papers, 4: 412.
traders, tavern keepers, and rural artisans such as blacksmiths, gunsmiths, carpenters, weavers, and millwrights. Similarly, recent histories have emphasized the roles of prominent Indian sachems and warriors at the expense of ordinary Indian peoples. I therefore refer to Indian settlers, farmers, hunters, and villagers to describe those natives who had no formal role in diplomacy with colonial governments.

Fourth, the comparative dimension of this work highlights the similarities and differences between the structures and processes on the New York-Pennsylvania-Iroquois borders. Both colonies' common alliance with the Six Nations sustained a period of peaceful relations in the early eighteenth century. There were significant differences, however, in the stability of the two colonies' relations with their Indian neighbors. Despite William Penn's vision of peace with natives, Pennsylvania endured grueling conflict from an early date; the peaceful relationships between native and European communities were circumscribed and short-lived. During the Seven Years' War, Delawares, Shawnees, Mingos, and their French allies inflicted tremendous destruction on Pennsylvania's defenseless frontiers. The Seven Years' War and Pontiac's War in Pennsylvania in Virginia set in motion processes such as unrestrained settlement and racial violence that the American Revolution merely exacerbated. The racial violence of

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common settlers against Indians, for example, surfaced in Pennsylvania in the 1750s but not in New York.

Of all the British North American colonies, New York enjoyed the longest span of peace with the Iroquois nations on its borders. Strong religious, economic, social, and military ties enabled Indian and colonial communities on the New York-Iroquois borderlands to coexist peacefully until the early 1770s. Indeed, those borderlands reflected cultural relations in the St. Lawrence Valley of New France, where "certain habitants had a good knowledge of Indian languages, were aware of native traditions and customs and, not infrequently, entertained close and friendly contacts with their Indian neighbours" from the réserves.\(^{15}\) It was not until the American Revolution that the Iroquois and the New York colonists experienced the same destructive and racially charged warfare that Pennsylvania, Virginia, and other British colonists had experienced much earlier. The Revolution sparked civil wars that pitted loyalists against rebels and Oneidas and Tuscaroras against Mohawks and Senecas. It uprooted the British-Iroquois alliance and led to displacement and dispossession for many Iroquois in punitive postwar treaties with the United States.

Finally, I establish a new vantage point by exploring northeastern North America as the "Iroquoian borderlands" rather than the Middle Colonies' frontiers; this vista is a practical application of Daniel Richter's recent call to "shift our perspective to try to view

the past in a way that faces east from Indian Country." The term "Iroquoian borderlands" more accurately reflects the realities of the eighteenth-century Mohawk, Susquehanna, Juniata and Ohio Valleys than the terms "New York frontier," or "Pennsylvania frontier." I have used "frontier" and "borderland" interchangeably to describe a nebulous intermediate "zone of interpenetration between two previously distinct societies." I also refer to specific geographical areas (e.g., "Mohawk frontier" or "Ohio country") and borders (e.g., "New York-Iroquois borders"). "Iroquoian borderlands" refers to neither a linguistic area nor the Six Nations' ancient homelands proper. Geographically, I define the Iroquoian borderlands as the areas on the Six Nations' periphery that either fell under Iroquois influence or were settled by Iroquois and other native emigrants. Like a vast arc, those borderlands stretched from the St. Lawrence down the Champlain Valley to the Mohawk Valley, across the Appalachians' eastern edges to the Delaware and Susquehanna valleys, then westward across the Appalachians' ridge and valley country to the Potomac and Ohio rivers' headwaters. Colonial settlements in Pennsylvania and New York appear not as inexorable juggernauts but as weaker entities on the periphery of a powerful Indian confederation.


By questioning the inevitability of European domination, my work provides a nuanced analysis of the means and ends of cultural contact. For example, when I decided to pursue a broader study encompassing much of northeastern North America, I expected to engage the longstanding debate over whether the Middle Colonies constituted a distinct region. But I found that works like William Brewster's *The New York and Pennsylvania Frontier* (1954) obscured the degree to which the lands northward, southward, and westward of those colonies remained an Indian world and landscape. Brewster's terms projected possession and unified boundaries where few to none existed. Pennsylvania's evolving boundaries, for example, were contested by the Six Nations, Ohio Indians, Virginia, Maryland, Connecticut, and New York. Colonial charters and land claims were peripheral if not invisible to native peoples, who continued to travel, hunt, fight, and settle in areas they had for centuries. The process to be explained was how the permeable Iroquoian borderlands of the early eighteenth century were transformed into rigid colonial, state, and national borders that were juridically and racially defined.

Understanding the intermediate spaces along Iroquoia's periphery as "Iroquoian borderlands" underscores the enduring prestige of the Six Nations, the most powerful Indian confederation in the eighteenth-century eastern North America. The Haudenosaunee, or People of the Longhouse, inhabited a metaphorical longhouse

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stretching from Mohawks’ eponymous valley to the Great Lakes; their population increased over the eighteenth century, so that by the 1760s they numbered around 7,000, not including the emigrant Iroquois settled in the St. Lawrence, Susquehanna, and Ohio valleys. The keepers of the longhouse’s eastern door were the Mohawks while the Senecas guarded the western door. The Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and the Tuscaroras (after the 1720s) inhabited the lands between the door keepers. The Six Nations’ country sat astride the most strategic trade and transportation routes. Moreover, the Iroquois exercised (or at least claimed) a degree of influence over their native neighbors such as the Delawares and Shawnees; they invited displaced or indigent peoples such as the Tuscaroras, Nanticokes, Tutelos, and Mahicans to settle on their borderlands in the eighteenth century (the Tuscaroras became the sixth nation after their adoption in the 1720s). British officials inaccurately attributed to the Iroquois an imperial status, but it was a reflection of how fearful and jealous they were of Iroquois independence. “Without any exageration,” Sir William Johnson wrote in 1763, “I look upon the Northern Indians to be the most formidable of any uncivilized body of people in the World. Hunting and War are their sole occupations, and the one, qualifies them for the other.” After nearly a century of contact with the Six Nations, British officials had become prisoners of their own inflated rhetoric about Iroquois military prowess.

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21 DRCHNY 7: 574.
Recent interpretations portray the eighteenth-century Iroquois as factionalized, dispersed, dependent, and declining peoples. The worlds of the Five Nations and their native neighbors had indeed changed dramatically with the advent of French, Dutch, Swedish, and English colonizers in the seventeenth century. The French planted a permanent colony along the St. Lawrence River in the early 1600s; the Dutch simultaneously established trading bases in upper Hudson Valley and the Delaware Valley. European-borne epidemic diseases struck native villages with tremendous lethality; the fur trade partly reoriented native economies; Christian missionaries and geopolitical changes accompanying colonization sparked wars among Indians. The Five Nations were embroiled in nearly a century of conflict with the French and their traditional Algonquin, Montagnais, and Huron enemies. After the peace of 1701, the embattled Five Nations coexisted with their European neighbors and pledged neutrality in any future conflicts between the French and English (who had taken New York from the Dutch in 1664 and established the proprietary colony of Pennsylvania in the Delaware Valley in 1682).

Given such grim seventeenth-century conditions, scholars have minimized the Six Nations’ sovereignty in the eighteenth century. But such interpretations diminish British officials’ consuming fear that the Six Nations would shift their power to the French and the multitude of Indian nations in the interior of North America. In 1745, for example, the New York Council feared that Albany would fall to French and Indian attack, in which

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case "there would be nothing less to expect than the Revolt of the Six Nations" and a shift in the balance of power toward the French; all the British colonies' frontiers would then succumb to the French and Indians. While the Mohawks and Oneidas were increasingly surrounded by European settlements, the Six Nations as a whole retained the vast majority of their ancient homelands until the 1770s and 1780, when the American Revolution resulted in displacement or dispossession for many Iroquois. The Six Nations succeeded in preserving their neutrality and independence until the American Revolution; nor did the preponderance of power fall to the British after their conquest of New France in 1760. Throughout the 1760s and early 1770s, the Six Nations played off the English and the unvanquished nations of the Ohio Country and pays d'en haut. Before 1763, British officials feared that the Six Nations would side with the French; after 1763, they feared that the Six Nations would ally with other confederacies in a pan-Indian movement that no British arms could possibly suppress, as Pontiac's War demonstrated.

This work is organized into three thematic sections: land (chapters 1-2), war and peace (chapters 3-4), and imperial crisis and revolution (chapter 5 and epilogue). The first two chapters explore the intricate negotiations over land and usufruct between European and Indian farmers, squatters, and hunters and Indian settlers in the Schoharie, Mohawk, Susquehanna, and Juniata valleys. They undermine several longstanding assumptions about European settlers, their socioeconomic status, and their attitudes toward land,

23NYCM 21: 68-69 (December 24, 1745).

property, and natives. Chapters three and four explore the nature of violence, warfare, and racial hatred between Indians and colonists during the Seven Years’ War. The third chapter explains the social, cultural, gender, and military dimensions of Pennsylvania colonists’ and Indians’ violence, hatred, and atrocities that erupted during the war. But as chapter 4 argues, the Seven Years’ War strained, but did not sever, the process of cultural accommodation that prevailed on the New York-Iroquois frontiers. The strong ties between European and Indian communities in the Mohawk Valley endured despite the tumultuous conflicts that raged between 1754 and 1764.

Chapter five shifts the action to the Ohio Country, which was the focal point of the imperial crisis on British North America’s frontiers in the 1760s. Unrestrained British settlement, a vicious circle of revenge killings and mass murders, and the British army’s presence in the Ohio Country fueled a crisis over land, law, and authority that reverberated from colonial capitals to London. The Ohio Country was so destabilized and decentralized that open warfare had already begun there long before shots were fired on Lexington Common. The epilogue demonstrates how the American Revolution affected Indian and European communities on the New York-Pennsylvania-Six Nations borders; the Revolution dissolved the theretofore close social, economic, religious, and personal ties that bound Indian and colonial communities together. The Mohawk Valley in particular suffered tremendous devastation from 1777 through 1781 in a civil war that pitted neighbor against neighbor, loyalists against rebels, and Iroquois against Iroquois. Indians’ and Euroamericans’ racial hatred borne of the Revolution’s warfare made any postwar accommodations tenuous. Though the process was not inevitable, the Iroquoian
borderlands in which Indian and European settlers had co-inhabited for most of the eighteenth century were replaced by rigid, racially defined borders of individual states and the new American republic.

Combining the methodology and perspectives of ethnohistory, social history, and comparative history, this dissertation examines many manuscript collections that historians have seldom or never consulted. Manuscript collections from the New York State Archives, New York State Library, New-York Historical Society, Pennsylvania State Archives, and Pennsylvania Historical Society are the foundation of this work. I have also buttressed the work with the standard published sources such as government records, accounts of Indian treaties and conferences, missionaries' writings, traders' and merchants' account books, travel narratives, captivity narratives, land patent records, church records, newspapers, letters, and diaries. But I have read these primary sources for what they reveal about everyday lives on the frontiers. These sources collectively tell a more complex, more ambivalent story about Indians and Europeans in early America than the simple dualism of encroaching colonists and Indian victims: it is a story about the possibility of European and Indian communities coexisting peacefully and creating mutually beneficial relationships as they adapted to their highly contingent worlds.
PART I: LAND

During the Seven Years’ War, the Delaware sachem Teedyuscung declared to Pennsylvania officials, “You may easily see the Reason of the gloomy and dark days; they have proceeded from the Earth... The Land is the Cause of our Differences; that is, our being unhappily turned out of the Land.”¹ Issues relating to the land—occupation, rights to its resources, possession, legal title, and boundaries—were the most contentious and divisive issues that Indian peoples and European colonists confronted. Most of the historical literature on the topic tends to focus on treaties that alienated Indian lands, notorious cases of land fraud, and ecological changes accompanying European settlement. Moving beyond the legal dimension of land relations, the following two chapters addresses the question of how European farmers and hunters actually negotiated with the natives or dispossessed them. Historians typically cast native dispossession in eastern North America as a largely inevitable process and a function of the colonists’ greater numbers. In many accounts of European expansion, natives have no role in the process other than as victims whom the colonists eventually defrauded of lands, defeated in any resistance, and pushed out of the way. In such reductionist interpretations, British colonists are alleged to have had no regard for Indians’ occupancy and rights as they slowly encroached on their lands; unchanging native peoples defend unchanging beliefs about the spirituality of land and the environment.

¹MPCP 7: 676.
Chapters 1 and 2 describe what happened when European settlers moved onto lands that native communities either occupied or used for hunting and gathering. These chapters defy many of the simplistic generalizations about European-Indian relations over land and attitudes towards property. Ordinary colonists and Indians frequently negotiated over land possession and usufruct. Some colonists respected and defended native rights as they approached them for permission to use the land (often without formal title). Indians adapted to both the presence of large numbers of European settlers and, after more than a century of contact with Europeans, had become familiar with Europeans' legal methods for permanently alienating land. Indian acceptance of European tenants, in particular, was becoming a widespread phenomenon on some eighteenth-century frontiers as a way to accommodate trustworthy settlers. Such examples of accommodation suggest that conflict between settlers and Indians over land was not inevitable; moreover, they demonstrate that natives had considerable sway in the process of frontier settlement.

Both Indian and colonial communities were enmeshed in larger imperial and regional frameworks that had great bearing on their experiences. Pennsylvania and New York (to a lesser extent) both enjoyed reputations as a "best poor man's country" in the eighteenth century. But immigration to the Quaker colony made it the most expansive in all of British North America. New York's manorial society and the threat of French invasion or actual warfare slowed settlement expansion. The contest for frontier lands within each colony was often a triangular struggle between the original native inhabitants, local settlers, and powerful colonial and imperial officials who controlled the legal machinery of land patenting. But the struggles were often more complex, multi-
dimensional affairs that pitted Ohio Indians against Iroquois, Mohawks against Mohawks, Pennsylvania settlers against Virginia settlers, colonies against colonies, and imperial officials against colonial interests.
The eighteenth-century Mohawk Valley was the primary avenue of European settlement expansion. It was the geographical "axis of empire" that provided the British colonies with a crucial link over the Appalachians to the Great Lakes. Mohawks, Oneidas, and Mahicans who had lived in their ancient homelands for centuries confronted and coexisted with Dutch, English, Irish, and German settlers. Historians typically assume that relations between colonists and Indians at a local level could only be productive of land disputes, violence, and inevitable displacement of the Indians. Unlike in many other British colonies, however, European expansion in New York did not inevitably degenerate into open warfare. On the Mohawk frontier, ethnic boundaries tended to blur and cultural exchanges were commonplace. In fact, the natives' local relationships with nearby European settlers were often more harmonious than their formal diplomatic ties to New York officials entrusted with maintaining the Covenant Chain alliance.

This chapter investigates how Europeans and Iroquois both shared and contested the Mohawk Valley for most of the eighteenth century. It moves beyond older studies of diplomacy and cultural brokers by highlighting how ordinary people negotiated over land issues such as property, boundaries, and usufruct. Through ethnographic sketches of three Mohawk communities, it argues that land negotiations between Indian and colonial...
settlers were premised upon the mutually beneficial social, economic, and religious relationships that they forged.

The Mohawk Valley was seen by contemporaries as one of the most fertile areas in all of North America. William Johnson boasted that the valley comprehended "an Extensive Tract of Country which in general in point of Soil Yields to None on the Continent." Surveyor General Cadwallader Colden explained that the valley's alluvial soils were "exceeding rich, [and] yields large crops of the best wheat and the repeated overflowings of the rivers keep it always in strength." But it was not until the mid-eighteenth century that a salient of colonial settlements emerged in the valley from the Hudson River line. Both contemporaries and later historians remarked that New York's population was not commensurate with its long existence. Many New York officials believed that the proprietary colonies (especially Pennsylvania and Maryland) were draining away potential or actual settlers with the lure of cheap land.2

In the seventeenth century, the colony's geopolitical situation and land distribution was not conducive to the rapid expansion of its multiethnic Dutch, English, Huguenot, Walloon, Jewish, and Palatine population. First, the Five Nations' abiding prestige and independence hindered settlement to a degree. The New York government could not as easily dominate the Mohawks as it did the much weakened "River Indians" (Mahicans) who lived among the European settlers in the Hudson Valley. The Mohawks had a reputation as "the most warlike and renowned of all those Nations." Sir William Johnson, who continually emphasized Mohawk preeminence, wrote in 1767 that "This Nation tho' 

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2SWJP 6: 27-28; NYCD 6: 123.
at present Weak in Number is the first of the Confederacy in Rank, & as it is called by
them, the Door to the Six Nations.” Second, New France and its Indian allies continually
threatened the security of the New York frontier. Those European settlers who emigrated
from Europe partly to escape war’s depredations were reluctant to live on such an
exposed border where their lives and labor would again be in jeopardy. Governor Fletcher
believed that “the hardships that this province hath undergone in the defence of the
Frontiers and the detaching of our people hath drove many of them thither [to
Pennsylvania] to enjoy their ease.” For most of the seventeenth and early eighteenth
centuries, European settlements were mostly confined to the lower Hudson Valley
corridor in the counties and boroughs around New York City. As geographer Donald
Meinig concludes, New York’s growth was “relatively slow in pace and constricted in
area” for most of the colony’s history.3

New York’s land system, unlike Pennsylvania’s, did not greatly stimulate
settlement expansion. “The distinctive hallmark of New York in the colonial period,”
writes historian Sung Bok Kim, “was the string of great baronial estates that dominated its
landscape.” New York’s leaders and elites tended to obtain land in “extravagant grants”
of tens of thousands of acres, which were then subdivided among invested partners.
Colden pointed out “how prejudicial these excessive grants have been to the Settlement &

3SWJP 6: 27-28; NYCD 6: 123; Fletcher to the Lords of Trade. June 10, 1696. DRCHNY 4: 159,
183; vol. 6: 960; Donald W. Meinig, “The Colonial Period, 1609-1775.” in John H. Thompson, ed.,
Geography of New York State (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1966), 121-39, at 137, and idem.,
Atlantic America, 119-29. For studies of New York’s elites, see Cynthia A. Kiemer, Traders and
Gentlefolk: The Livingstons of New York, 1675-1790 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992) and Mary
Lou Lustig, Privilege and Prerogative: New York’s Provincial Elite, 1710-1776 (London: Associated
University Press. 1995).
improvement of this Colony & is the true reason why it is not near so populous & well
cultivated as the neighbouring colonies." He observed that “the hopes of having land of
their own & becoming independent of Landlords is what chiefly induces people into
America" and that opportunity to obtain a freehold was greater in Pennsylvania than in
New York. Moreover, the process of land patenting was expensive for the applicant but
incredibly lucrative for the governor and councilmen who received the many fees for
patenting.4

The end of Queen Anne's War in 1713, the establishment of Fort Hunter at
Tiononderoge, and the Palatines' settlement at Schoharie in 1712 renewed colonists'
interest in Mohawk Valley lands. The “long peace” between New France and Britain from
1714 to 1744 also lessened the dangers of settlements in the colonists’ minds. Moreover,
lands in the Hudson Valley were becoming scarce as manor lords developed and peopled
their vast estates. When New York established a trading post at Oswego on Lake
Ontario, the flames of colonization were fanned even farther up the Mohawk Valley.
Traders, batteauxmen, teamsters, and settlers began traveling up the valley to the Oneida
Carrying Place and Oswego in ever greater numbers. Lt. Gov. George Clarke (1736-
1743) was one of the first governors to aggressively advocate British expansion up the
Mohawk Valley. From 1730 to 1743, he acquired 57,228 acres; he eventually held 95,

997 acres of Mohawk Valley lands (which he either did not improve or settled sparsely).5

Writing in the 1750s, Surveyor General Cadwallader Colden observed that the Mohawks increasingly lived “intermixed with the Christians” and “daily resort to their houses.” Eighteenth-century settlement patterns confirm Colden’s description. In 1710, Albany and Schenectady remained Dutch enclaves and garrison towns on the exposed northern periphery of the colony; there were very few European farms north or west of those towns. By 1750, Palatine, Dutch, English, Irish, and African settlers and slaves lived interspersed among Mohawks, Oneidas, and Mahicans. In the Schoharie Valley, for instance, German villages were located on the east bank of Schoharie Creek within sight of Mohawk settlements. The largely Anglo-Irish plantations at Warrensbush were only a few miles from Tiononderoge. In the upper Mohawk Valley, the Germans’ closest neighbors were Oneidas, Oswegatchies, and Canajoharies, not other Europeans.6

Mohawks were increasingly surrounded by European settlers. But this did not automatically translate into Mohawk irrelevance or dependency. Indian peoples significantly influenced issues that many historians believe they had no control over: land and British settlement expansion. Rather than passive victims, Iroquois adapted in novel ways to the increasing numbers of families crowding around them. These adaptations included consciously creating land disputes among the colonists, symbolic adoption of


trustworthy colonists, and employing powerful allies such as Sir William Johnson to present their land grievances to the metropolitan British government. They also tried to create peaceful relations with Europeans whom they deemed trustworthy by accepting them as tenants. Historians of colonial New York have usually ignored Indians in their studies of colonial expansion, preferring to focus on ethnic identity, landlord-tenant relations, and agrarian rebellions. This chapter’s three sections on the Mohawk communities of Schoharie, Tiononderoge, and Canajoharie demonstrate just how intertwined colonial and Iroquois communities were in the eighteenth-century Mohawk Valley. Without reference to the village worlds that framed ordinary peoples’ lives and mentalities, it is impossible to understand the eighteenth-century New York-Iroquois borders.
Part I: "Oblig'd to keep fair with the friendly Indians amongst whom they dwelt": Palatines and Mohawks in the Schoharie Valley

The Iroquoian word "Schoharie" or "Eskahare" signifies "drift wood"—probably a reference to the flotsam that collected at the junction of Schoharie, Little Schoharie, Stony, and Line creeks. Displaced by the storms of war and the flood of European emigration to the British colonies, diverse native peoples—Mohawks, Mahicans, Tuscaroras, Delawares, Oneidas, and Oquagans—also drifted into the Schoharie Valley in the early-to-mid-eighteenth-century. Usually referred to as the "Schoharie Mohawks" by colonial officials, these first peoples still remain veiled in obscurity. Historians and anthropologists rarely mention the existence of the third Mohawk settlement located about twenty miles south of Tiononderoge on Schoharie Creek.¹

According to tradition, the area was settled by a Kanawake Mohawk named Karighondontee and his family between 1690 and 1700. They and other Mohawks may have come southward in response to French attacks on old Mohawk villages on the north bank of the river and on Schenectady in the late seventeenth century. Both the valley's geography and the multi-ethnic character of the Indian settlements belie such a simple explanation. The Valley lay at the intersection of numerous Indian trails radiating outward

in all directions; it had long been an extended hunting ground and trade artery for many Indian peoples of the Hudson, Mohawk, and Delaware valleys. Schoharie Mohawks in the eighteenth century travelled southwestward along the Adageghtinge and Delaware rivers' branches to trade with Indians at Oquaga and Tioga. Mahican Indians also traveled from the Hudson River to the Schoharie Valley to hunt; some bands settled there in the early 1700s and later dwelled among the Mohawks permanently.²

Indian communities in both the Schoharie and Susquehanna valleys were becoming decidedly multi-ethnic as Indian settlers came in from all points of the compass. Seth Tehodoghwenziageghte, the son of Karighondontee and his Turtle-clan wife Marie, married a woman named Catharine in the late 1720s. Catharine was the daughter of Nicolas Etowaucum, a Mahican war leader and one of the four Indian “kings” who visited London in 1710. When missionary Gideon Hawley visited Schoharie in 1752, he received provisions from a Indian named Jonah, who had a French mother and a Tuscarora wife. Catharine, the daughter of a Schoharie sachem, married an Oquaga Indian named Lawrence, the son of Isaac Dekayenensere (Isaac’s daughter was Joseph Brant’s first wife). As a result of such marriages, there may have been between 100 to 200 Indians living in the upper Schoharie Valley in the early to mid eighteenth-century.³

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Regardless of their ethnic background, Schoharie was a land rich in emotional and spiritual significance to the natives who lived there. On the west side of Schoharie Creek lay three distinct mountains—one of which was called Onitstachragarawe or Corn Mountain. Given its proximity to the lush Indian cornfields below, Onitstachragarawe probably had the same spiritual meaning for the Schoharies that a similar mountain had for their Cayuga brethren further west. In his 1743 journey to Onondaga, John Bartram recorded an Indian story regarding the supernatural origins of the “three sisters”—corn, beans, and squash—from a distinct hill in the Cayugas’ country.4

Across the Atlantic Ocean, a migration was underway that would forever change the world that the Schoharie Mohawks knew. In the early eighteenth century, German peasants living in the Palatinate and other upper Rhine Valley regions faced great social and economic hardships. The continued domination of aristocrats, depredations of invading armies, high taxes, and poor harvests fueled an extensive auswanderung of German peasants. Some of these subsistence farmers, many living on the brink of poverty, migrated to America to become freeholders. Promotional literature, reports from other German emigrants, and news of Queen Anne of England’s patronage inflated the villagers’ hopes of obtaining land in America. In 1709 alone, more than 13,000 Palatine families journeyed to Holland and England. The British government sponsored a plan to settle the “poor palatines” in New York to produce naval stores for the Royal Navy. Overseeing the project was the newly-appointed Governor of New York, Col. Robert Hunter, a British army officer who had served with distinction under the Duke of Marlborough. As

4Simms, Frontiersmen of New York, 1: 76-77. Bartram, Journey from Pennsylvania to Onondaga, 54; Sivertsen, Turtles, Wolves, and Bears, 79.
he and the Palatines departed for America in April 1710, the four “Indian Kings”—three Mohawks and one Mahican—were approaching England on their diplomatic voyage.  

Like many other colonization projects, the British government’s naval stores plan ran aground on the shoals of New World conditions. After a hard journey on crowded, disease-ridden vessels in which hundreds died, Hunter and his charges arrived in New York harbor in June 1710. The governor had initially planned to settle the Palatines at Schoharie to produce naval stores and to provide a frontier barrier against the French, whose 1690 attack on Schenectady was still fresh in New Yorkers’ minds. But he decided against that valley because of preexisting jurisdictional disputes with the Mohawks and the navigational barrier of Cohoes Falls near Albany. More important, Hunter discovered that Schoharie did not even have suitable pines for the production of naval stores. Instead, he purchased a tract of about 6,000 acres on the Hudson River from the wealthy landowner Robert Livingston.

With unfailing accuracy, Lord Clarendon predicted that, given such arrangements, “the Palatines will not be the richer.” The nearly two thousand Germans living on the Hudson disconcertingly discovered that their new homes bore a striking resemblance to their old. Worse still, they were not freeholders but tenants, not farmers but tar-and-pitch-
makers, not subsisting but nearly starving. Given the Palatines’ inexperience in producing naval stores, the project never became solvent and eventually collapsed. Moreover, they had many grievances for which Hunter and Livingston were perfect scapegoats. For example, some of their children had been apprenticed to local Dutch and English families. The naval stores project eventually collapsed, leaving Hunter’s personal credit exhausted and the Palatines living on “almost barren land.” One Palatine representative recounted to Hunter a conversation he had heard among five frustrated Germans sitting around a fire: “We came to America to establish our families,” one remarked, “to secure lands for our children on which they will be able to support themselves after we die.” Increasingly, the mythic Schoharie Valley—a “Land of Canaan” flowing with milk and honey that the New York “Pharao” denied them—loomed ever larger in the Palatines’ imaginations.7

Few Palatines knew that Schoharie had once been the object of one of New York’s many high-profile land fraud cases. In 1695, Col. Nicholas Bayard, a member of the governor’s council, obtained a patent for Schoharie lands from Governor Benjamin Fletcher. As with many of Fletcher’s land grants, the Bayard patent’s size was almost incalculable: colonial officials later reported to the Board of Trade in 1698 stated that it was 24-30 miles wide but “its breadth we know not.” The Mohawks protested that Bayard had obtained the signatures of three drunken Mohawks who had no authority in matters of land. Worried over the possibility of losing the Five Nations’ alliance, the British government instructed Fletcher’s successor, the Earl of Bellomont, to rescind some

7DHNY 3: 657 (Clarendon); 708 (land); 658 (campfire scene); 659 (Canaan); 660 (population); 683 (Hunter’s credit); 553 (apprenticing); 168-69 (instruction in naval stores production); 707-14 (“Pharao” at 710); for other references to Palatine unrest in the Hudson camps, see DRCHNY 5: 212-15 (Cast’s letters), 238-42.

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of Fletcher's egregious land grants. Bellomont and the Assembly negotiated an "Act for Vacating Breaking and Annulling Severall Extravagant Grants of Land made by Coll Fletcher." Colonial representatives informed the Mohawks in 1699 that they were "possessed of said land [Schoharie], as if no such writing had been, and the said writing fully destroyed."*

But Schoharie lands again became an object of wealthy colonists' interest as a result of the proposed Palatine settlement there. Given the juridical powers arrayed against them—the Commissioners of Indian Affairs, surveyors, colonial landholders, and their manipulation of written law—the Mohawks shaped an otherwise malignant situation to their advantage. In early July 1710, the Commissioners of Indian Affairs informed the Mohawks that Hunter had arrived with "a great many familys" to settle at Schoharie, which they falsely claimed "is already purchased from you." They requested that the Mohawks accompany the surveyor general to lay out the tract. The Mohawks asserted their claims to the area, recalling that Governor Bellomont had "brooke y' Deed of Sale of y' Sd. Land & therefore it derives on us again." They were distrustful of government surveyors who might through sleight of compass and chain steal more of their lands. In one of their first meetings with Governor Hunter, Mohawks told him that they had heard rumors that Queen Anne "had Sent a Considerable Number of People with your Ex.ly to Settle upon the Land called Skohere, which was a great Surprize to us and we were much Disatisfyd at the news, in Regard the Land belonged to us." But true to their strong hospitality ethic, especially toward the poor and indigent, the Mohawks were "willing y' *

her maj. "shall have y^e Land at Skohere for poor people, & not one foot more, provided it be duey purchased." They reserved most of the fertile flood plains below Onitstachragarawe for their own planting and requested that all future land sales be public events, with all three clans present, to prevent precisely such land disputes. The Mohawks likely intended the grant to be a deed in trust—an act of faith in both Queen Anne and the British alliance. Governor Hunter, however, believed that the Mohawks had "resigned their claims to their Lands to the Crown," for in subsequent years he speedily issued land grants to many applicants.9

But the Germans applied for land not to the government but to the original Mohawk settlers. It is unclear how the Palatines came to know the locations of the Mohawk villages and how they established personal ties to them. Those who had read promotional tracts may have formed favorable impressions of Indian character and felt confident to approach the natives. Perhaps some of the Palatines (including John Conrad Weiser) who had participated in the aborted 1711 expedition to Canada encountered some of their Mohawk allies during their military service. Another possibility is that the Palatines on the Hudson frequently met Mahican or River Indians, who told them of the Schoharie Mohawks and the Indian path leading to the valley.10

During a harsh winter in 1712, in which the Palatines suffered heavily, they were "put under the hard and greeting necessity of seeking relief from the Indians." This decision was "much against their wills," but the Palatines had few alternatives: they had no

9 Lawrence H. Leder, ed., The Livingston Indian Records, 1666-1723 (Gettysburg, Pa.: Pennsylvania Historical Association, 1956), 215-16; "Propositions made by the Maquase Indians, owners of the Land called Skohere and divers other Sachims of the said Nation to his Excellency Robert Hunter 22nd of August 1710," Miscellaneous Manuscripts, Indians, Folder 3, NYHS (emphasis mine); DRCHNY 5: 553. See also DRCHNY 5: 171 and NYCM 10: 528-29 (July 13 and 20, 1710), NYSA.
offensive power to vanquish the Indians, no defensive strength to resist the French, and no food. During the Palatines’ exodus, the “Canaanites,” not an invisible God, led the Israelites to the “promis’d land of Schorie.” The Palatine faction that advocated moving to Schoharie sent a delegation of “Chiefs” to the Mohawks, including John Conrad Weiser. The delegates were leading officials or “listmasters” among the Hudson River camps. The Mohawks “kindly” received the Palatine “Chiefs,” who told them of “their miserable Condition.” During this meeting the Iroquois likely spread out grass mats for their guests to sit on and shared the calumet before proceeding with business. The deputies sought the Mohawks’ permission to settle at Schoharie—one indication that the Palatines believed that the Indians were “the true owners of the soil.” The Palatine villagers’ communal understanding of land and property—similar to the Iroquois’ own—survived their journey to America and influenced their views of Indian villagers’ rights. In the Palatine account of the meeting, the Indians not only approved, remarking that they had long ago set aside the land to Queen Anne for their use, but pledged that “no body else should hinder them of it, and they would assist them as far as they were able.” In the dead of winter in late 1712, about 150 hungry families (perhaps numbering around 400 or more persons) made a grueling journey through deep snow along the Indian paths and either took up lands on the east bank of Schoharie Creek or wintered at Schenectady.11

The Palatine and Mohawk villagers' spatial arrangements facilitated frequent social and economic interactions. The Palatines' agricultural villages—more a motley collection of huts—were located on the east bank of Schoharie Creek. The villages' names—Kneskernsdorf, Gerlachsdorf, Fuchsendorf, Schmidtsdorf, Weisersdorf, Hartmannsdorf, and Oberweiserdorf (from north to south)—commemorated the six Palatine "Chiefs" who had negotiated with the Mohawks. Plainly visible from Weisersdorf was Karighondonte's Mohawk village which was situated near a bend in Schoharie Creek near a mountain that the Palatines would come to know as Onistagrawa. A smaller village of Mahicans or River Indians was located just a few miles south of Oberweiserdorf on the east side of Schoharie. The Schoharie Indians' principal village, known as "Eskahare," was situated about twenty four miles south of Tiononderoga on the west side of Schoharie, opposite the northernmost German villages. Collectively, the Schoharie Indians numbered between 100 to 200 for most of the eighteenth century but their numbers were steadily declining due to disease and frequent participation in British military campaigns. By 1713, more than five hundred Germans had settled the valley, far outnumbering the Schoharie Mohawks and imparting a decidedly European cast to the landscape.12

Initially, the Palatines were totally dependent upon their Mohawk neighbors for food, shelter, and clothing. They represented themselves as babes suckling at their Mohawk mothers' breasts, a metaphor that established the dependent nature of their alliance and was attuned to the Mohawks' own kinship-based diplomatic terminology. A

1720 petition acknowledged that due to their defenseless condition, “they were oblig’d to keep fair with the friendly Indians amongst Whom, they dwelt, which was the only way to be protected and live in peace.” It also revealed that “had it not been for the Charity of the Indians who shew’d them where to gather some eatable roots and herbs, must inevitably have perish’d every soul of them.” The Indians showed the Palatines where to gather ochnanada (wild potatoes) and otgraquara (strawberries). The Palatines also benefited from the Mohawks’ earlier clearing of the Schoharie bottomlands for corn and other staples; they were instructed in the cultivation of Indian corn, “the Chief of their subsistence” which they “got of the natives.” A second-generation German settler also remembered the exchanges of material goods between Indians and colonists: the Palatines “wore moggisins—buckskin breeches and jackets of leather, which they plentifully obtained of the Indians.” Adoption of Indian or colonial dress may have occurred while natives and newcomers hunted together. One settler, who claimed to be “part native,” later recalled how a party of Indian and European hunters rescued her from a panther in the hills above the Schoharie Valley.13

Peaceful exchanges between the Mohawks and Palatines and creation of fictive kin ties reinforced their alliance. When John Conrad Weiser settled along Schoharie Creek, he sent his young son Conrad to live with the family of a Caughnawaga Mohawk named Quainant (or Taquayanont) who inhabited the valley. Conrad was to learn the Mohawk language and to act as an interpreter. John Conrad’s ultimate goal, to create stronger links between the Palatine and Mohawk communities, came at enormous personal risk: he

13DHNY 3: 711-13; Weiser Autobiography, 25; Brown, Brief Sketch of the First Settlement of Schoharie, 10; Roscoe, History of Schoharie County, 30-32; Simms, History of Schoharie County, 89-90.
had already lost one of his sons, Johann Frederick, who died a few years earlier when Governor Hunter apprenticed him to other New York colonists. During the cold winter of 1713, young Conrad, along with his Indian hosts, suffered from “severe cold” and was “poorly clothed.” To make matters worse, Weiser frequently had to hide from drunken Indians. His initially traumatic initiation, however, did not instill any hatred of Indians in him. He was adopted by a Mohawk family, and he consistently maintained ties with his Mohawk family, particularly two brothers, Jonathan Cayenquiloquoa and Moses, and a Mohawk sister. He became fluent in Mohawk, as he recounted in his autobiographical journal:

One English mile from my father’s house lived some Maqua families. Then there were often some of the Maqua on their hunting trips in trouble and there was much to interpret but without pay. There was no one else to be found among our people who understood the language. I therefore mastered the language completely, as much as my years and other circumstances permitted.

Weiser’s apprenticeship later paid great dividends for the Palatines in their approaching confrontations with New York’s well-connected landed interests.\(^{14}\)

Hunter and the provincial government were determined to squelch the Palatines’ unwarranted and brazen defiance of their repeated orders forbidding their removal to Schoharie. Colonial officials in 1711-12 were undoubtedly more sensitive to threats from below since the Palatines’ insubordination occurred while rumors circulated of a slave conspiracy in New York City. Colonial officials were particularly concerned with what they saw as unsanctioned diplomacy with the Mohawks. In June 1715, the New York government issued a warrant for John Conrad Weiser’s arrest, “for Acting and Treating

\(^{14}\)Weiser Autobiography, 21-23, 29. 33; Wallace, Conrad Weiser, 18, 579; DHNY 3: 566-67 (Johann Frederick).
with ye Indians contrary to His Excellencies Proclamation." Hunter presumed Weiser guilty of "several Mutinous Riotous & other disobedient & illegal practices." Moreover, he was "skulking" like an Indian on the frontiers to avoid arrest. But when he proved unable to expel the Palatines by force, Hunter contented himself with the thought that the Palatines would absorb any future French-Indian attacks.\textsuperscript{15}

Conrad Weiser observed that at Schoharie "the people lived for a few years without preacher and without government, generally in peace." Mohawk and Palatine villagers were capable of crafting mutually beneficial arrangements over land, establishing boundaries between their communities, and living in peace. For example, since the Germans did not initially obtain land through official measures, they and the Mohawks relied on local landmarks to delineate communal boundaries. Certainly Schoharie Creek, with the east side inhabited by the Palatines and the west side by the Mohawks—was one important boundary. Another landmark, which denoted the southern boundary of Palatine lands, was an old oak stump, along with a pile of stones (which stood into the early nineteenth century) located near the junction of Little and Big Schoharie creeks. The oak stump, with turtle and snake totems carved into it, served the Schoharie Indians as a place to grind their corn. While some Germans carried their wheat and corn to Schenectady for milling, others used the oak stump and imitated Indian technology for producing meal in the early years of settlement.\textsuperscript{16}


\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Weiser Autobiography}, 29; Brown, \textit{First Settlement of the County of Schoharie}, 5; Roscoe, \textit{History of Schoharie County}, 30; Simms, \textit{History of Schoharie County}, 48, 52.
When conflict came to the Schoharie, both the Indians and the Palatines allied to thwart the schemes of outsiders who threatened their lands. They were under siege from outsiders—the “Seven Partners” and a Schenectady merchant named Adam Vrooman—who had access to the legal weapons of New York’s land system. Their improvements aroused the interest of those wealthier individuals who may have hoped to secure Schoharie lands and the Palatines as tenants. In April 1714 Vrooman obtained a license to purchase from the natives 340 acres of land on the west side of Schoharie Creek; that the lands lie so close to the Mohawks planting grounds and that the claims expanded from 340 to 600 acres raise questions about Vrooman’s veracity. When Vrooman attempted to settle on his tract, the Palatines struck back with the aid of their Mohawk allies. Vrooman complained to the governor that “Wiser with his Crew” had damaged his property and prevented him from settling lands given to him by the Indians “so long agoe.” He particularly denounced “Wiser’s Son a Young Lad [who] is very Impudent.” Conrad Weiser employed his interpreting skills “to Run to Call the Indians that Lives [there] to help Him” drive cattle through Vrooman’s corn field—apparently a daily ritual. The disgruntled Vrooman warned Hunter that “[Weiser] and his father with some Confederates Conive with the Indians every day . . . and tells them many Lyes.”

In November 1714, a more formidable threat to the Schoharie Mohawks and Palatines’ lands emerged. The “Seven Partners”—an Albany coterie that included

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members of the wealthy Livingston and Schuyler families—received letters patent for a tract of about 10,000 acres along Schoharie Creek. The grant embraced much of Bayard’s old claims and enveloped the Palatines’ settlements. The Seven Partners served notice to the Palatines that “Wee are King’s of this land” and that they should either enter leases or leave. According to the Palatines, the Partners also tried to sow “Enmity betwixt them and the Indians, and if possible to persuade them (for money or Rumm) to put them in possession of the land and declare them rightfull owners thereof; but in this also they fail’d.” Disdaining the partners’ “extravagant terms,” the Germans pleaded to the Mohawks “that since they had so long sukled them at their breast, not to wean them so soon and Cast them of.” The Mohawks’ response is not recorded.

For five or six years, the Palatines remained squatters in the eyes of the absentee landholders. The Palatine leadership held out hope that an appeal directly to the British crown might secure their occupancy of Schoharie. In 1718, John Conrad Weiser and two other leaders sailed for England, where they presented petitions on behalf of the Palatines. These petitions shed light on Palatines’ attitudes toward Indian occupancy and land. They argued that since the area they initially settled was too small, they were “oblig’d to sollicit all the Indian Kings there adjoyning for more land, which they willingly granted for 33 pieces of Eight.” Johannes Wilhelm Schefs’ petition emphasized the numerous improvements the settlers had made, including “Hutts, Houses, & some Mills for grinding

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18 DHNY 3: 711-13; Knittle, Early Palatine Emigration, 200-201; Higgins, Expansion in New York, 52-58; Indorsed Land Papers 5: 70, 144, 173 (Bayard); 6: 24-25, 78-80 (Seven Partners); on the attempts of land speculators to obtain squatters’ lands and improvements, see Fox, Land Speculation in the Mohawk Country, 10-11.
of Corn.” He asked that King George grant the Palatines the lands they occupied in Schoharie since their residence predated the Seven Partners and Vrooman patents. While the applications did not result in a royal land grant to the Germans, the Board of Trade ordered the new governor of New York, William Burnet, to settle the Palatines elsewhere on the frontier.¹⁹

In their collective memory of their emigration to New York, Palatine settlers remembered peaceful relations and cooperation with the Mohawks, not the existence of vacant land over which “savages” had no rights. When John Conrad Weiser and other agents petitioned the British government in 1720, they mentioned that the Palatines’ decided to settle at Schoharie because “the Indians had given [Schoharie lands] to the late Queen Ann for their use.” By the time young Conrad Weiser penned an autobiographical account, the legend had become even more embellished. In his telling, the Palatines had sent deputies to the Mohawks because one of the four “Indian Kings” who had visited England in 1710 saw “the German people [lying] in tents on the Black Heath” and set aside some of the Schoharie lands out of pity for the “poor palatines.” As Weiser remembered it, “the Indian Deputies were sent to direct the Germans to Schochary.” Shiploads of Palatines, however, had already departed for New York when the “Indian Kings” reached England, so there is no basis in fact for the Palatines’ belief.²⁰

¹⁹DrCHNY 5: 554, 575, 582, 634; DHNY 3: 710; A.G. Roeber, Palatines, Liberty, and Property, 13.
²⁰DHNY 3: 708; Weiser Autobiography, 17; so enduring was this myth that later historians, including Francis Whiting Halsey in his 1901 classic The Old New York Frontier, reported that while in England the Palatines “had met the five Indian chiefs taken over by Major Schuyler, who offered them land in America” (35-36).
By the early 1720s, the Palatine community in Schoharie fractured and the leadership that had structured the community’s alliance with the Mohawks dispersed. As Conrad Weiser recalled, “there was no one among the people who could govern them” and Palatines drifted to other areas in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Virginia. He added that “each one did as he wished.” Many Schoharie residents, as Governor Burnet reported, had “actually taken leases from [the absentee landlords] and attorned Tenants to them.” Other Palatines, including Conrad Weiser, migrated westward and southward along the Susquehanna, taking up lands in the Tulpehocken Valley, an area still occupied by the Delawares but nominally claimed by Pennsylvania (the Palatines made no effort to negotiate with the Delawares over land). Having been defeated in their attempt to bypass New York’s procedures for land patenting, some Germans “began to get a little wiser” and applied for licenses to purchase Indian lands. Well-to-do settlers began patenting lands in the Schoharie Valley. Other Palatines would go on to settle a tract nearly forty miles west of Albany called Burnetsfield. In the early 1720s, Palatine leaders such as John Jost Petrie, John Conrad Weiser, and Johann Peter Kniskern had negotiated with Mohawks and Oneidas for lands further west.21

The upper Mohawk Valley, especially the areas that became known as Stone Arabia, Burnetsfield, and German Flatts, was a Palatine haven in the eighteenth century. The Palatines carried with them into these areas the legacy of cooperation and face-to-face negotiation with the natives they had displayed at Schoharie. The German Flatts inhabitants essentially interspersed between Mohawk and Oneida villages. For the second time, the Palatines’ lives on the frontier were intricately linked to Indian peoples with whom they were obliged to keep on friendly terms. New York officials hoped that by planting the Palatines on the far western border they “will be still more immediately a Barrier against the Sudden incursions of the French, who made this their Road” when they attacked Schenectady in 1690. When the Board of Trade wrote in favor of the Palatine emigration in 1709, it believed that they would “in process of time by intermarrying with the neighbouring Indians (as the French do) they may be Capable rendring very great Service to Her Majesty’s Subjects.” As chapter four demonstrates, the Palatine and Oneida communities created a political, economic, and military alliance designed to shield both peoples from the threat of French attacks on their settlements.22

22DHNY 3: 716; DRCHNY 5: 88, 656.
II: “Now you see for yourself how we are treated”: The Tiononderoge Mohawks and the Early European Colonization of the Mohawk Valley, 1712–1748

The Iroquoian word “Tiononderoge” signifies “two streams coming together”—Schoharie Creek and the Mohawk River. In the early eighteenth century, the Mohawk peoples living at the village of Tiononderoge increasingly found themselves at the junction of Mohawk and Anglo-Dutch cultural streams. The Mohawks’ experiences demonstrate the extraordinary pressures of colonization that eighteenth-century Mohawks faced and how they adapted to European settlements that increasingly surrounded them. Tiononderoge’s proximity to the main nodes of Anglo-Dutch power at Albany and Schenectady meant that they were the hardest pressed of all of the Iroquois. Moreover, the New York officials responsible for maintaining the Covenant Chain alliance were often most involved in attempts to aggrandize Indian lands. Despite the powerful officials arrayed against them, the Mohawks succeeded in gaining a modicum of security for their lands, avoiding total dependency and poverty, and maintaining their prestige for decades to come. In contrast to Schoharie, where bands of emigrant Indians accommodated bands of emigrant Palatines, the Tiononderoge Mohawks endured a tempestuous relationship with their powerful European neighbors at Albany and Schenectady, who tried to obtain their valuable planting lands. Like their Schoharie brethren, the Tiononderoge Mohawks created alliances with local colonists—based upon face-to-face encounters—to protect their


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lands from covetous outsiders. One such colonist was a young twenty-three-year-old Irish immigrant named William Johnson.

Tiononderoge, like Schoharie, had only been recently settled by the Mohawks; it was unlike a typical seventeenth-century Iroquoian village with palisades to protect the longhouses inside. The Haudenosaunee had largely ceased to live in their eponymous longhouses by the early- to mid-eighteenth century. During a diplomatic mission to Iroquoia in 1677, the English official Wentworth Greenhalgh described five different Mohawk villages. Four of them were pallisaded villages or "castles," while one was "without Fence & contayns about ten houses." All of the Mohawk villages were located on the north side of the Mohawk River. By 1712, there were only two villages, which had been relocated to the south bank. French attacks against the Mohawk villages in 1693 had forced the abandonment of the four main villages that Greenhalgh had seen in 1677. Over the next decade, the Mohawks shifted their residences to the south bank of the river for added protection. A number of Mohawk bands lived in four distinct settlements near the mouth of Schoharie Creek; it was only during the period from 1700 to 1712 that they began to concentrate on the east bank in the village that became known as Tiononderoge. On a hilltop to the west lay an abandoned pallisaded village called Ogsadaga. In 1713, an English missionary estimated the Mohawk population at Tiononderoge as 360 persons living in 40-50 houses.²

²"Observations of Wentworth Greenhalgh in a Journey from Albany to the Indians Westward," in Snow, Gehring, and Starna, *In Mohawk Country*, 188-92 (at 189); Fenton and Tooker, "Mohawk," *HNAI* 15: 474; see the excellent overviews of Mohawk population and settlement in Dean R. Snow, *Mohawk Valley Archaeology*, 1: 449-81 (see particularly the site descriptions for Auriesville #1 and #3, Milton Smith (1092), and Fort Hunter (1100, 1105, 1112); *DRCHNY* 4: 802 (Ogsadaga); David Guldenzopf, "Frontier Demography and Settlement Patterns of the Mohawk Iroquois," *Man in the Northeast* 27
Mohawks settled at Tiononderoge for protection in a time of unimaginable danger. When Queen Anne's War broke out in 1702, they faced increasing pressure to participate in English campaigns against Canada, such as the Francis Nicholson's aborted 1709 expedition up the Champlain Valley. Nicholson's army included hundreds of Iroquois warriors, who suffered heavily from disease and the anomie typical of European-style campaigning. The Mohawks not only feared French attacks but killer epidemics that had attacked their bodies with even greater vehemence. "Death follows us everywhere we go," one Iroquois lamented to Governor Hunter in 1719. He might have been referring to the smallpox epidemic that had raged in 1716-1717. What disease left undone, rum finished. The Mohawks' proximity to Dutch traders at Albany and Schenectady virtually guaranteed a torrent of rum that swept away much of the village's peace and health.

English missionaries irregularly stationed at Fort Hunter regularly reported how drunkenness unleashed violence among the villagers. Some Mohawks were accidentally killed in drunken brawls.3

Like the rest of the Iroquois peoples after the 1701 treaty with the French, the Mohawks tried to rebuild a lasting peace from war's ashes. For the Keepers of the

Eastern Door, this meant balancing their ties with the French via their Kanahwake Mohawk brethren and their English neighbors. They also pressed the New York government to build a fort for their protection. While some historians see the introduction of forts as the death knell for native autonomy, the Mohawks believed a fort was necessary to "preserve us from our Enemies for we were surrounded by the French and Dawaganhaes on all hands." In 1712, four local carpenters completed a fort with four blockhouses, a chapel, and a parsonage. The newly appointed missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, William Andrews, also arrived at Fort Hunter in 1712 hoping to convert the Mohawks to Christianity. Many Mohawks had already received Christian instruction through Dutch Reformed clergy such as Godfridius Dellius. Andrews left the mission in 1719 disheartened that his efforts had not produced more converts. In fact, there was a solid core of Protestant Mohawk converts at Fort Hunter who had fashioned a Mohawk Christianity that Andrews did not recognize. Just as the Mohawks shaped their religious needs, they did not passively experience the political events unfolding around them.4

among them in hopes of obtaining Mohawk land, not to redeem Mohawk souls. The sachem Deanissorens reported that he had encountered a Mohawk messenger carrying news that an Indian named Johannes had been murdered and another wounded. This report may have originated in a "Drunken Quarrel" between some Mohawks and soldiers stationed at Albany. The Mohawks, according to Decanissorens, were "ready and [making] Bullets were resolved to distroy y\textsuperscript{e} Christians and desired y\textsuperscript{e} assistance of the other four Nations." Lt. Charles Huddy at Fort Hunter confirmed that there was a conspiracy afoot among "the four upper Indian Nations to surprise the fort in the Mohocks Country."

Venal New York officials, from the Commissioners of Indian Affairs to the commanders of colonial garrisons, consistently used their offices to defraud Mohawks of their lands. These official negotiators jeopardized the peace as much as than the ordinary settlers living closest to the Mohawks. The governor's council received word that one officer at Fort Hunter, Lt. John Scott, was "Treating with the Indians to make . . . purchases of them for land without any Lycense from this Board" and ordered him to desist. Hendrick Tekarihogen, who had visited London in 1710, later complained that the Tiononderoge villagers could not practice their devotions "as Long as rum was sold so Publickly in their Country." In particular, John Scott, Johannes Harmense, Joseph Clement, and Thomas Wildman "sold Rum so plentifully as if it were water out of a

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\( ^5 \) NYCMSS 58: 87 (January 24, 1713) NYCM 11:115-17 (July 3 and 17, 1712) and 207 (August 3, 1713); for other rumors of the Mohawks' impending destruction, see Hendrick Hansen and John Bleeker's journal of a conference at Onondaga in 1713, DRCHNY 5: 372-73 and the records of the 1714 and 1717 conferences between Governor Hunter and the Five Nations, DRCHNY 5: 383, 485-86.
fountain and if that Cannot be privinted they Cannot Live Peaceably in their Castle."

Scott’s rum was probably involved in his land deals, for in 1720 Hendrick Tekarihogen vehemently resented that “Cap’ Scot had bought some Land of the Maquase in a Clandestin way in the Night time and not in a Regular Lawfull way.” The Commissioners of Indian Affairs callously ignored Hendrick’s request “that no Patent of any Land in the Mohoggs Country should be Granted [to Scott]”; Governor William Burnet and the Council approved John Scott’s patent in 1722.6

Land controversies in colonial New York tended to be long, drawn-out affairs lasting for decades. They often involved colonial claims to Indian lands; even if colonists received letters patent, they could not attempt actual settlement if natives still inhabited or claimed the area. Land speculation was an investment based on faith that natives would eventually be driven away. The Tiononderoge Mohawks, for example, faced chronic challenges from the Corporation of Albany for the fertile bottomlands, the Mohawk Flatts, situated near the junction of Schoharie Creek and the Mohawk River. This land dispute, which persisted into the 1770s, was doubly explosive because it involved rival colonial claimants: Walter Butler’s predominantly Anglo-Irish faction against the largely Dutch claimants of the Corporation of Albany. Originally from Connecticut, Butler relocated to New York and became a lieutenant of New York militia commanding the small garrison at Fort Hunter. In 1730, he obtained a license to purchase 12,000 acres at Tiononderoge

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6NYCM 11: 352-53 (May 30, 1716), vol. 12: 169 (September 9, 1720); DRCHNY 5: 569 (rum); see DRCHNY 5: 217, 662-63, 863-64 for other native complaints about the excessive flow of rum to their villages. For John Scott’s patent for lands four miles west of Tiononderoge, see Indorsed Land Papers, vol. 7: 185; vol. 8: 188, 197, 200; vol. 9: 1.
(also known as the Mohawk Flatts) from the natives he ostensibly guarded from harm. The Corporation of Albany soon filed a petition for a grant of 4,000 acres of the Flatts, which they claimed the Mohawks had “formerly granted to the city” in 1686. The Albanians also filed a *caveat* against Butler’s petition to stop the land-patenting machinery. To broaden his political base, Butler enlisted other officeholders to become partners, including Governor Cosby and some of his council members. His initial claim for 12,000 acres ballooned into a claim for 86,000 acres of Mohawks’ lands. In contrast to the Palatines, who had a degree of respect for Indian occupancy, Butler and the Albanians (some of whom were entrusted with Indian relations), referred to the Mohawk Flatts as “vacant land,” ignoring native uses of the area. The controversy lingered until August 1733, when Cosby and the interested councilmen approved Butler’s application. At least one of Butler’s Indian deeds was produced *post-facto* in 1735, suggesting less-than-scrupulous methods for obtaining the necessary Indian quit-claim.7

In a September 1733 meeting with the Mohawks, Cosby took action to discredit the Albany Corporation’s claims and to secure his own. In his historical writings, Cadwallader Colden stressed that once Cosby learned of Tiononderoge’s value and the “defects” of the Albany deed, he “resolv’d to have it for himself.” According to Colden, the governor may have arranged for Butler to incite the Mohawks about the nature of the Albany deed. The Mohawks later protested that the mayor and Corporation of Albany

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had by "deceitful and Indirect ways and Means" induced them to sign a deed of trust for the Flatts. The Indians feared that the Corporation "would Defraud us of the Said land by taking possession of it for themselves."

The Mohawks declared that they were "able to take care of our own Land ourselves" and demanded justice. Cosby ordered the mayor of Albany to produce the deed and had interpreter Laurence Clausen read it to the assembled Indians. Upon hearing that the deed was an "absolute conveyance" of the lands rather than a deed of trust, the Mohawks "cryed out with one voice that they were cheated" and threatened to "leave their Country, and go over to the French." Cosby turned the deed over to the Mohawks, who in a "great rage" tore it up and burned it. The Mohawks then signed another deed in trust with the King of England and asked for their own copy. Significantly, the name of a principal Mohawk woman, Jacomine, is the first signature to appear on the deed.

The written records did not document the authentic voices of the Mohawks, just as they veiled the role that women like Jacomine played in the proceedings. Why, for example, would Mohawks who had just discovered a gross fraud then convey more lands to Walter Butler and directly ask the governor to give Butler a patent? Did the Mohawks truly have "Affection" for Butler as the minutes stated? Cosby's interest in obtaining other Tiononderoge Mohawk lands and defeating the Albanians' claims meant that he and his associates may have manipulated the Mohawks' speeches and actions to bolster their

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8Cadwallader Colden, "History of Governor William Cosby's Administration and of Lieutenant Governor George Clarke's Administration Through 1737." Colden Papers 9: 304-305; NYCM 16: 253-54 (September 12, 1733); April I, 1734 Council Minute, Daniel Horsmanden Papers, NYHS, Misc. Microfilms 32: DRCHNY vol. 5: 960; vol. 6: 15-16 (deed in trust).
own claims. Cosby’s colonial contemporaries were also suspicious of his actions: as Colden saw it, Cosby and “his friends could not avoid the Impression it made on peoples minds that he would stop at no Injustice in order to fill his pockets.”

The Mohawk Flatts controversy haunted both the Mohawks and New York political life for years to come. The Tiononderoge Mohawks never fully resolved the conflict with Albany’s leaders until 1773, when the British government and Sir William Johnson pressured the Albany Corporation to issue a quit-claim. In the short term, Cosby had a 14,000-acre interest in Butler’s Tiononderoge patent. After the governor’s death in 1736, Sir Peter Warren purchased this tract of land from his widow and enlisted his young nephew, William Johnson, to develop his new plantation.

Of all the Europeans who settled near Tiononderoge, Johnson would prove to be the most significant in Mohawk history. The twenty-three-year old arrived in New York unheralded and inexperienced. Like other Europeans in the Mohawk Valley, he displayed a willingness to live peaceably with his Mohawk neighbors. Born into a prominent Anglo-Irish gentry family in 1715, Johnson had emigrated to New York in 1737-38 as a client of his uncle, Peter Warren, a Royal Navy captain. Johnson profitably managed his uncle’s estate--Warrensburg or Warreensbush--located only a few miles east of the Mohawk town at Tiononderoge. In addition to the twelve Irish families who accompanied him to New York, Johnson later settled Irish, English, and Palatine families at Warreensbush (including

9 NYCM 16: 254; Colden Papers 9: 305.
10 Indorsed Land Papers, vol. 11: 162, 165, 174; vol. 12: 79; Colden Papers 2: 188 (Mrs. Cosby’s sale of land); see Katz, Newcastle’s New York, chap. 4 and Bonomi, A Factions People, chap. 4 for the political controversies spawned during Cosby’s administration; see DRCHNY 6: 16 (footnote) for the resolution of the Mohawk Flatts land dispute.

Like the Palatines, Johnson and his "Neighbours at the Mohawks Castle" quickly established a harmonious and symbiotic relationship through close economic and social ties that benefited both communities. At a local level, their relationship helped to stabilize an emerging bicultural Mohawk Valley world that Iroquois and Europeans shared. Johnson became involved in the fur trade with the Oquagas and Mohawks and obtained a lucrative contract to supply the British garrison at Oswego. He recognized that his trading store would intercept "all the High Germans passing by that way in the winter, and all the upper Nations of Indians, whose trade is pritty valuable." Johnson's relations with his Mohawk neighbors soon made him in an important negotiator in Anglo-Iroquois diplomacy. The Mohawks appreciated his liberality and fairness, naming him Warrighiyagey (variously translated as "doer of great things" or "in the midst of affairs"). Johnson once boasted that the Mohawks were "well pleased at my <SettIeing> here, and keeping w'. necessarys they wanted." Historians typically emphasize how Johnson influenced the Mohawks, but the Mohawks cultivated Johnson for their own purposes. In future years, the Mohawks employed their powerful neighbor to advocate their interests and lands. Since Johnson's own influence among the Six Nations rested largely with the
Mohawks, he had a vested interest in protecting their rights and promoting their prestige as Keepers of the Eastern Door. He supported the Mohawks in their land grievances over the Mohawk Flatts, Kayaderosseras, Livingston, and other smaller patents. Recent historians such as Timothy Shannon have focused on Johnson's important relationship with Hendrick Theyanoguin. Historians typically credit Johnson and Hendrick with remolding a stronger Anglo-Mohawk link in the Covenant Chain, but they overlook Johnson's relationships with other key sachems and Mohawk women. Johnson fathered a number of children with a Mohawk woman named Elizabeth and another unnamed Mohawk woman. William and Elizabeth had three children—Brant Johnson or Keghneghtaga in 1742, Thomas in 1744, and Christian in 1745; the second Mohawk woman bore him a son named William Tagawirunte. Contemporaries speculated wildly on how many Indian "concubines" Johnson kept, which obscured the vital role of women in Mohawk polity and matrilineality. Johnson's relationship with Elizabeth gave him a connection to the most influential matrons and sachems of Tiononderoge. His array of partnerships with Brant Canagaradunckwa, Theyanoguin (Hendrick), and many other Mohawk leaders was developed in the context of the Mohawks' matrilineal ties.  

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Significantly, Elizabeth’s sister, Christina, married Brant Kanagaradunckwa in 1738. Elizabeth’s uncle, Peter, married a Tiononderoge Mohawk named Margaret in 1735. Peter’s and Margaret’s children included Joseph and Molly Brant, both of whom would figure prominently in Johnson’s later years. Johnson learned to speak Mohawk (no small feat for an adult European), occasionally acted as an interpreter, and became familiar with Iroquois customs and diplomatic rituals such as the Condolence Ceremony. As a contemporary observed, Johnson “knew how to react to the Indians’ sense of humor” and he complied “with their humours in his dress & conversation with them.” Most important, Johnson understood the significance natives placed on gift-giving and hospitality; his house was almost never without Indian guests.14

Continuing European colonization and the advent of King George’s War in 1744 tested the Mohawks’ increasingly close ties to the English. Even the Mohawks’ staunch friend William Johnson contributed to the colonial settlement boom by settling German and Irish tenants on his estates on favorable terms; he prided himself on being of the few large landholders who successfully improved frontier lands. One rumor in particular illustrates both the Mohawks’ residual fears over being dispossessed and the

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extraordinarily close social relations between the Tiononderoge villagers and their European neighbors. On a cold January night in 1745, a rumor swept through the Mohawk castles, fueled by their deepest fears and suspicions of the British. While the frequency of such rumors from Decanissorens’ time to Hendricks’ suggests a state of perpetual distrust of the Albany officials and traders, the 1745 rumor also reveals the depth of colonial and Iroquois social interactions. The rumor began, as one Mohawk remembered, when “Our Friends among the White People” informed the Mohawks that “the white People of Albany, were a coming with Drums & Trumpets with several hundreds to kill the Mohawks.” Gunpowder and bullets had been recently brought into Fort Hunter, which verified the report. Five or six Mohawks who had been in Schenectady actually delivered the news in the middle of the night. The Mohawks were so alarmed that some fled to the Oneidas and upper Nations; as one Mohawk remembered, “the dead Cry was heard everywhere, Que, Que, Que.” Rev. William Barclay’s attempts to quiet his Tiononderoge flock were met with “Violence” and accusations that he was “the chief contriver of the destruction intended against them” and in league with the devil. The Commissioners for Indian Affairs soon intervened. Although Governor Clinton believed that without their efforts “we should have lost our Indians,” the Albany Commissioners were at the heart of the problem. John Henry Lydius’s Mohawk informant related that some Mohawks were so fearful of the Commissioners that they fled to Canada upon their approach to


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Tiononderoge (one of their few trips to Mohawk Country).  

For most of 1745, New York's colonial officials groped to understand the rumor's origins and, to a lesser extent, why the Mohawks reacted to it so fearfully. Some thought that it was the work of French agents, perhaps Chabert de Joncaire in Seneca Country. All that Lydius could discover was that the man "lived between Schenectady and fort Hunter." The New York government charged Pennsylvania interpreter Conrad Weiser, who was journeying to Iroquoia to broker a peace with the Catawbas, to investigate the "Strange Alarm" amongst the Iroquois.

Anxious colonial officials searched for a person to punish, but Mohawks focused on the larger cause. As Aaron Asarageghty, a Tiononderoge Mohawk, told Weiser, "the old Cause, That we have been cheated out of Our Lands, stil remains unsettled." Long-standing grievances over land frauds and fears of dispossession were at the heart of the Mohawk leaders' remarks. Canajoharie leaders Hendrick, Abraham, Arughiadokekka spoke bitterly that the "Albany People did intend to hurt us, --& have in a manner ruined us," as they told Weiser. "They have cheated us out of our Land, --Bribed our Chiefs to sign Deeds for them--They treat us as Slaves" and listed a host of other grievances against

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them. They emphasized that the Indians “would no more look upon the Commiss* as their true friends” and threatened to move to New France. They warned that “the Quarrel with Albany will never be made up—They had in a manner made it up by word of Mouth, but on both Sides, only the Tongue Spoke, & not the heart, & we will never be friends again with the Albany People.” Weiser’s attempts to persuade Hendrick of royal justice seemed an ineffective way to dispel his belief that the “Albany people” wished “for nothing [more] than the Destruction of the Mohawk Nation.”

At a 1745 meeting with Six Nations leaders, Governor Clinton pressed the matter further, hoping to uncover the rumor’s genesis and again sidestepping the larger issue of Mohawk lands. In a private conference, Hendrick revealed that Andries Van Patten (who may have been one of the carpenters who helped to construct Fort Hunter) was responsible for spreading the report. Tiononderoge sachem Johannes Canadagaye, spoke “distinctly” that “I have been the most part of the Winter at the House of Andrew Van Patten,” as Conrad Weiser interpreted it. Van Patten heard news that the Mohawks “were to be cut off by their Brethren the Dutch.” Johannes could understand a little Dutch, but Van Patten could not speak Mohawk, so they relied on Van Patten’s “Negro Wench [who] interpreted it into the Indian Language.” Greatly alarmed, Johannes went “several times from Van Patten’s to the Mohawks, went to Arent [Stevens], and he went down with Johannes to Van Patten’s and heard the same from him from his own Mouth . . . and sometimes the Negro Wench put a few Words in Indian” [could these “few Words” have included the conspiracy story?]. Van Patten was called before the Council, which believed

his steadfast protestations of innocence. Governor Clinton and his council concluded that
"the Report spread among the Indians at which they pretended to be so much alarmed and
uneasy was a device of their own contrivance in order to induce this as well as the
neighbouring Govern" to give them presents this year."^{19}

Accordingly, colonial officials hardened their hearts in the 1745 meeting while the
Mohawks "were resolved to open their Hearts." Hendrick charged that "there were
persons that had Deeds in their pockets for five or six lots of land and now he has not a
dust of ground to set his foot on." He voiced the Mohawks' concern that "they were
become the property of Albany people, they were their dogs" who could be kicked around
like their poor and increasingly landless neighbors, the River Indians. A report also
circulated that the Albany Corporation had secured another deed to the Mohawk Flatts (it
still claimed the area as late as 1773). Hendrick even alluded to other Indian peoples' 
tribulations in New York, New England, and Maryland, and feared that "we shall be
brought to the same pass." The rumor's original source was the Mohawks' fear of
dispossession and empowerment, which had "remained in our hearts for some years."
Perhaps perceiving the assembled delegates' indifference, Hendrick spoke boldly and
forcefully in a way that baffled the most experienced colonial interpreters; he "run on for
above an hour in an harangue which the Interpreter could make little or nothing of... 
neither head nor tail could be made of Hendrick's oration." Hendrick's oration was all for

^{19} "Memorandums taken by Conrad Weiser in Albany," Penn Manuscripts, Indian Affairs, vol. 1,
HSP (also printed as "Conrad Weiser's Journal During the Albany Treaty of 1745," in Julian P. Boyd, ed.,
with an introduction by Carl Van Doren, Indian Treaties Printed by Benjamin Franklin, 1736-1762
Ser. B., 13: 314-15; Barclay called Van Patten an "Honest Farmer" in his letter of October 21, 1745 (13:
316-17); Sivertsen, Turtles, Wolves, and Bears, 172.
nought. Governor Clinton cursed the Indians when they asked for some rum in parting; his secretary spurned the River Indians' gift of venison. As Weiser recorded, Clinton "went away without fulfilling his Promise to remove the Indians Grievances about Lands." The Indians were "intirely displeased" and told Weiser, "Now You see yourself how we are treated." 20

Given the disingenuousness of New York's official negotiators, the Mohawks had little choice but to cultivate alternative relationships with neighbors who would benefit their communities and safeguard their land base. To the Mohawks, William Johnson was the proverbial right man at the right time. At a time when their faith in the Albany Commissioners was at its nadir, Johnson's political fortunes were on the rise. Having acted as Clinton's agent in his disputes with Albany, the governor appointed Johnson "Colonel of the Six Nations" in 1746 and stripped the Albany Commissioners of their powers. The Mohawks now had another outlet through which to raise long-standing grievances and disputes. King George's War cemented the Mohawk-Johnson relationship, for Johnson was instrumental in organizing joint war parties of Mohawk warriors and colonial soldiers to defend the valley. In 1746, Cadwallader Colden captured a particularly defining moment in Johnson's career:

When the Indians came near the Town of Albany, on the 8th of August, Mr. Johnson put himself at the Head of the Mohawks, dressed and painted after the Manner of an Indian War-Captain; and the Indians who followed him, were likewise dressed and painted, as is usual with them when they set out in War.

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20 "Memorandums taken by Conrad Weiser in Albany," Penn MSS, HSP; NYCM 21: 50-52 (October 9, 1745); DRCHNY 6: 293-95; Conrad Weiser report, October 6, 1745, in Daniel Horsmanden Papers, NYHS; Wallace, Conrad Weiser, 230-31; Sivertsen, Turtles, Wolves, and Bears, 140.

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From 1746 to 1747, Johnson equipped many "a Regm'. of Christians, & Indians" who fought in joint scouting expeditions in the Lake Champlain area. He earned and promoted a reputation as one who intimately knew and understood the Indians.\(^{21}\)

William Johnson's emergence was attended with growing political conflict. As an agent of Governor Clinton and an Oswego trader, Johnson incurred the resentment of the Commissioners of Indian Affairs at Albany and their interests in the New York Assembly. Johnson increasingly had to mediate local disputes in the Mohawk Valley as well. In 1747, the Mohawk village of Canajoharie commanded his attention. Johnson wrote to Governor Clinton that "there is another grand villain George Clock lives by Conajoharie Castle, who robs the Indians of all their cloaths &c which they get of me. I had [several] complaints of Hendrick &c about his behaviour." Johnson wrote two letters warning Klock to stop his liquor sales. Klock told Johnson to go hang himself. The German settler's defiant actions and lack of regard for the Indians apparently confirms the image many historians have of European settlers. But in the Canajoharie neighborhood, Klock's conduct was more the exception than the rule.\(^{22}\)

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\(^{21}\) Cadwallader Colden, quoted in Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson*, 53; *SWJP* 9: 5; Johnson was appointed a justice of the peace in 1745, a colonel of militia in 1748, and a member of the Governor's Council in 1751 (*SWJP* 1: 60, 167).

\(^{22}\) William Johnson to George Clinton, May 7, 1747, *DRCHNY* 6: 362; see *SWJP* 1: 19 for the Albany Commissioners' attempts to rein in Johnson.
PART III: “Wee intend to Live our Liftim to githeir as Brotheirs”: The 
Canajoharie Mohawks and their European Neighbors

By the mid-eighteenth century, the Canajoharie Mohawks bore an ever greater resemblance to increasing numbers of Europeans settling among them. The expansion of European settlement in the 1720s, particularly the movements of Palatines to the upper Mohawk Valley, meant that the Mohawks would henceforth live “intermixed with the Christians, and the other Indians living near our Frontiers” and that they would “resort daily to the Christians Houses.” By the 1750s, the colonial population in the City and County of Albany had risen from around 3,500 in 1714 to over 10,000 by 1749. Anywhere from 2,600 to 4,550 colonists outnumbered the few hundred natives living in the Mohawk Valley. The colonists’ sheer numbers presented the Mohawks with fundamental questions over their status and lands: How could they retain their political and economic independence in the ancestral homelands that they increasingly shared with outsiders? How much of their lands would they retain? How would they prevent colonists from stealing their lands through chicanery? How could they influence the process of colonial settlement in ways that would bring security to their lands and communities?¹

Writing in 1769, William Johnson believed that the Canajoharie Mohawks were “already sensible that their Children must from being surrounded on all Sides have

recourse to Farming of some sort." While they "were always lamenting that they had so little land left," they took steps to ensure their continued presence and prosperity in their homelands. They rapidly adapted to the changing political, economic, and material currents of the eighteenth century. These adaptations, however, neither diminished their identity as Mohawks nor were they understood as decline from a precontact idyll. Those who persisted in their old homelands had committed themselves to living in peace with the British and accepted that they would have to part with some lands; after a century of contact, they knew that Europeans would alienate these lands through written legal documents. In 1772, a sachem named Joseph sadly noted the sordid history of land fraud and lack of redress that left the Mohawks "reduced to very scanty limits." But he acknowledged that this was partly due to "the many sales we have from time to time made of large Tracts to accommodate your people." They did not view their decisions to part with land as a zero-sum game in which any diminution of their land base was total defeat and surrender to European expansion. The Mohawks' decisions to allocate lands to the Europeans were intensely emotional and painful, but they were determined to construct a peaceful and secure world—to "accommodate" the British settlers as Joseph remarked. Moreover, the Mohawks still retained enough prestige and power to ensure them a strong voice in land affairs.²

Modern scholars often interpret Mohawk adaptation to colonial expansion as evidence of European domination and a declension from precontact times. The Mohawks were allegedly becoming "Settlement Indians," the most abjectly dependent, poverty-

²SWJP 7: 201-202; DRCHNY 8: 305.
stricken, and demoralized Indians. As historian Timothy Shannon explains the Mohawks’
eighteenth-century economic status, “The Mohawks, finding themselves bypassed by the
fur trade and colonial diplomacy, slipped into poverty and dependence. In this new
economy, they had little to offer except land, the sale of which undermined their own
political and demographic stability.” Shannon argues that the Mohawks were so degraded
and poor that “local land sales had become a part of their subsistence.” Chapter 4
completely overturns the idea that the Mohawks and Oneidas sunk into economic
irrelevancy and that land was their last commodity. This chapter challenges materialist
interpretations and demonstrates that Mohawk cultural values are better explanations for
their land sales than simply ways to obtain trade goods, food, or money. It is misleading
to characterize the Mohawks’ land sales as a sign of “decline” or their being duped or
“bypassed” by forces too powerful for them to control or understand. The story of
Canajoharie defies modern historians’ understanding of “settlement Indians” as “victims of
a world market” who “faced a future of poverty and oppression.” 3

The Mohawks’ land negotiations with local European settlers represented a
pressured people’s striking adaptation to European expansion that had notable successes
and failures in a volatile world. On an official level, they pursued an aggressive diplomacy
of resistance against egregious land frauds, such as the Kayaderosseras and Livingston
patents. At a local level, the Canajoharies protected their landed security through

Strangers Within the Realm. 137. 153; see Guzzardo, “Sir William Johnson’s Official Family,” for an
interpretation of the Mohawks as mere clients of Johnson dependent upon his patronage. See also Daniel
Mandell. Behind the Frontier: Indians in Eighteenth-Century Eastern Massachusetts (Lincoln: University
of Nebraska Press, 1996).
symbiotic arrangements with local settlers. William Johnson observed that the natives “certainly can give preference to whom they like” in land negotiations. They tried to accommodate settlers who demonstrated good will and hospitality. For example, the Canajoharies had numerous European farmers living as their tenants on the fertile lowlands around their castle. These farmers not only saw the Mohawks as the true “owners,” but occasionally defended the Indians’ rights against colonial outsiders who tried to disrupt their peaceful arrangements. The Mohawk Valley, however, was a world of confusion and complexity. Some European farmers respected and defended Indian rights while others employed their close ties to the Mohawks to defraud them of lands.

The Canajoharie Mohawks’ history demonstrates their tenacious ability to adapt to a changing world and to maintain a modicum of sovereignty. What is surprising is just how well the Mohawks adapted, safeguarded their lands, and became worthwhile economic partners with their neighbors. The extraordinarily close relationships of the Canajoharie Mohawks with neighboring European communities illustrate the larger patterns of cultural accommodation that prevailed on the New York-Six Nations borders.

Canajoharie, or Kanatsyohare, the “Upper Castle,” means “washed kettle,” from a pot-like feature carved into a rocky gorge by Canajoharie Creek. The eighteenth-century Mohawk village at Canajoharie was more a cluster of settlements on the south side of the

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4SWJP 12: 302.
Mohawk River opposite the mouth of East Canada Creek that frequently shifted in location. Like Fort Hunter and Schoharie, Canajoharie was not a pallisaded castle like older Iroquois villages: dispersed settlements stretched for a few miles along the south side of the Mohawk River from Ostquago Creek westward to Nowadaga Creek. Along the river were fruit orchards and fields of corn, wheat, peas, potatoes, beans, oats, and other crops. The castle’s population fluctuated over the eighteenth century, but probably held between 200 and 300 persons. As late as 1773 the population was estimated to be 221 men, women, and children.⁶

The Mohawks proved that they could live increasingly outnumbered in “the Heart of [colonial] Settlements” and prosper economically and politically. Col. Peter Gansevoort was one of many American soldiers who observed the prosperity of Iroquois settlements in the 1770s: Canajoharie was “abounding with every Necessary so that it is remarked that the Indians live much better than most of the Mohawk River farmers their Houses very well furnished with all necessary Household utensils, great plenty of Grain, several Horses, cows, and waggons.” At both Fort Hunter and Canajoharie, Mohawk material culture bore the marks of decades of close contact with European settlers. Mohawks ate from a variety of native and colonial ceramics, pewter, copper kettles, and expensive china. Many Mohawks adopted domesticated livestock and maintained herds

of horses, pigs, and cows. In addition, by 1760 “almost all the Indians have Sleas (sleighs)” as Warren Johnson noted. Horse-drawn sleighs and wagons facilitated easy travel and transportation of wood, pelts, or trade goods. European architecture also influenced Mohawk structures. During a visit to Brant Kanagaranadunckwa’s house, Daniel Claus and Conrad Weiser “could not find fault” with it. The house itself is evidence of merging cultural practices in the Mohawk Valley: Claus wrote that Brant “lived in a well built, 2 story house, provided with furniture like that of a middle-class family; there was nothing wanting in our food or drink or in our beds.” Increasing social stratification was evident in house construction and furnishings. Wealthier Mohawks’ houses had a combination of limestone foundations, wood floors, glass panes in the windows, curtains, clapboards, chimneys, and numerous outbuildings such as Dutch barns. But the ordinary Mohawk villagers lived in structures similar to the makeshift log houses that European farmers constructed.7

While Mohawk material culture had radically changed, its meanings and purposes were framed by traditional patterns. Some warriors once used a rum keg with a hide covering as a drum to sing war songs and march in processional dances. The rhythms of life in the Mohawk communities—ceremonies, marriages, births, deaths, warfare—retained


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a great deal of continuity with older rhythms. Margaret and Peter Tehowaghwengaraghkwin migrated from Fort Hunter to traditional Mohawk hunting lands in the Cuyahoga Valley where some migrant Mohawks were settling; a son named Theyanoguin was born there in early 1742. Margaret returned to Canajoharie in the late 1740s after her husband’s death, probably during an epidemic. She married again, but her happiness was short-lived; Catawba warriors killed her second husband, Lykas, during a 1750 expedition. In the early 1750s, she married the Tiononderoge sachem Brant Canagaradunckwa. The couple evidently violated longstanding Mohawk taboos, for Claus explained that Brant had “ruined himself by marriage, & was forced to leave his place” and move to Canajoharie. 8

Into this changing and unchanging world flowed increasing numbers of European settlers. Beginning in the 1720s, Palatine emigrants—no strangers to the Mohawks—settled on the north side of the Mohawk Valley opposite Canajoharie where they established settlements called German Flatts, Stone Arabia, and Burnetsfield. Over time, Canajoharie came to denote a specific neighborhood in which both Mohawks and Europeans lived. A network of local personal, religious, economic, and political bonds enabled its peoples to cooperate and to live in relative peace. Many ordinary farmers living there could speak Mohawk, Iroquoian dialects, or trade pidgins. According to later sources, the newcomers “always were on friendly terms with the Indians they were never sent off empty handed when they needed food.” One colonial family’s oral tradition hearkened to a time when an

8SWJP 10: 852 (keg); SWJP 9: 61 (Lykas’ death); Wallace, Conrad Weiser, 339 (Claus); Kelsay, Joseph Brant, chap. 2; Sivertsen, Turtles, Wolves, and Bears, 165-66.
ancestor's farm was "a favorite resort of the Indians for fishing purposes, and particularly of the Indian boys," including young Joseph Brant, who "remained several days at a time" with the family. 9

Frequent economic transactions strengthened the ties between Canajoharie's European and Indian peoples, who were economically interdependent. Mohawk Valley farmers sold much of their produce to local Mohawks, Oneidas, and other Six Nations Indians constantly traveling through their neighborhoods or attending conferences. From the 1750s to the 1770s, Mohawks gathered ginseng and traded it to nearby colonists or traders, such as widow Sarah Magin, in return for rum or other necessities. Mohawks also supplied furs and food (e.g., meat, fish, fowl, corn) to colonists in return for various services or goods. Indians had their corn ground at nearby settlers' mills and obtained boards for their houses at nearby sawmills. Mohawks relied on local blacksmiths and gunsmiths to repair kettles, tools, hoes, knives, firearms, and increasingly, plows. When the Canajoharie Mohawks informed Warrighiyagey that the women were having problems hoeing especially hard ground, Johnson promised that he would direct some German farmers "who live nearest to you, to go up with some Plows to break up your stiff Ground." Mohawks occasionally relied on local farmers to "repair [their] Fences & assist [them] in planting [their] Corn." With such tutelage, the Mohawks and Oneidas began to

9Wallace, Doblin and Starna, Journals of Claus and Weiser, 10-11. 38 Rufus Grider Scrapbooks, NYSL. 1: 45-46; Simms, Frontiersmen of New York, 96-97; Higgins, Expansion in New York, 18-19, 60; Vrooman, Forts and Firesides of the Mohawk Country, 133-35; Jeff N. Clyde to Lyman Draper, February 11, 1878, Joseph Brant Papers, Draper Manuscript Collection, Series F, State Historical Society of Wisconsin. 5F74. See chapter 4 for documentation on settler-Indian communication.
acquire their own plows and "common farming tools" such as scythes and pitchforks.10

Religious ties also formed part of the common ground between Mohawk and European communities. Rather than taking long journeys to Albany, Christian Mohawks attended local Dutch or Palatine churches for christenings, baptisms, and marriages. In the mid-1720s, for example, the Rev. John Jacob Ehle (or Oel), a Westphalian German, settled in the upper Mohawk Valley and established a log mission house on the north side of the Mohawk River opposite Canajoharie. Ehle and Petrus Van Driessen of Albany baptized dozens of Mohawk adults and children in the next decades. Palatines and Mohawks probably even worshiped in the same church together, as a 1752 petition most likely written by a literate Mohawk attests. Interceding for local German settlers, Canajoharie headmen asked Governor Clinton to set aside some land from Teady Magin’s patent for "our Cristein brethairein hair [who] had the promis of it this maney yeirs."

Clearly worried that Magin would force the Germans off, the Mohawks declared, "we will not have our Church Puld down for we [the the Mohawks and the Palatines] are on[e] church and we will not peart." The Canajoharies added "Wee ar grown up togetheir and wee intend to Live our Liftim to githeir as Brotheirs."11

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11Sivertsen, Turtles, Wolves, and Bears, 119-21 (quotation at 121), 147-48; Rufus Grider Scrapbooks, NYSL, 1: 27-30; Indorsed Land Papers 11: 6, 38, 45, 49; Petition of Hendrick, Abram Peterson, and Others, to George Clinton, February 8, 1753, IJDH Reel # 15, 159-60 (on Petrus Paulus’ literacy, see SWJP 9: 52); Simms, Frontiersmen of New York, 101-102; Vrooman, Forts and Firesides of the Mohawk Country, 1137-40; W.N.P. Dailey, The History of the Montgomery Classis, R.C.A., (Amsterdam, N.Y.: Recorder Press, n.d.). Ehle’s life and ministry will forever remain obscured, for his...
Harmonious relations, however, tended to become dissonant because of property disputes, land-use disagreements, and alcohol. A perennial native complaint on many British colonial frontiers, including New York and Pennsylvania, was unpenned European livestock which trampled native cornfields and competed with deer for the forest’s bounty. But Mohawk leaders were especially concerned about “the bringing [of] rum to our Castle, has made us dwindle away as the snow does in a warm sun shining day.” The Mohawks’ grief over rum’s taking of individual lives was exceeded only by their grief over colonists’ endangering their collective lives by defrauding them of land. In one of the most hotly contested land cases of the eighteenth century, the 1731 Canajoharie Patent, Philip Livingston and other Albany parties obtained a deed for the Canajoharie Flatts that encompassed the Mohawks’ settlements and planting grounds. When the Indians learned of the fraudulent deed, they declared, “if this is true then M’ Livingston has murdered us asleep for our Land is our Life.”12

Canajohary sachems believed that land was the “Affair the greatest importance to us, which is concerning the boundaries of our Lands, or the Division between us & our neighbors.” The Mohawks were determined to maintain their lands and independence.

while accommodating European settlers. It was often a hard, narrow line to walk, fraught with the risk of dispossession and eventual poverty. In 1763, the Mohawk sachem Cayenquiragoa spoke on behalf of thirty-three Mohawk women, who were considered "the Truest Owners being the persons who labour on the Lands, and therefore are esteemed in that light." Mohawk women "unanimously declared" that "they would keep their Land, and did not chuse to part with the same to be reduced to make Brooms."

How, then, would the Mohawks be able to preserve their lands and accommodate increasing numbers of European colonists surrounding their settlements? While "Lands have often been the Occasion of Quarrels," as one Mohawk speaker believed, they were also the occasion of intricate negotiations between ordinary colonists and Mohawks that enabled both peoples to coexist.13

Historians have generally viewed Mohawk land sales as a sign of unmistakable decline, as if land were the only commodity left for the economically irrelevant Indians to sell. This interpretation overlooks the core values of Mohawk culture. Adoption practices and traditional hospitality ethics, not a literal and figurative "selling out" of lands, best explain why Mohawks gave land rights to British colonists. Hospitality and reciprocity were crucial determinants in the natives’ dealings with outsiders, since good feelings between neighbors were as important as formal conferences in maintaining healthy alliances. Historian James Lynch argues that Iroquois adoption fell into two categories—assimilative and associative. In the first case, war captives and related Indian peoples

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(e.g., the Tuscaroras) were totally assimilated into Iroquois polity and kinship.

Associative adoption was a status frequently extended to Europeans “who were considered to be trustworthy and had proved their sincere friendship to the Iroquois.” Adoptees like William Johnson or a nearby farmer typically received honorary Iroquoian names and were treated as fictive kin. The Mohawks, for example, believed that “one half of Coll°. Johnson belonged to his Excellency [the N.Y. Governor], and the other to them.”

Given abiding Six Nations’ prestige and the legal requirement of an Indian deed for land patenting, the Mohawks retained considerable leverage in granting land rights and creating a larger framework for peace. Both the Mohawks and Oneidas were especially receptive to poorer European frontier families and adopted them. They temporarily allocated planting rights—and in some cases outright ownership—to these families premised on future good behavior. The Mohawks once spoke of Conrad Gondermann, a “very poor man, and who we took amongst us and gave him a Tract of Land out of Charity.” On another occasion three Canajoharie sachems interceded on behalf of a “poor Man” named Conrad Mattys (or Mattice) who lived in their neighborhood. They requested that the government carve out a thousand-acre tract for Mattys from lands they had already sold to David Schuyler and Nicholas Pickert (Conrad Weiser’s brother-in-

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law). Eve Pickerd, “a Mullatto Woman liveing on the Flatts of Conajoharie,” and her family were given a “little spot of Land.” Natives also provided land use rights for individuals who provided communal services. In the 1750s, the Schoharie Mohawks provided a tract of land for the Rev. Johannes Schuyler of Schoharie as an inducement to “Christen & marry many [of] our People.”

The Mohawks’ hospitable practice of selective land grants to favored individuals often backfired, leading to prolonged and heated land disputes and to a reduction in their land base. Retrospective Mohawk sachems lamented that “We hav[ing] given away & Sold the greatest part of our Lands to our Bretheren the White People (whom we could not refuse, on their declaring their poverty & want of them to us) . . . are now surrounded entirely by them.” Theyanoguin pointed out that most frauds involved individuals who claimed more land than the Mohawks had originally agreed upon. Conrad Gondermann, according to Theyanoguin, was “not satisfied” with the Mohawks’ gift of land in his poverty. He took in “more [land] which we have not given or sold him, and since that he has got a surveyor & surveyed a great quantity of Land which we know nothing of” [he obtained letters patent for a 950-acre tract in 1753]. Gondermann held a child-like status in Mohawk kinship structure, for Hendrick told the governor that “we intend Brother to take a little Rod and whip him, which may deter others from doing the same.” Pickerd, who “understood the Indian language well,” showed Johnson a deed for part of the Canajoharie Flatts, signed only three days before by “the drunkenest Rascals in ye whole

15DRCHNY 6: 784; NYC M 23: 210 (July 24, 1754), 23: 73 (June 12, 1753); SWJP 3: 339 (Pickerd); SWJP 9: 716, 1: 130 (Schuyler).
Castle" but predated a few months before to make it look authentic. The occasion for the deed signing was a festive one: Indians and colonists had a "Horse race on the Ice" and Eve's children afterward entertained the unsuspecting Mohawks at "their House w* is a Tavern [and were] there made drunk" and forced or cajoled to sign the deed. When Johnson spoke to the Mohawks, they "declared they knew nothing of it." What especially galled the Mohawks was the "unbrotherlike behaviour" that their neighbors' actions betrayed. How could peace be maintained when such underhanded plans were being formulated? The Mohawks felt betrayed "by people whom they assisted, and nourished like Children when unable to help themselves."16

The Canajoharie Mohawks were successful in creating a symbiotic relationship with a group of Swiss and German settlers that lasted for decades. These farmers became the Canajoharie Mohawks' tenants and "remained in peaceable possession" of agricultural lands without any legal title. As William Johnson affirmed in 1762, "some of them have lived on sd. Land about twenty years, unmolested by any one." The Mohawks apparently initiated this arrangement themselves, in response to increasing numbers of European colonists: "they applied to the Settlers for rent, who accordingly have ever since paid it to them in Corn, or otherwise as they desire it, for wch they gave them regular [receipts] [considering them as Landlords, & Original proprietaries]." As the tenants' deposition

attests, they initially applied to Philip Livingston for land, believing that he was the legitimate owner. But Livingston knew that his patent was fraudulent, for he feared that developing lands there would be the “occasion of a quarrell with the Indians.” The Canajoharie settlers, who believed that the Mohawks had undisputed rights to the land, reached a mutually satisfactory arrangement that lasted two decades: “The People liveing on Said Land, have for these Several years past, paid their Rent to the Indians uninterruptedly, and they say they will pay it to no other, until it appears to them clearly that the Indians have no right to it, & indeed I cant see they are to blame.” Rents were typically paid with corn and wheat. These tenants were later at the center of a swirling controversy involving George Klock and other colonists who in 1761 “bought the Pattent whereon the Switzers live, who paid Rent to y’ Indt. and takes in the whole Canajoharie Castle their planting Lands &c w[h] causes a verry great uneasiness among y’t whole.”

While some local colonists such as George Klock and Eve Pickerd betrayed the Mohawks’ trust and generosity, the Indians could rely upon other white neighbors to come to their defense in land disputes. Able to wield pen and paper and knowledgeable about legal processes, the Mohawks’ allies proved to be invaluable. For example, two settlers cast aspersions on Eve Pickerd’s deed by testifying that they were present at its

17 SWJP 3: 356 (Switzers), 619-20 (peaceable possession), 649 (twenty years) 364 (paid uninterruptedly); SWJP 4: 116, 667 (Original Proprietaries—emphasis mine), 144-46 (Klock). Colden Papers 6: 18; for the Canajoharie tenants’ side of the story, see Deposition of John Diffendorf, Solomon Miers, Jacob Keller, and Henry Miers, January 14, 1762, Duane Papers, Legal-Misc. Box, 1666-1770, NYHS; see also the John Tabor Kempe Papers, Misc. Microfilms, Reel # 49 (Case of The King v. George Klock). NYHS; Alexander Papers, Box 48 (Court Papers), NYHS, and the references in Index to the Sir William Johnson Papers (v. 14) under the headings of Klock and the Canajoharie Patent. See Colden Papers 6: 19 and SWJP 3: 341-42, 365, 602, 606, 619, 651, and vol. 4: 50, 84, 280-81 for references to Lappius and his congregation.
signing; the Indians never received any consideration nor was there a justice of the peace present. In 1758, the Schoharie headman Seth complained to Johnson of German farmers lately settling on their lands by virtue of an Albany landowner's claim. However, Johannes Lawyer and "many more Inhabitants of Schohary" told the Indians that "it was yet their property." Lawyer even "shewed them a Draught of Schohary & showed the Indians that the Patroon had no right or Title to said Lands." These settlers may have had pecuniary motives of their own for helping their Indian neighbors. But the case of two "old Indian woemen" at Schohary who tried to purchase lands suggests that some European settlers had concern for justice to the Indians. Four Schoharie Germans wrote to William Johnson that the two Indian women were being charged too much money (£300) for a tract that contained but a small area of lowlands. Johnson then pressured the European landowner to lower his price by a third. In the controversy involving George Klock that erupted in the 1760s, three Canajoharie Germans petitioned Sir William Johnson to induce Klock to sign a release so that the lands would revert to the Mohawks.18

The Mohawks frequently resisted what they saw as European intrusions and thus influenced the land-patenting process to their advantage. They intentionally sowed divisions between rival colonial claimants, obstructed suspicious surveyors roaming about, and warned off white trespassers from hunting and planting grounds. They were especially zealous about protecting their main hunting grounds of Kayaderosseras north of the Mohawk Valley. Kayaderosseras was undeveloped for most of the eighteenth century,

18SWJP 4: 890 (Pickerd); 4: 657 (Klock); 8: 466-67 (Lawyer); 10: 59-60, 488-89 (Schoharie); see also 4: 311-13.
given the threat of French invasion and the patentees' fear that the Mohawks would go to
war if they tried to develop lands obtained wholly by subterfuge. Small numbers of
squatters and hunters, however, began trespassing in Kayaderosseras in the 1760s. Four
white farmers who were "well acquainted with the Mohock Language" testified that
Mohawks complained to them "of the great injustice of the patent called Kayaderosseras."
Lewis Davis, a farmer "well acquainted with the said Indians for above forty years,"
learned of the Kayaderosseras controversy when "one M' Nelson was about running some
lines there, but was prevented by the Mohocks who fired upon his horses where upon he
desisted." In 1765, the Mohawks "procured a Country School Master to write a few
Lines" to squatters at Kayaderosseras warning them off, though the squatters' response
that they "would make good their possession" surely did not please the Indians. The
Mohawks demonstrated great patience toward the squatters. They repeatedly warned
Cobus Maybe to remove from the Canajoharie Flatts before burning his house to the
ground. They also repeatedly interfered with surveyors or succeeded in having a
trustworthy surveyor appointed. In 1736, Surveyor General Cadwallader Colden "would
not suffer [him] to Survey . . . alledging in some cases that they had not sold the quantity
of land describ'd in the Deeds of Purchase." Mohawks also watchfully followed surveyors
to ensure that the boundaries were accurately marked. One "Indian Chain bearer" who
went along with a surveying party in 1752 to vouch for accurate boundaries "found out
how much [land] was stolen" by the provincial interpreter Arent Stevens. Theyanoguin
then brought it to the New York government’s attention the following year.19

Another stratagem was to sow divisions between rival colonial claimants to delay settlement or to guarantee that settlers whom the Mohawks favored remained there. In 1752, Teady Magin, an Oswego trader, associate of William Johnson, and agent of Philip Livingston, applied for license to purchase 8,000 acres at Burnetsfield and adjoining the disputed Canajoharie patent (Magin later applied for 30,000 acres in the same area and had enlisted Governor Clinton’s son as a partner). Mohawk sachems Hendrick, Abraham, Paulus, Johannes, and Nickus petitioned the governor, “praying that the High Germans living near them may have a part of the Lands that Teady Magin is taking up, and that his Honour would grant a Lycense to the [Germans] to purchase four Miles in depth joyning to the [lands they] now live on.” According to the petition, the land was meant for “our Cristein bretharein hair [who] had the promis of it this maney yeirs” (these brethren were probably their German tenants at Canajoharie). After receiving no response to their petition, however, the Mohawks took direct action. In October 1753, Hendrick and other Mohawk sachems refused to allow Deputy Surveyor Alexander Colden to survey Teady Magin’s tract “on any other Terms then what is set forth in their Petition” on the German settlers’ behalf. By refusing permission to survey, they obstructed Magin’s attempt to

19Colden Papers 6: 371-75 (Davis); SWJP vol. 4: 652 (Kayederosseras) vol. 11: 625 (warning); vol. 11: 926 (Maybe’s house); vol. 4: 478 (Oneidas threaten to bum a German squatter’s house); Colden Papers 2: 158-60 (survey); DRCHNY 6: 783 (Indian chain bearer); SWJP 4: 233 (Duncan). See also Alexander Colden’s letter to his father. November 7, 1753, in Colden Papers 9: 129-34 in which he details the Canajoharie Mohawks’ obstructions to his surveying; Representation of Cadwallader Colden and Alexander Colden. NYCM 23: 212 (August 9, 1754). NYCMS 79: 1-16 (July 27, 1754) [full text]. William Johnson was one of Arent Stevens’ partners in the land dispute involving the “Indian Chain-bearer” and received a sixth of the lands. See SWJP 1: 394-95, 411-12, 565; Indorsed Land Papers, 15: 18, 24, 37.
patent the land on his terms. Instead, they “marked owt on the Floor what Lands” they intended to give the Germans to live on. \(^{20}\)

By 1753, the storms of settlement and land disputes had left the Mohawks angry, confused, and divided. The imperial pressure coming to bear on the Six Nations was evident in the speech of Squearesere, or Red Head, an Onondaga sachem:

we don’t know what you Christians French, and English together intend we are so hemm’d in by both, that we have hardly a Hunting place left, in a little while, if we find a Bear in a Tree, there will Immediately Appear an Owner for the Land to Challenge the Property, and hinder us from killing it which is our livelyhood, we are so Perplexed, between both, that we hardly know what to say or to think.

As William Johnson later pointed out, the deep-seated “dread of haveing their Lands snatched from them, as they call it, without the consent & knowledge of the whole, is, by what I can see, the greatest trouble, and uneasiness they labour under.”\(^{21}\)

This silent, invisible dread that welled in Mohawk hearts burst forth in New York City in 1753. Theyanoguin came to renew the Covenant Chain at a conference with Governor Clinton, the Council, and some assemblymen. But he found no chain left to renew or brighten, for he charged that it was “likely to be broken not from our Faults but yours.” Before commencing his speech, he warned that “If you dont endeavour to redress our Grievances the rest of our Brethren the 5 Nations shall know of it and all Paths will be stopped.” The Mohawks’ chief concern was not just the colonists’ “indifference and neglect” but the numerous instances of their duplicitous dealings over land. In the

\(^{20}\)SWJP vol. 1: 97, 287, 368; vol. 9: 9 (Magin’s background); Indorsed Land Papers vol. 14: 149, vol. 15: 49, 112 (Indian deed); Colden Papers 9: 124 (Clinton’s son); NYCM 23: 125-26 (November 7, 1753); Petition of Hendrick, Abram Peterson, and Others, to George Clinton. February 8, 1753. IIDH Reel 15, 159-60; Colden Papers 9: 132 (“marked owt”). See Philip Livingston to Colden, January 3, 1737/38, in Colden Papers 2: 188 for Magin’s connection to Livingston.

\(^{21}\)SWJP 9: 117; Johnson to Colden, February 20, 1761, Colden Papers 6: 12.
Mohawks’ view, the colonists’ premeditated attempts to cheat them betrayed a callous disregard for the whole alliance. They had intended land cessions to strengthen the Anglo-Iroquois alliance, but “it seems now as if we had no Lands left for ourselves,” as Theyanoguin complained. He then provided a list of persons against whom they had grievances, including Eve Pickerd, Arent Stevens, Conrad Gunterman, Philip Livingston, and others. What galled the Mohawks was that the colonists had acted with “stealth and Deceit” in taking up larger quantities of land than what they had in good faith agreed upon.22

Hendrick’s next move completely stunned and silenced the assembled colonial officials. After the governor casually brushed aside the Mohawks’ points and showed little inclination to assuage them, Hendrick simply stated, “When we came here to relate our Grievances about our Lands, we expected to have some thing done for us.” He marveled that “all what we have desired to be done for our Good is not granted which makes our hearts ache very much.” The colonial officials’ hearts also ached after Theyanoguin announced, “as soon as we come home we will send up a Belt of Wampum to our Brothers the 5 Nations to acquaint them the Covenant Chain is broken between you and us.” The Indians then departed for their homes.23

The reality of Mohawk and Iroquois power was evident in 1753, when Theyanoguin precipitously declared that the Covenant Chain was broken. Hendrick’s action could not have been better timed. By the early 1750s, the British believed that their

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22DrCHNY 6: 781-783, 787.
23DrCHNY 6: 788.
influence among the Six Nations and other nearby nations had reached its nadir. French advances into the Ohio Country and consolidation of its hold of the Champlain Valley had made the British appear weak and defenseless. The Lords of Trade fretted the "fatal Consequences which must inevitably follow from the neglect" of the Six Nations, particularly New York's "dissatisfactory answers" to the Mohawks' land grievances. The Lords of Trade instructed the new governor of New York, Sir Danvers Osborne, to look into the Mohawks' complaints and to renew the Covenant Chain upon his arrival. The fact that a single Mohawk sachem, acting on behalf of one Mohawk castle, could cause such trepidation and panic throughout British imperial circles is tangible evidence of just how much influence the Six Nations commanded in British eyes.24

At the Albany Congress of 1754, commissioners from many British colonies met to discuss common defense measures and to renew the Covenant Chain with the Six Nations. It was in some small way a moment of justice for the Mohawks. The New York government tried to resolve some but not all of the land disputes that Hendrick had outlined in 1753. For example, Philip Livingston's heirs "declared their Readiness to give up all Right" to the infamous Livingston Patent of 1731 that took in most of Canajoharie itself. Gov. James DeLancey also mediated a compromise between Teady Magin and the Mohawks and the German settlers whom they favored. Upon learning that one third of Magin's patent, formerly held by Governor Clinton, now devolved upon him, DeLancey compromised the dispute by offering the Germans his parcel of land. Hendrick explained that "we thought the Coven Chain was broken, because we were neglected." "Taking a

24DRCHNY 6: 799-801.
stick and throwing it behind his back,” he warned that “you have thus thrown us behind your back, and disregarded us, whereas the French are a subtle and vigilant people.” He turned his face toward the Commissioners of Indian Affairs and announced, “We think our request about Coll: Johnson [that he be reappointed to superintend their affairs], which Gov Clinton promised to carry to the King our Father is drowned in the sea. The fire here is burnt out.” The Mohawks’ open disdain for the Albany Commissioners meant that their “good trusty friend” would emerge from the 1754 conference with heightened prestige.25

The Anglo-Iroquois Covenant Chain had been renewed and brightened, but its lustre was diminished by news of French victories that nullified the Albany Congress’ achievements. The British were terrified of the “evident design of the French to surround the British Colonies, to fortifie themselves on the back thereof, to take and keep possession of the heads of all the important Rivers, to draw over the Indians to their Interest.” If the French navy ever appeared in strength, James DeLancey warned, “there is the utmost danger that the whole continent will be subjected to [the French] Crown” and that “slavery” was a real possibility.26

Towards the close of the Albany Congress in July 1754, all eyes shifted toward the Ohio Country. Commissioners and colonists began receiving reports of a French victory over a force of Virginia militia under Col. George Washington’s command.27 The British defeat at Fort Necessity in July 1754 elevated French prestige among the Delawares and

26 DRCHNY 6: 887-88.
27 DRCHNY 6: 852.
Shawnees in the Ohio Country. But even greater catastrophe struck the following year
when Gen. Edward Braddock's two regiments of British regulars advanced into the Ohio
Country to expel the French. A predominantly Indian army of Delawares, Shawnees, and
other western nations accompanied by French soldiers routed and nearly annihilated
Braddock's army. In an isolated mountain valley in Pennsylvania called the Great Cove,
frontier settlers braced for the worst as rumors of impending French and Indian attacks
spread across their defenseless frontier.
CHAPTER 2
DISPOSSESSING THE INDIANS:
PROPRIETORS, SQUATTERS, AND NATIVES IN
THE SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY, 1730-1755

On November 1, 1755, a war party of ninety-some Delawares, Mingoes, and
Shawnees attacked the European settlements in the Great Cove Valley in south-central
Pennsylvania. Squatters had been moving into the valley as early as the 1730s, but it
remained Pennsylvania’s vulnerable far western periphery when the Seven Years’ War
began in 1755. Indeed, the Pennsylvania government had purchased the Great Cove lands
from the Six Nations (by fraudulent means) only the year before at the Albany Conference
of 1754. Columns of smoke rising up from the valley, bloating corpses of settlers and
livestock, and refugees fleeing eastward were visible signs of the warriors’ successful
offensive. One European who surveyed the scene tersely remarked, “The Great Cove is
destroyed.” The warriors also took several settlers captive, including Charles Stuart, his
wife, and their two small children. After traveling a short distance, the triumphant war
party halted and some of the English-speaking Indians informed Charles Stuart in

\[^{1}\text{It is unknown exactly when the Stuart family settled in the Great Cove. Most likely the Stuarts arrived there in the late 1740s after King George’s War. When Richard Peters’ expedition reached the Great Cove in 1750, the Stuarts were listed among the squatters: see Samuel Hazard, ed., Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, 16 vols. (Harrisburg: Theophilus Fenn & Co., 1838-1853), 5:444 (hereinafter cited as MPCM). Shingas’s remarks (see p. 2) also suggest that the family had been living on the frontier for a number of years. Stuart was apparently killed during Pontiac’s War (see Pennsylvania Gazette, December 16, 1763).}\]
excruciating detail of the execution that awaited him.  

But Stuart was not killed. His experience reveals far more than the familiar story of encroaching settlers, frontier violence, destructive Indian raids, and grueling captivities. It vividly illustrates that the Seven Years' War in Pennsylvania, like King Philip's War in New England, was a war between neighbors. Squatters living in the Ridge and Valley country of the Appalachians frequently encountered Indians at their homesteads both before and after the Seven Years' War. The Stuarts, for example, began squatting in the Great Cove sometime in the late 1740s, probably after King George's War (1744-1748). Their homestead was situated near the Tuscarora Indian path and they extended hospitality to untold numbers of Indian travelers over the years. The memory of these peaceful encounters led the Delaware sachem Shingas to spare Stuart's life. Shingas reminded his comrades that Stuart had "Lived on the Frontiers and that their People had Frequently Call'd at [his] House in their Passing and Repassing between Aughwick & Fort Cumberland and had Always been supplied with Proviss[ions] and what they wanted Both for themselves & Creatures without Ever Chargeing them anything for it." Stuart's apparently hospitable encounters raise the question of how ordinary people on the 

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frontier—squatters, farmers, hunters, and rural artisans—shaped relations with Indians at a local level. How did settlers like the Stuarts actually dispossess the natives from their lands? How did the Delawares, Shawnees, Iroquois, and other natives—many of whom were relatively "new Settlers" themselves—interact with neighboring European families?

A close analysis of ordinary settlers and Indians' face-to-face meetings reveals an important dialogue in the colonial encounter that has largely escaped historians' attention: how squatters and Indians in the Pennsylvania backcountry intensely negotiated with each other over land use and possession before and after the upheaval of the Seven Years' War. In spite of their many conflicts and misunderstandings, they uneasily coexisted, communicated, and crafted mutually beneficial relationships in their routine encounters (e.g., small-scale trading of corn, alcohol, tobacco, and wild game). Squatters also found it expedient to acknowledge Indians' occupancy and to approach them for permission to remain on the land or try to "buy" it from them. On the eve of the Seven Years' War, some squatters were paying Indians yearly rents in return for planting rights; they hoped that these extralegal actions (along with their improvements) would bolster their claims when the government actually purchased the lands. Settlers cleverly exploited their local relationships with Indians to resist proprietary attempts to bring them back into the "feudal revival's" fold. Backcountry farmers' land negotiations and trading relationships with the

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5I am defining "ordinary settlers" as the middling to poor farmers, rural artisans, and squatters living on small tracts of land with their families in the backcountry. These people were mainly non-state actors with no official ties to the Pennsylvania government and Indian diplomacy. Indians' most frequent interactions were not with official "cultural brokers" but with "frontier people," "country people," "back inhabitants," or "common people," as colonial elites were fond of calling them.

6SWJP 10: 645.
Indians were simply means to landed ends—part of the process of achieving competency, building prosperous farms, and for some squatters, owning servants or slaves.

Some historians argue that the struggle for frontier lands in Pennsylvania was a triangular contest between colonial officials, squatters, and Indians. On a local level, however, the contest was more octagonal in shape: Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, the Six Nations, Susquehanna Indians, Ohio Indians, squatters, and land speculators all battled for control of frontier lands. But colonial elites clearly fretted over the unofficial relationships that squatters and Indians were forging, for these interactions threatened larger proprietary and imperial interests. Squatters neither paid for land nor paid quitrents, blurred the proprietors' vision of orderly settlement, and often resisted any attempts to remove them. Colonial officials regarded unlicensed settlers as “mutinous spirits” who “cut & mangle the best parts of the Country and make it impossible for the Prop. to appropriate . . . good lands for their own use.” Thomas Penn envisioned a dark future in which “we shall have the Country intirely over run with people, who will neither pay us our due nor submit to the Laws of the Country.” At risk were the Penn family's land claims and the wealth that it would derive from land sales and quitrents: As Thomas Penn emphasized, “the regulation of our Quit Rents is of the utmost consequence to us.” Informal, local, and unofficial negotiations between ordinary settlers and Indians also threatened the government's claims to exclusive jurisdiction over diplomatic negotiations.

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7See Eric Hinderaker, Elusive Empires, 244.
Informal or unofficial negotiations between ordinary Europeans and Indians also threatened the government's claims to exclusive jurisdiction over diplomacy with Indians. The need to extinguish Indian title made it essential that the proprietors try to maintain rigid control over Indian diplomacy and purchasing land by treaties. From William Penn to John Penn, Pennsylvania leaders issued stern warnings against private individuals buying land from Indians. Settlers who dared to negotiate with Indians were, from the government's perspective, "intermeddling" or "tampering" with Indians. Moreover, colonial officials and land speculators were casting covetous eyes at precisely the same lands that squatters and Indians were inhabiting—the upper Susquehanna Valley, the Juniata Valley, and the greatest prize of all, the Ohio Country.

This chapter focuses on two expeditions that Pennsylvania's proprietors sent into the backcountry to remove squatters in 1748 and 1750. Those two confrontations illustrate the processes that transformed Pennsylvania's early eighteenth-century borderlands into rigidly defined borders on the eve of the Seven Years' War. They shed light on the interplay of local events with imperial developments, on everyday encounters between European settlers and Indians, and the processes whereby proprietors and ordinary settlers displaced native peoples. Colonial magistrates occasionally prosecuted

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squatters for trespass, burned their cabins, and ejected them, but the expeditions failed to resolve the squatter problem permanently. Moreover, squatters used their local ties with Indians to defeat the 1748 expedition. Commoners' confrontations with colonial authorities are a useful reminder that Pennsylvania's frontier diplomats were hardly neutral "cultural brokers" negotiating between Indian and European worlds. Officials like Conrad Weiser, Richard Peters, and George Croghan were neither reacting to squatters running amok in the backcountry nor magnanimously protecting Indians' rights: they were aggressively negotiating their own economic interests, vision of orderly expansion, and definition of property. Interpreter Conrad Weiser, whose work helped to secure peace between the colony and neighboring Indians, also had "a real Love for the Prop[rietors] & cordially & industriously consults their Interest & will spare no pains to advance it," as Richard Peters approvingly noted. Official negotiators created power relationships on the frontier, sometimes to the detriment of Susquehanna and Ohio Indians and squatters.10

Although the provincial expeditions failed to solve the squatter problem, they fulfilled vital legal and diplomatic functions that paid off in the short term. First, the Pennsylvania government asserted jurisdiction over frontier lands whose boundaries were disputed with Maryland, Virginia, and Connecticut. The 1748 and 1750 expeditions ranged through Pennsylvania and Maryland's disputed boundary zone.11 Second,
Pennsylvania employed its strong ties to the Six Nations to graft Iroquois claims and influence onto the disputed lands. The colony's land purchases from the Six Nations extinguished Indian title, ended squatter occupancy, and secured the areas from other colonial competitors. Third, provincial expeditions extended the province's legal system into the interior and, if they were successful, reduced the settlers to proprietary terms. Fourth, removing illegal settlers cleared the way for surveyors, land speculators, and legal settlers who could pay for land and quitrents. The expeditions were also a prelude to what Dorothy Jones has termed "colonialism by treaty" or the ways that colonial governments exploited diplomatic meetings for land sales.\(^2\) Not coincidentally, the Pennsylvania government, negotiating with the Six Nations, literally bought the disputed lands out from under the squatters and local Indians in 1749, 1754, and 1768. Pennsylvania settlers paid dearly for the proprietors' acquisitions: these new purchases, often obtained by fraudulent means, virtually guaranteed some sort of reprisal from the displaced Susquehanna and Ohio Indians.

Conflict in the eighteenth-century Pennsylvania backcountry belies the colony's reputation as the "best poor man's country in the world" where one could easily attain landed independence and enjoy religious toleration. It also shows the inherent instability in Pennsylvania's alliances with neighboring Indian nations. Pennsylvania's strong ties with the Six Nations sustained an exceptional period of peaceful relations, "the Long Peace," which lasted from the 1680s to the 1750s. Pennsylvania, however, was the most

\(^{12}\)Dorothy V. Jones, License for Empire: Colonialism by Treaty in Early America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).
expansive settlement frontier in all of British North America and it could not forever hide from the consequences of its displacement of the Shawnees, Delawares, and Susquehanna Indians. The colony attracted thousands of European immigrants, primarily Scotch-Irish and German-speakers. Between 1720 and 1750, the colony’s population nearly quadrupled because of immigration and natural increase. By the middle of the eighteenth century, European settlements had expanded into the area southeast of the Blue (or Kittatinny) Mountain, a long, imposing, nearly unbroken ridge running diagonally across Pennsylvania from southwest to northeast.  

The eighteenth-century "feudal revival" in America was fast eclipsing Pennsylvania’s shining reputation as a “best poor man’s country.” Between 1730 and 1745, colonial proprietors from New York to Pennsylvania to South Carolina began to revive old land claims that had not initially yielded wealth in the seventeenth century. Thomas Penn arrived at Philadelphia in 1732 after a decade-long legal imbroglio over William Penn’s will (an English court finally ruled in favor of Hannah Penn’s sons—Thomas, John and Richard—in 1727). Although Pennsylvania's Land Office had been

inoperative for fourteen years, settlers continued to pour into the colony throughout the 1720s. Given the uncertainty of proprietary authority and title, many of them ignored quitrent payments and squatted on unsurveyed lands, hoping that their improvements would give them legal possession in the future. William Penn's sons, then, faced many obstacles in asserting proprietary rights, restoring their shaky finances, and instituting an effective land policy. Thomas Penn began by raising the price of land to £15 10s. per 100 acres and the quitrent to a halfpenny sterling per acre. The indebted Penns initiated an aggressive policy of land sales, collection of quitrents in arrears, and ejection of squatters. They also sought to acquire new lands from the Six Nations Iroquois, who claimed to exercise authority over the multiethnic peoples of the Susquehanna Valley and their lands. The Penns' policies were eventually so successful that proprietary lands were "rapidly becoming the most valuable single holding in the Western world." 

Squatters' decisions to ignore proprietary claims were prompted in part by the Penns' aggressive land policies and socioeconomic conditions in the colony. One colonist remarked that the Scotch-Irish had been "so much oppressed and harrassed under Landlords in our own Country" that they came to America "with the chief and principal

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view of being, in this foreign world, freed from such oppression."15 Settlers resented the Penns' brand of "mercenary feudalism" because their claims "divorced the pursuit of profit from any larger sense of community welfare."16 They also objected to speculators' practice of buying land cheap and selling dear. One farmer believed that "the removing of them from the unpurchased Lands, was a Contrivance of the Gentlemen and Merchants of Philadelphia, that they might take Rights for their Improvements when a Purchase was made." Historians have also shown that economic inequality (in terms of land ownership and proportionate wealth) in Pennsylvania was substantial and growing by the eve of the Revolution. Settlers bristled at tenancy, rising land prices, and rampant land speculation, which drove landholding further out of reach. By the late 1740s, then, unsettled lands (especially in older settlements) were generally becoming scarce and too expensive for poor immigrants disembarking at Philadelphia. Some immigrants hoped that a short stint as tenants would allow them to acquire wealth but this strategy was increasingly ineffective as a means to a freeholder end. As a result, many settlers migrated up the Great Valley into Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas.17


Proprietors saw their wealth dwindling away as families who were discontented with proprietary land policies, rising land prices, and high quitrents ventured into Indian country to establish homesteads. The settlers' desire for landed independence—always at the expense of natives' landed independence—was the most important motivation in their decision to invade Indians' lands and hunting grounds. Deep-seated beliefs in the value of labor and improvements—what Richard Maxwell Brown termed the "homestead ethic"—sustained squatters' hopes of eventually possessing the land legally. When illegal settlers had an opportunity to apply for land on good terms in 1754 and 1768 they did so. There were no squatter rebellions in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania and no overt acts of collective resistance against the proprietors over land policy. Like their accommodations with natives, the squatters' defiance of the proprietors was limited and practical.18

Squatter families began moving north up the Susquehanna Valley and west along the Juniata Valley as early as the 1730s. Many poorer Ulster emigrants in search of land headed directly to the frontiers after disembarking at Philadelphia. The life of Simon Girty, Sr.—whose family appears on a list of squatters compiled by Richard Peters in 1750—illustrates one of many European settlers' paths to the frontiers and their personal relations with natives. Simon immigrated from Ireland to Pennsylvania in 1735. He soon entered into the fur trade and had contacts with the Delawares in the Ohio Country; he

undoubtedly became familiar with the geography of the central Appalachians through the course of his journeys to the west. After his marriage to an English woman named Mary Newton in the late 1730s, Girty moved to the Path Valley in the 1740s and continued his fur-trading activities without official license. The magistrates expelled the Girty family and burned their cabin to the ground in 1750. Later that year, Simon, Sr., already in debt, was killed in a duel. Other squatters listed in Peters' report—like Jacob Pyatt (father and son) and Arthur Dunlap—were also Indian traders or had informal connections to the Indians. Such individuals may have occupied frontier land under the pretense of trading or natives may have given them permission to establish posts at convenient locations. Indians sometimes bestowed usufruct rights or "gifts" of land to favored individuals (such as William Johnson or Conrad Weiser). Trader George Croghan believed that the Juniata valley squatters were "a Set of White Men that make their living by trading with the Indians." Many settlers—or "little Traders" as the Provincial Council called them—"without any Authority from the Government take a few trifling Goods and go into the Woods to sell them." It is likely that some squatters saw a brief stint as traders as a means to a landed end.19


A "frontier exchange economy" prevailed for the first few years of the squatters' residence on the frontier. As Stephen Aron, Richard White, and others have argued, conflict became endemic between frontier settlers and Indians because their economic goals and organization were so similar, at least temporarily. The settlers had taken extraordinary risks in moving families, possessions, and livestock over mountains so steep that one traveler had "to hold by the tails of the horses & let them haul us up." "The road was dismal," wrote the Rev. David McClure in 1772 after his ascent of McAllister's Gap through Kittatinny Mountain: "It was a hollow through the mountain about six miles, rough, rocky & narrow." Once ensconced in the mountain valleys, the settlers must have been exceptionally cognizant of their isolation and vulnerability. There were no forts to flee to, no military forces to mobilize quickly, no roads to facilitate trade with more settled parts. The area resembled an "open-country neighborhood"--a "landscape of dispersed family farms and rural kinship communities." The families subsisted in Indian fashion through hunting and agriculture. They were dependent on Indians' largesse to some degree for their survival. Peaceable dealings with the natives were therefore a necessity since family survival was at stake.20

1748" (339). He was also present at the 1751 Logstown council. See vol. 1: 364 and vol. 2: 331, 339.

Native peoples thus faced a potent combination of zealous proprietors, ecological changes, and rapid expansion of colonial settlements, all of which dramatically heightened tensions in Pennsylvania's Indian relations. Many Susquehanna and Delaware Valley natives had found little evidence of benevolence in the Penn family's action. The colony's strong alliance with the Six Nations was partly designed to bring the Delawares, Shawnees, and multiethnic Susquehanna Indians (and their lands) under Iroquoia's preponderant power. The proprietors presumed that "the Five Nations have an absolute Authority over all our Indians" and negotiated with the Iroquois for Delaware, Shawnee, and Susquehanna Indians' lands. Incidents like the Walking Purchase of 1737, the loss of key hunting and planting grounds, ecological changes, unprincipled European traders, and settlement expansion prompted most of the Delawares and Shawnees living in eastern Pennsylvania to migrate to the Ohio Valley in the 1720s. Yet Indians did not retire westward in the face of a Turnesian line of colonial settlements. Some Delawares, Shawnees, and Conestogas remained east of the Appalachians and intended "to live & dye where they are now settled." Other Indian peoples weakened by warfare and disease--Tuscaroras, Nanticokes, Tutelos, and Conoys--migrated northward into the Susquehanna and Juniata valleys in the early 1700s under Iroquois auspices.21

Europeans moving onto frontier lands did not enter a vacant wilderness. Multiethnic Indian towns, Indian farms, and Indian families—Delaware, Tuscarora, Conoy, Tutelo, Nanticoke, and Shawnee—still lined the Juniata and Susquehanna valleys; native hunters sought game in the same bottomlands that squatters were invading. As Conrad Weiser informed the proprietors, the Juniata was the Indians' "only Hunting ground for dears, because further to the nord there was nothing but Spruce woods . . . and not a single dear could be found or killed there." The Shawnee leader Kishacoquillas presided over a village of twenty families at the town of Ohesson well into the 1740s; further upstream on the Juniata was the Delaware town Assunepachta, which contained twelve families. One Tuscarora band continued to live in the Tuscarora or Path Valley until the 1760s and maintained ties with their kin living in Iroquoia. In his 1747 journey through the Conococheague Valley in Pennsylvania and Maryland, the Rev. Michael Schlatter noted that "in this neighborhood there are still many Indians, who are well disposed and very obliging, and are not disinclined toward Christians." While Schlatter may have misrepresented Indian attitudes, he rightly noted that natives and newcomers shared the same valley. 

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24 For Tuscarora settlements, see David Landy, "Tuscarora Among the Iroquois," in Trigger, Northeast, 15: 520 and MPCP 8: 722-23; for locations of other native settlements, see Barry C. Kent, Janet Rice, and Kakuko Ota, "A Map of 18th Century Indian Towns in Pennsylvania," Pennsylvania Archaeologist 51, no. 4 (1981): 1-18 (for references to Ohesson and Assunepachta, see pp. 8-9 and 12); Henry Harbaugh, The Life of Rev. Michael Schlatter (Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston, 1857), 172-73. See James Rice's article (cited in f. 28 below) and Frank W. Porter III, "From Backcountry to County:
Settlers had no qualms about living near Indian towns or amidst the numerous individual Indian families who remained in the area. George Armstrong, for example, applied for 300 acres of land in 1755 along Tuscarora Creek that was "opposite to the settlement of the Indians called Lakens" (perhaps a Tuscarora settlement). Turbut Francis described his tract as lying "about 3 miles below the place where an Indian lived whose name was Connosque." Even if Francis had no personal dealings with Connosque, it is significant that Indian peoples and Indian landmarks figured so prominently in his mentality. He added that the creek running through his tract was "almost opposite to ye place that Jno. Thompson a Delaware Indian formerly lived." In April 1769, a settler on the east branch of the Susquehanna River applied for 300 acres "at a large Indian Cabbin"—perhaps still occupied or recently abandoned. Natives who were dissatisfied over colonial encroachments removed to the Ohio Country, while others relocated closer to Iroquoia. For example, a Nanticoke band that had once lived at the mouth of the Juniata river established a new settlement in the Wyoming Valley by 1750. Tuscaroras settled among the Iroquois "brought forward the subject of the history their land on the Juniata" to three Moravian missionaries in 1752. They told the Moravians that they were "deeply grieved to see white people living on their lands. They wished to have them removed." The Tuscaroras' desire to avoid "dissension in their land" explains why they chose relocation over confrontation. But many native families could not forget the familiar faces of the farmer-hunters who displaced them. When Indian warriors attacked Pennsylvania's

The Delayed Settlement of Western Maryland," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 70 (Winter 1975): 329-49 for analyses of this forgotten colonial frontier.

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settlements in 1755-1758, they frequently targeted the settlers who had earlier invaded their lands.24

Indeed, during the Seven Years' War the Delaware leader Teedyuscung conveyed the deep animosity that the experience of dispossession instilled in Delaware hearts: "The Land is the Cause of our Differences; that is, our being unhappily turned out of the land is the cause." The Brandywine Delawares, living closest to the most populated areas around Philadelphia, illustrate the larger processes of displacement and ecological change accompanying European colonization. Hannah Freeman, a Delaware woman who remained in the area, later testified that "the country becoming more settled the Indians were not allowed to Plant Corn any longer [probably because of unpenned livestock and an inability to relocate seasonally to new lands] her father went to Shamokin and never returned." The Brandywines also complained to the government that colonists' dams and grist mills interfered with the seasonal movements of fish. In a 1729 letter to Lt. Gov. Patrick Gordon, the sachem Checochinican complained that "the Land has been unjustly Sold, whereby we are redused to great wants & hardships." He described his people as "greatly disquieted" and complained that new settlers would not even allow them to cut

down trees for their cabins.\textsuperscript{25}

Other illustrations of ecological change abound in the historical record. As early as 1718, the Commissioners of Property noted that the fields surrounding Conestoga were fenced "to secure the Indians' Corn from the Horses, Cattle, and Hoggs of those new settlers." The colonists' unpenned livestock trampled Indian corn fields and, running free in the woods, competed with deer for mast. While Europeans saw the trees and livestock as their property, natives did not give up the right to bark trees for shelter and treated the colonists' roaming livestock as fair game. Gov. William Keith, for example, requested of visiting Susquehanna Indians to "not suffer your young People with their Dogs & Arrows to Hunt & kill [the colonists'] Creatures." Declining numbers of deer and other game remained a thorny issue between European and Indian settlers. Like many Delawares, a small band of Conoy immigrants living on the Susquehanna River removed to Shamokin because of declining game. A Conoy sachem named Old Sack asked a resident of Lancaster to inform the governor that "the Lands all around them being settled by white People, their hunting is spoiled." Indicating that relations with the settlers themselves may have remained amicable, Old Sack noted that the Conoys "were under no fear or Apprehension of [the colonists] using them ill.\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{25} MPCP 7: 676; Becker, "Hannah Freeman," 251, 252-56; PA 8th ser., 2: 1701 (fish); PA 1st ser., 1: 239. For the provincial government's response to the Delawares' complaints, see PA 8th ser., 2: 1710, 1713; MPCP 3: 269.

Colonial and native inhabitants were capable of communicating effectively and creating mutually beneficial relationships with one another. Indian and European settlers lived in a world of tremendous ambivalence: friendship, harmony, trust, understanding, and amity coexisted with antagonism, suspicion, fear, misunderstanding, and enmity. Backcountry settlers often bartered, worked, socialized, and hunted with Indians at their homesteads. The missionary David Brainerd complained of Indians who "upon Christmas days" in the 1740s went "to drink and revel among some of the white people." A Delaware sachem "in want of provisions received ten bushels of meal from a miller on Tulpehocken Creek" in 1730. A backcountry settler named Richard Thomas believed that he had entertained and provisioned "the king of the five nations" and other Iroquois; they took up "their Lodging near to his house, whear they Resided about fore days and nights" in July 1727. When the Seven Years' War began in 1755, John Bartram captured the sense of betrayal that many settlers felt: Indians who used to be "allmost dayly familiars at thair houses eat drank cursed & swore together were even intimate play mates" were destroying "all before them with fire ball & tomahawk."27

Underlying these peaceful interactions was an undercurrent of disagreement. European and Indian settlers were both competing over frontier resources: alluvial soils for agriculture, hunting grounds, and springs. Different cultural beliefs about alcohol use,

land use, property, and reciprocity made settler-Indian encounters prone to break down into fights, brawls, and murders. Some squatters were openly hostile to "friendly" Indians. James Patterson, who began trespassing in the Juniata Valley in the early 1750s, carved out loopholes in his log cabin in case of attack. His native neighbors frequently visited his homestead "on the friendly mission of bartering furs and venison for rum and tobacco." But Patterson—"Big Shot" according to legend—used these visits to gain much-needed food supplies and to intimidate the Indians. He allegedly kept a target posted on a nearby tree and blazed away at it so that visiting natives could see what might happen to his human targets.28

"Unofficial" meetings between ordinary settlers and Indians—whether peaceful or violent—remained at the heart of the squatter problem from the 1730s through the 1760s. Squatters first came to light as a serious problem for Pennsylvania leaders in the 1730s when they began moving up the Susquehanna and Juniata valleys. They established farms astride major Indian trade routes and north-south war paths that Iroquois parties used to attack their Catawba and Cherokee enemies in the Carolinas. Colonial governors and officials feared that squatters would provoke these war parties and precipitate open conflict. During the winter of 1742-43, for example, their worst fears almost came true when a group of Virginia backcountry settlers initiated a skirmish with an Iroquois war party. The fact that eight Iroquois warriors were killed or wounded threatened to engulf Virginia and Pennsylvania in a war with Iroquoia. Only Conrad Weiser's and Shikellamy's

deft diplomatic work staved off disaster. But their diplomacy did not put to rest officials' fears that such incidents would happen again.\textsuperscript{29}

Squatter encounters with Indian war parties provided occasions for misunderstanding over the meanings of reciprocity and property. Whether through fear or openhandedness, some squatters routinely provided food and provisions to the war parties; others undoubtedly contemptuously refused and slammed their doors shut. Well into the 1760s, Iroquois warriors expected supplies from European and Indian settlers alike. Villages in the Susquehanna Valley had long been centers of hospitality for traveling Indians and especially for Iroquois war parties. The warriors similarly camped near the colonists' homesteads and requested (or demanded) food and supplies from the inhabitants. During a journey to Onondaga in 1737, for example, the provincial interpreter Conrad Weiser encountered a destitute and ragged Iroquois warrior north of Shamokin, a major Indian town in the upper Susquehanna Valley. The warrior's condition was due in part to a raid against southern Indians that had gone awry and the fact that he "had squandered a part of his property drinking with the Irish" at a backcountry tavern or a settler's homestead. An Iroquois warrior drinking with the Irish is only one indication that settlers frequently saw and met with the war parties. In 1749, George Croghan reported that an Iroquois warrior was killed while drinking with his comrades on the way home to Onondaga. The four Iroquois men stopped at a "Stillhouse" or tavern along Aughwick Creek and one of them died from knife wounds during a scuffle. Croghan promised to

"Secure all ye white Men that was att ye plese till I find outt the Truth of ye affair." He believed that such meetings occurred frequently enough to justify a stiff fine on "all Stillers and Tavern keepers . . . for Making ye Indians Drunk, & Espesely warriers."\(^{30}\)

Squatters routinely negotiated over land with their Indian neighbors and with Indian war parties. The Oneida sachem Shikellamy once complained of a German squatter named Frederick Star who moved to the Juniata Valley in the early 1740s. The sachem reported that the German man claimed "a Right to the Land meerly because he gave a little Victuals to our Warriours, who stand very often in need of it." Shikellamy desired that Brother Onas (the native name for the Pennsylvania governor) would "take the Dutchman by the Arm and to throw him over the big Mountains [Blue Mountain?] within your Borders." The incident reveals that squatters and Indians were not living isolated lives but trading, communicating, and negotiating over land issues. It also suggests that some squatters recognized Indian possession of the land and attempted to "purchase" it for themselves. In July 1742, for example, a Six Nations delegation at Philadelphia complained of squatters along the Conococheague Creek in south-central Pennsylvania who brazenly approached some Iroquois warriors "while they were hunting." According to the Iroquois speaker, the squatters "made some proposals about the Purchasing of Land from them," and the Iroquois warriors tentatively agreed to "receive five Duffield Strowds

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for two Plantations on the River Cohongoranta [the Potomac River]." The warriors, of course, had no authority to give away land and probably thought that the strouds were gifts, not down-payments.31

Shikellamy's protest represented only one in a series of longstanding complaints (dating to the 1730s) that Indians had voiced over Europeans trespassing in the Susquehanna and Juniata valleys. As the Six Nations' supervisor of the multiethnic Susquehanna Valley peoples, Shikellamy assumed responsibility for representing their grievances to Pennsylvania officials. The Susquehanna Indians, as Conrad Weiser once reported, were "very uneasy about the white peoples settling beyond the Endless [i.e., Kittatinny] mountains on Joniady [i.e., Juniata], on Shermans Creek and elsewhere." In 1749, they reported that "above 30 families are settled upon [their] land this spring, and daily more goes to settle thereon; some have settled all most to the heads of Joniady River along the path that leads to Ohio." As Weiser's paraphrasing indicates, the Indians' conceptions of frontiers or borders usually involved mountains. They viewed the long ridgeline of the Kittatinny Mountain (and the "endless" mountains that lay beyond) as a natural boundary between their settlements and European settlements. Ogashtash, a Seneca sachem, once argued that "our Boundaries are so well known, & so remarkably distinguish'd by a range of high Mountains." The Iroquois also saw the Susquehanna Valley as an important buffer zone between Iroquoia and Pennsylvania; their major north-south war paths also ran through it. Iroquois delegations traveling to Philadelphia and war parties passing through the colony saw firsthand the constant seepage of settlers into the

31 MPCP, 4: 648, 561; for Frederick Star, see PA, 8th ser., 4: 3327.
fertile river valleys. As early as 1733, Shikellamy believed that the sight of trader John Harris's farm on the Susquehanna would offend his brethren: "the Warriours of the Six Nations, when they pass that way, may take it ill to see a Settlement made on Lands which they have always desired to be kept from any persons settling on." Pennsylvania officials usually replied to Indian complaints with official proclamations warning settlers to remove and forbidding settlers to purchase lands from Indians. But proclamations alone could not effectively stem the rising tide of squatters and the government finally took direct action in response to Indian complaints.32

The proprietors' first major attempt to remove squatters by force occurred in August 1748 in the Tuscarora or Path Valley in south-central Pennsylvania. Tuscarora and Conococheague creeks watered the rich bottomlands of the Path Valley. Set between sharp and rugged mountain ridge lines, such pockets of alluvial soils attracted both Indian and European settlers. During his journey to the Ohio Country to conduct treaty negotiations with the Wyandots, Conrad Weiser was ordered to expel squatters who had taken up residence along the Allegheny path, the main trade route between the Ohio Country and the Susquehanna River. In a strange twist of events, Indians and squatters repulsed one of the provincial government's earliest attempts to remove the illegal trespassers. About fifty miles west of George Croghan's trading post on Aughwick Creek, Weiser and a few local magistrates encountered the Oneida sachem Scaroyady and with a

32 PA., 1st ser., 2: 24 (Indians uneasy/Joniady); MPCP 5: 389 (boundaries); MPCP, 3: 503 (Shikellamy). See MPCP 5: 391-92 for other references to Kittatinny Mountain as the Indians' preferred boundary ("your side of the Blue Hills"). See MPCP 5: 394-95 for an example of a governor's proclamation ordering illegal settlers to remove themselves from unpurchased lands.
group of Indians (probably Ohio Iroquois). Scaroyady (or Monacatootha) acted as a go-between for the Iroquois and Shawnees living in the Ohio Country. The squatters had somehow received advanced warning of Weiser's mission and appealed to the Indians for help. They informed Scaroyady that they "were to be turned off by the Govern'". The Indians did not insist that all of the Europeans be unconditionally removed. Instead, they "desired that at least two familys, to wit, Abraham Shlechl and another, might stay, that they, the said Indians, had given them liberty, and that they thought it was in their power to give liberty to such as they [liked]." Scaroyady made it clear to Weiser that "if any of the people now living there was turned off, no other Body should setle there, they [the Indians] being informed that as soon as the people were turned off others would be put on the land such as the Government [liked]."33

Scaroyady's comment reveals that some natives were willing to accommodate trustworthy European settlers who demonstrated good will and hospitality; the Indians' insistence that "no other Body should settle there" reflected their unwillingness to negotiate with the Pennsylvania government for lands (which would be permanently alienated and settled with outsiders unknown to them). Squatters, like Indians, mostly desired small plots of land for farming, while the proprietors negotiated for hundreds of thousands of acres. Scaroyady clearly established friendly relations with a few squatter families and may have genuinely sympathized with their plight. Weiser reported that "the people used [the Indians] well on their coming by, and Informed them of the design [the

33 PA, 1st ser., 2: 15; Wallace, Conrad Weiser, 277-79; idem., Indian Paths of Pennsylvania, 49-53, 168-70; for an account of Weiser's activities at Logstown, see McConnell, A Country Between, 74-77.
The settlers feared the authorities' actions, made their predicament clear to the Indians, and lobbied for permission to stay. The frontier inhabitants could readily and clearly communicate, perhaps through a trade pidgin and English-speaking Indians. Meetings with traveling Indians must have been an almost daily occurrence for settlers and traders living along the well-worn Allegheny Path. Perhaps native and colonial travelers found lodging and food at their cabins. Rural artisans such as blacksmiths probably repaired weapons or mended hatchets and pots for the Indians. Scaroyady may also have perceived the squatters' disaffection from the provincial government. He explicitly distinguished between two kinds of settlers: those the Indians liked and those "the Government [liked]." His distinction suggests that Indians may have forged informal alliances with friendly squatters to forestall the movement of settlers "such as the Government [liked]" onto the frontier.

But why would Scaroyady and his companions allow certain families to stay given the Susquehanna Indians' previous complaints? Even more important, why did the Oneida sachem believe that he had the authority to decide on the matter? Conrad Weiser himself was at a loss to explain Scaroyady's action. Scaroyady was probably granting these people usufruct rights of some kind. Native peoples in the eighteenth century Northeast frequently invited displaced or indigent neighbors to live among them; they also bestowed usufruct rights upon favored individuals in instances of "associative adoption," a reflection

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34 PA. 1st ser., 2:15.

35 PA. 1st ser., 2: 24. Weiser later informed the Shamokin Indians that Scaroyady "had given liberty (with what right I could not tell) to settle."
of the strong hospitality ethic that bound native societies together. Being keenly aware of English and French designs on the Ohio Country, Scaroyady may also have hoped to retain trustworthy settlers as sources of information on colonists' intentions.

The changing political and military balance of power in the Ohio Country may also have influenced Scaroyady's decision. When the disgruntled Shawnees and Delawares migrated to the Ohio Country in the 1720s, they soon cultivated close ties to the French. Both Pennsylvania and the Six Nations fretted over their inability to control the independence-minded Ohio Indians. By the end of King George's War in 1748, however, some far western Indian tribes like the Wyandots, Twilightees, and Miamis were breaking ties with the French and entering into alliances with Pennsylvania (hence Weiser's trip to Logstown in 1748). The Six Nations had appointed Scaroyady to supervise the Shawnees in the Ohio Country around this time. Having been in the Ohio country for only a year, Scaroyady may have used the Path Valley incident to bolster his authority as a negotiator. The sachem urged Weiser to delay any action on illegal settlement until after the Logstown meeting—at which point the Six Nations would arbitrate the affair. Indians in the Juniata Valley were probably resentful of Iroquois decisions regarding their homes; but

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36 James Lynch, in "The Iroquois Confederacy, and the Adoption and Administration of Non-Iroquoian Individuals and Groups Prior to 1756." Man in the Northeast 30 (Fall 1985): 83-99, distinguishes between assimilative (e.g., adoption of peoples such as the Tuscaroras) and associative (individual or honorary) adoption. Scaroyady's actions fall into the category of associative adoption—"a historical adoption to a new set of political realities, in which assimilative adoptions were not necessary nor even desired by either party, but where symbolic identity was still ritually required" (p. 89). For perceptive commentary on northeastern Indians' conceptions of land tenure and usufruct, see Kathleen J. Bragdon, The Native People of Southern New England, 1500-1650 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 43, 137-39; Anthony F.C. Wallace, "Woman, Land, and Society: Three Aspects of Aboriginal Delaware Life," Pennsylvania Archaeologist 17 (1947): 1-35; Francis Jennings, The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire, 325-28.
as client peoples, they deferred to Iroquois leadership.\textsuperscript{37}

The Six Nations' council sent the Oneida sachem Canasatego and other Iroquois sachems to Philadelphia in 1749 to mediate the problem of illegal settlement with the Pennsylvania government. Around 280 Iroquois, Tutelos, Nanticokes, and Delawares made their way to Philadelphia in August. Canasatego and his entourage were incensed at the numbers of squatters on the Susquehanna's eastern bank beyond the Kittatinny Mountain. On their way down they also saw "Papers which were Interpreted to us to be Orders for these People to Remove." Canasatego delivered a stinging rebuke to Brother Onas: "Notwithstanding your Engagements," he told Governor Hamilton, "many People have settled on the East side of Susquehanna, & though you may have done your Endeavours to remove them, yet we see these have been without Effect." Canasatego concluded that "white People are no more obedient to you that our young Indians are to us."\textsuperscript{38}

Colonial negotiators had been hoping that the Iroquois would take notice of the illegal settlements and bring their grievances before the governor. Conrad Weiser urged his employers to refrain from using open force against the squatters until after the conference. "when all proper means ought to be used to make a purchase from [the Six Nations] . . . for some part of that land between the Kititany or Endless mountains &


\textsuperscript{38}MPCP, 5: 395-410, at 400.
alleghiny Hill". Weiser wanted the proprietors to purchase "all the Lands on the Waters of Juniata." The canny provincial interpreter correctly anticipated that the Iroquois would be receptive to a land purchase as a way of defusing the growing crisis over colonial encroachment. Gov. James Hamilton went on the offensive and attempted to shift responsibility for the squatters' encroachments onto Indian shoulders. Playing Weiser's 1748 rebuff for all that it was worth, Hamilton asserted to Canasatego and his entourage, "We shall not find it difficult effectually to remove all these Intruders if some of your Indians do not give them Countenance." Hamilton warned that "such Licenses [to remain on the land] must not be given, & that if we turn the People off you must not defend them nor invite them there again." According to Richard Peters, the provincial government, "as an Expedient to quiet them, proposed a purchase of [the Juniata lands] from the Indians." The Six Nations, however, wanted to preserve both the Juniata and Wyoming valleys from European encroachment. Accordingly, the Iroquois delegates agreed to sell only a small parcel of land on the east side of the Susquehanna. On the proprietors' maps, however, the purchase became a huge swath of land between the Susquehanna and Delaware rivers that bordered the Wyoming Valley. Proprietary officials hoped that their 1749 purchase would lure illegal settlers away from the troubled Juniata Valley. Governor Hamilton assured the Indians that squatters would yield to his proclamations to remove, "especially as they may be provided with Land on the East side of Sasquehanna within the new Purchase."  

39 Conrad Weiser to Richard Peters, May 8, 1749, Conrad Weiser Correspondence, 1741-1766, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; MPCR 5: 407-408; Wallace, Conrad Weiser, 277-85 (quote on Juniata at 279); MPCR 5: 477 (expedient); MPCR 5: 408 (Hamilton on new purchase). See MPCR 5: 406-7 for
As the 1749 Philadelphia conference shows, squatting increasingly became the ideological pretext for colonial land purchases in the eighteenth century. Controlling the backcountry and its inhabitants was an important corollary of colonial Indian policy. Colonial elites espoused views of social evolution in which frontier people were degenerating into a state of savagery. They argued that lawless and violent settlers would inevitably spark a war with the Indians. Provincial secretary Richard Peters greatly feared that "the lower sort of People who are exceeding Loose & ungovernable from the mildness of the Constitution & pacifick principles of y° Friends [Quakers] wou'd go over in spite of all measures & probably quarrel with the Indians." Colonial elites tended to exaggerate any perceived threats to their authority. Peters worried that "the People over the Hills are combin'd against the Government, are putting in new Cropps & bid us Defiance." He correctly believed that "it would be impossible to preserve the Peace of the Province" unless the Penns resolved the Indians' grievances over squatters. But the provincial secretary's solution did not include respect for Indian sovereignty: Pennsylvania officials believed that squatters had to be contained and peace preserved by purchasing disputed lands from the Six Nations by whatever means necessary. In 1749, Peters suggestively informed the sons of William Penn that "all mouths were full of the necessity of an Indian purchase" as the only way to forestall a frontier war. In fact, proprietary officials were even willing to fabricate a diplomatic crisis knowing that natives would try to resolve it with a treaty (which the proprietors always expected would conclude with a

the proprietors' description of the areal extent of the 1749 purchase. See also William N. Fenton's concise account of the 1749 conference in The Great Law and the Lonehouse, 455-57.
land purchase). Even as war loomed in 1754, Conrad Weiser urged the proprietors to unleash squatters onto native lands:

"[O]ur people Should be let loose to Set upon any part of the Indian lands upon giveing Sec[urity] for their Complying with the proprietary terms after pu[rchase:] the Indians would Come in and demand Consideration . . . and what Can they Say, the people of pensilvania are their [Breth]ren according too the treatys Subsisting."

The only problem with Weiser's plan was that the squatters had never been on the proprietors' leash.40

To contain the threat posed by squatters' and Indians' land negotiations, the proprietors worked to completely dispossess both groups. Weiser and other officials feared that illegal settlement, if not "nipt in the bud," might lead to a more lasting accommodation between Indians and colonists. According to Richard Peters, Weiser apprehended "a worse Effect, that is that [squatters] will become tributary to the Indians & pay them yearly sums for their Lycense to be there." Settlers paying tribute to Indians was a complete disaster for the Penns, who were deeply in debt at the time and dependent upon income derived from land sales and quitrents. Weiser's prediction of Indian-settler accommodation had come to fruition by the late 1740s. He knew "positively" that squatters "are got into this way [paying tribute] on the East side of Sasquehanna' beyond the Hills & receive acknowledgements & are easy about those Lands." Weiser feared that Pennsylvania's rulers would "not only have all the abandon'd People of the Province to deal with but the Indians too & that they will mutually support each other & do a vast deal

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of Mischief." Peters remarked that "this consideration has alarm'd me more than any other."41

Colonial officials were never able to discover which Indians had granted rights to colonial farmers—an indication of just how peripheral the officials could appear in local negotiations. Thomas Penn believed that the culprits were Delawares at Shamokin and that they should be "severely reprimanded"; Richard Peters speculated that Shamokin Indians had given tracts of land to Thomas McKee, who had married a woman from Shamokin; but he reported as certain that Shikellamy, Shamokin Indians, Delawares, and Nanticokes had all "levyd large Contributions" (perhaps rents) from neighboring colonial farmers. Years later, an indebted Andrew Montour, emulating what seemed to be a customary practice, also tried to attract European tenants. Some Indians living around Shamokin, aware of the value Europeans placed on their lands, accepted white settlers as tenants as a way of making them dependent upon native landlords. Aboriginal conceptions of land tenure had not remained frozen in some primordial state. As an Iroquois speaker asserted in 1742, "We know our Lands are now become more Valuable; the white People think we don't know their Value, but we are sensible that the Land is Everlasting." Periodic famines and food shortages also may have driven some Susquehanna Indians to negotiate land tenure arrangements in return for payment-in-kind. Eighteenth-century land records confirm that such relationships existed. One squatter named William Smith, who settled below Shamokin in the 1740s, claimed that his

improvement was made "with the consent of the Indians." The relationships that some settlers and Indians were forging in the backcountry clearly represented a threat to both the colony's land policy and the social order (as the authorities saw it). In 1750, the proprietors would take action to circumvent any challenges to their authority.42

Canasatego's complaints in 1749 set the stage for a second and even more sweeping ejection of squatters from the Ridge and Valley country. The government had been able to purchase lands on the east side of the Susquehanna, but the Indians were determined to preserve their Juniata Valley lands. The provincial government promised to evict the illegal residents through force. Its response reflected both a desire to maintain peaceful relations and to eject squatters who did not pay for the land or quitrents. In May 1750, Governor Hamilton sent Richard Peters and Conrad Weiser to eject squatters "on the Lands beyond Kittcotthinny [i.e., Blue] Mountains, not purchased of the Indians."

Peters, Weiser, and eight Cumberland County magistrates assembled at George Croghan's trading post at Aughwick. Five Shamokin Indians also accompanied them as observers and "expressed great Satisfaction" with the authorities' mission.43


Peters conducted the 1750 expedition as a quasi-military operation to suppress a “set of Scoundrels.” Thomas Penn later commended the “Hussar Spirit” that Peters displayed during the expedition—“nothing less than which will do with these People.” For the latter half of May 1750, Peters and the magistrates scoured the mountain valleys of the Juniata watershed, ejected squatters, arrested a few of them, and burned their log cabins. The number of squatter households astounded the officials (Peters’ report does not list the total numbers of people living in each household): five along the Juniata, eleven along Sherman’s Creek, eighteen lining the Path valley (including one “Abraham Slach,” probably the "Abraham Schlechtl" whom Scaroyady defended two years earlier), four along Aughwick Creek, and twenty-three in the Great Cove. Most of the trespassers were submissive and "had nothing to say for themselves but craved Mercy." They readily confessed to Peters that they had "no Right or Authority" to settle there. The provincial secretary informed the evictees that "they might go directly on any Part of the two Millions of Acres lately purchased of the Indians." Peters magnanimously offered large families the chance to live rent-free on his manors until they could support themselves. The magistrates entered the trespassers into recognizance for one hundred pounds and


44Abraham Slack (or Schlechtl) never applied for a survey of his tract of land in the Path Valley. He may have continued to live there into the 1760s. In 1762, one of his neighbors, John McClelland, applied for 50 acres of land “in the Great Cove about a mile above Abraham Slack’s improvement (Original Warrants, No. 167, Cumberland County, Land Records, Pennsylvania State Archives [microfilm reel 3.51]).” Slack apparently had relocated to the Wyoming Valley by the late 1760s. In 1769, after the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, he applied for 300 acres in the “new purchase” (New Purchase Register, 1769, application no. 2580, Land Records, Pennsylvania State Archives [microfilm reel 1.9]).
into bonds to the Proprietors for five hundred pounds. After "great deliberation" the authorities decided to burn the empty log cabins: "Mr. Weiser also giving it as his firm Opinion, that if all the Cabbins were left standing, the Indians [i.e., Shamokin Indians] would conceive such a contemptible Opinion of the Government, that they would come themselves in the Winter, murder the People, and set their Houses on Fire." After removing their personal belongings, the indebted squatters painfully watched their labor and improvements go up in smoke.45

Although historians often stereotype squatters as outlaws prone to violence, only one violent incident occurred during the expedition. On May 24, Peters, Weiser, and the magistrates approached Andrew Lycon's log cabin located along the Juniata. A band of unidentified Indians had "fixed their Tent on [Lycon's] Plantation" the night before--another indication of the frequent social interactions between natives and squatters. Lycon resisted the authorities and "presented a loaded Gun to the Magistrates and the Sheriff, said, he would shoot the first Man that dared to come nigher." The squatter's militant outburst gave the Indians "great Offence," and members of Shikellamy's family who were present insisted that the authorities burn Lycon's cabin, "or they would burn it themselves." Lycon was "disarmed, convicted, and committed to the Custody of the Sheriff" and "carried to Gaol." Such actions effectively extended the province's legal system into the interior: although the unpurchased lands remained outside of Pennsylvania's jurisdiction, squatters were bound to appear before Cumberland County

Lycon's vehement and violent defense of his claim was the exception to the rule. The vast majority of squatters sheepishly acquiesced to the magistrates and acknowledged that they were intruding on Indian lands. Some squatters who lived near the border—perhaps hoping to play off Maryland and Pennsylvania—petitioned Maryland officials for warrants for their lands, but nothing ever came of their proposal. Another group sent a petition to the governor of Pennsylvania which "prayed that his Honour might suffer them to remain there, till the [boundary] Line should be extended [westward], and the Purchase made of the Lands from the Indians." Peters even recorded some evictees as saying, "if the Indians were determined they should not stay there, it was better to go away directly." In both cases, the squatters exhibited an awareness of their role in maintaining peaceful relations with the natives. Perhaps they learned for the first time the extent of the Indians' resentment of their intrusions.47

Thomas Penn may have commended Peters' "Hussar Spirit," but he was uninformed about the clandestine dealings of his province's frontier magistrates. Indian witnesses had long suspected that colonial officials acted in collusion with the settlers. In 1742, Iroquois speakers interrupted Gov. George Thomas's speech when he pointed out that officials had removed illegal settlers. The Indians insisted that "these persons who

46Ibid., 4: 3324-25. See David Hackett Fischer, Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 765-71 for an interpretation of backcountry violence. An "Andrew Lycan" is listed as having warranted 250 acres of land in Lancaster County in 1737 but it is not clear whether this is the "Andrew Lycon" who lived along the Juniata (see PA, 3rd ser., 24: 458).

were sent did not do their Duty; so far from removing the people, they made Surveys for themselves, and they are in League with the Trespassers." The natives' accusation was equally applicable to the 1750 expedition. Some magistrates scouted for new lands while throwing off squatters. Benjamin Chambers and James Galbreath, Cumberland County justices involved in the expedition, both engrossed thousands of acres of land in places that they had seen in 1750 (lands in the Path Valley, Conococheague, and the Great Cove). Moreover, Richard Peters apparently gave verbal guarantees to many settlers that they would have preemption rights when the government purchased the lands west of the Susquehanna so long as they agreed to proprietary terms— a fact that went unmentioned in his official report. For example, the provincial secretary promised William White that he would have preemption rights and he agreed to remove his family. William's widow Mary and the family returned in the early 1750s and Mary defended their claim before the Board of Property in the 1760s.48

Peters' official report— which contains the names of sixty-one squatter households— provides a revealing glimpse of frontier families and their lifelong quests for land and security (the report does not enumerate all squatter households). Contrary to historians' image of transient and rootless wanderers, most of these squatters— at least in Pennsylvania— persisted on the frontier, despite proprietary expeditions and consecutive

Indian wars. Of the sixty-one heads of households listed in Peters' report, at least forty-one remained in the area in the 1750s and the 1760s; if they were not killed in the Seven Years' War or Pontiac's War, most were eventually successful in their pursuit of land. In theory, proprietors cringed at the idea of allowing squatters to claim land rights based upon their "illegal" improvements; but in practice, most displaced squatters returned to their claims in late 1754 or early 1755 after the government purchased the lands at the Albany Conference. Very few of these inhabitants ever received letters patent. But many squatters wanted a modicum of legal title and sent in applications to have their lands surveyed either before or after the frontier wars of 1754-1763 (squatters also filed caveats against one another). William White, for instance, warranted 100 acres of land in February 1755. In 1782, White's widow Mary still occupied their original tract in Cumberland County; she owned an additional 280 acres of land and a few livestock.49

Backcountry families were generally small, "very poor" (as Weiser reported in 1748), and lived in temporary log cabins in small clearings. Although Peters had reason to diminish the worth of the squatters' improvements, he described their cabins as "of no

49 Using the households in the Peters' report as a sample, I was able to identify definitively forty-one of the sixty-one squatter households using the Land Records and Cumberland County tax lists from the 1750s and 1760s. See John Cecil Fralish, Jr., Index of Names in the Tax Lists of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, For Certain Years, 1758-1767 (Carlisle, Pa.: Cumberland County Historical Society, 1977) and Morri Lou Scribner Schaumann, Transcriptions of Original Tax Records at Cumberland County Court House, Carlisle, Pa. (n.p., n.d. copy in Pennsylvania State Archives Reading Room). For references to William and Mary White, see PA, 3rd ser., 24: 776 ("Warrantees of Land: County of Cumberland, 1750-1874"); PA, 3rd ser., 20: 567 (Mary White on 1782 Cumberland County tax list). Settlers often did not receive letters patent because of the fees associated with the land patenting process and their great distance from the Land Office; some of them also died in the Seven Years' War or Pontiac's War. Possession of a warrant for survey, however, conveyed a modicum of legal title and a basis for possession. I thank Jonathan Stayer of the Pennsylvania State Archives for explaining the fine points of the land patenting process to me. See Jordan and Kaups, The American Backwoods Frontier, 1-7 for the most recent interpretation of the squatters' alleged "compulsive mobility" (p. 3).
considerable Value; being such as the Country People erect in a Day or two, and only cost the Charge of an Entertainment." It would be a mistake, however, to think that squatters were dirt-poor outcasts. Descriptions of frontier farms in the Pennsylvania Gazette in the Seven Years' War reveal extensive improvement. One tract in Berks County had a house with a cellar, a barn, outbuildings, and corn cribs in 1756. Settlers at the refurbished village of Burnt Cabins—a name that commemorated the proprietors' actions—erected a stone grist mill. Andrew Lycon's farm—he returned to his claim in the early 1750s—contained a sturdy "Dwelling house" and a "Hog house." Even more significant, Lycon had enough wealth to own two African-American slaves—a father and son. Richard Peters confirmed that other squatters he encountered on the frontier employed "servants" (perhaps indentured servants or black slaves). Lycon's quest for landed independence as a yeoman farmer was intricately interwoven with the colonists' destruction of Indians' landed independence and in his case, the use of unfree labor.50

The settlers' determined quests for land and commitment to property rights suggests that their friendly relations with Indians may have been short-term accommodations in order to master the "wilderness" and then the Indians. One dispossessed settler named Peter Falconer, in Richard Peters' words, believed that "it woud be impossible that Peace coud have Subsisted long" between colonists and Indians. The proprietors and colonists' joint dispossession of native peoples and the larger Anglo-French imperial struggle effectively foreclosed on the "Long Peace" in Pennsylvania.

50PA. 1st ser., 2: 15 ("very poor"); PA. 8th ser., 4: 3325-26, 3331 ("improvements" and "servants"); Pennsylvania Gazette. November 11, 1756 (Berks County) and March 18, 1756 (Lycon). Elizabeth Lycans—apparently some relation to Andrew—applied for 250 acres of land along the Juniata river in 1766 (West Side Applications, No. 2305, Land Records, Pennsylvania State Archives [microfilm reel 1.8]).
Settlement expansion, in particular, created repetitive crises for Indian and proprietary negotiators. The councils that were meant to resolve differences, however, often infuriated the Indians further.51

Proprietors, land speculators, interpreters, and colonial agents doubling as Indian diplomats were determined to use the treaty event to extract land concessions. Proprietors' land purchases—in 1749, 1754, and 1768—were also designed to preempt both native and squatter claims. At Albany in 1754, for example, the Pennsylvania delegation—primarily Richard Peters and Conrad Weiser—orchestrated a deceitful land deal with the Iroquois for a vast area west of the Susquehanna River extending clear to the Ohio Country. Proprietor Thomas Penn ordered that the Juniata Valley be settled "as fast as possible" with settlers who could pay for land and quitrents. The Albany Purchase further alienated both the Six Nations and the Ohio Indians and war loomed on the horizon.

When the Seven Years' War began, Indian war parties from the Ohio Country specifically targeted settlements in the disputed Albany Purchase, including the Great Cove Valley where Charles Stuart lived. A Delaware war party also targeted Andrew Lycon's homestead in 1756—another indication that natives did not forget their dispossession.

Lycon was apparently mortally wounded in combat after he and his neighbors killed a few of the warriors: "one of the Indians killed was Tom Hickman, and Tom Hayes, all Delawares, and well known in [those] Parts."52


52 Thomas Penn, quoted in Jennings, Empire of Fortune, 104; Pennsylvania Gazette, March 18, 1756 (Delawares). On Pennsylvania's concerns over "encroachments" from Virginia and Maryland, see PA, 2nd ser., 2: 683-84. On the Pennsylvania government's land purchases at the Albany Congress of 1754, see
Great issues hung in the balance in 1755 when the Ohio Indians and their French allies unleashed their military offensive against the Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia frontiers. For decades, native sovereignty had been eroded by the repeated incursions of settlers, livestock, alcohol, traders, and imperialistic colonial officials. The Delawares, Shawnees, Iroquois, and other Ohio valley peoples hoped that the Appalachian Mountains would prove a lasting barrier to European encroachments. Instead, French and English traders, settlers, and armies invaded the Ohio valley—"a country between" the two rival empires. In 1755, the Indians struck back in a bid for independence every bit as powerful as that of 1776. Their goals were to preserve their territorial sovereignty by forcing Pennsylvania colonists and proprietors to abandon their attempts to appropriate more lands.

Wallace, Conrad Weiser, 350-63; Jennings, Empire of Fortune, 101-6; and Timothy J. Shannon, Crossroads of Empire, chap. 5.
CHAPTER 3

"THE STORM WHICH HAD BEEN SO LONG GATHERING":
WARFARE AND VIOLENCE ON THE PENNSYLVANIA FRONTIER, 1755-1763

Penn's (formerly Mahanoy) Creek, Pennsylvania, October 16, 1755

Marie Le Roy and Barbara Leininger and their families were among the thousands of Europeans who immigrated to Pennsylvania in the early eighteenth century. The Leiningers, from the city of Reutlingen in the Rhine-Neckar region, arrived in the colony in 1748; the Le Roy family, from Switzerland, immigrated in 1752. Both families quickly occupied lands in the "new purchase" of 1754; their new homes on the west side of the Susquehanna River were located only a few miles from the Susquehanna Indian town at Shamokin. Settlers were willing to risk everything--lives and property--to obtain frontier land; a land rush in late 1754 and early 1755 occurred in the context of French occupation of la belle rivière, George Washington's defeat at Fort Necessity, and isolated Indian attacks on Virginia frontier settlers. In August 1755, Indian and French forces nearly annihilated Gen. Edward Braddock's army at the Monongahela; panic among ordinary settlers crescendoed as rumors of impending Indian attacks spread. Hundreds of European settlers and anglophile Indian refugees (from the Ohio and Susquehanna valleys) began fleeing eastward. Still, life seemed to go on in its familiar patterns for many families who remained on the frontier in the fall of 1755.
On October 16, the Le Roys' servant braved the chilly morning to round up the cows; Mrs. Leininger had gone to a nearby grist mill; and Indians, who routinely came to trade for rum and tobacco, stopped at the Leininger house. Perhaps the hosts thought nothing of the visit because they probably had seen warriors pass that way before; or they may have interpreted the warriors' requests as demands. The Delawares had painted their bodies black and their faces both red and black; distinct geometric patterns on their cheeks and circles around their eyes made them look especially foreboding to the colonists. The eight Delawares—Keckenepaulin, Joseph and James Compass, Thomas Hickman, Kalasquay, Souchy, Machynego, and Katoochquay—who came to the Mahanoy Creek settlement that morning were not intent on trading. The two English-speaking Delawares who had stopped at the Leiningers finished smoking their pipes and announced, "We are Alleghany Indians, your enemies. You must all die." They immediately shot Barbara's father, Sebastian, and tomahawked her twenty-year-old brother, John Conrad. Barbara and her sister Regina were taken captive. A half a mile away at the same moment, the other Delawares approached the Le Roy homestead, entered, and split Jean Jacques Le Roy's skull with two tomahawks. Marie's brother Jacob vainly struggled against the warriors and he, his sister, and a small girl visiting were taken captive. The family stood powerless as the Delawares ransacked and fired their house, and placed Jean Jacques' body in the flames, with two tomahawks sticking in his skull, so that his lower torso was burned off. They watched the Delawares topple a neighbor, approaching on horseback, with a well-aimed shot and then scalp him. The warriors led them to an encampment where other captives were located. Unsure of their fates and still in trauma, they grieved
as the warriors flaunted the scalps of their deceased kin and neighbors. The Delawares adopted Marie and Barbara, and they lived together for three and a half years, though the sisters never thought of their new lives as anything but “the yoke of the heaviest slavery.” During their captivity, they would later witness Pennsylvania soldiers, now possessed by an incarnate hatred of Indians, attack their village at Kittanning.¹

The Seven Years' War fundamentally altered the ways that ordinary colonists and Indians on the Pennsylvania frontier interacted with and viewed one another. Like a fiery crucible, the war refined Europeans’ and Indians’ elemental attitudes towards one another. Despite years of peaceful if uneasy coexistence, colonists and Indians regarded each other with an increasingly racialized hatred—a process that Pontiac's War in 1763-1764 and the American Revolution only exacerbated. The war set in motion a cycle of vengeful violence—raids and counterraids and a series of individual and mass murders—that endured on the Pennsylvania and Ohio frontiers for another forty years. Recent historians of mid-eighteenth-century Pennsylvania typically emphasize “Indian hating” as a peculiarly Euroamerican racist pathology of backcountry “thugs” as Francis Jennings quipped. James Merrell, however, points out that “substituting one savage folk for another risks pushing the interpretive pendulum too far in the other direction.” Recent histories have ignored the degree to which Indians hated, in an increasingly racialized way, the colonists who had threatened their lands; they have not explained the structural and social origins of

this chronic violence. This chapter offers a more balanced ethnohistorical interpretation of the origins of colonist-Indian hatred and violence, the spectrum of wartime encounters, and how Indians and colonists' mutual hatred and retributive attacks transformed their relationships. The Seven Years' War was fought not between total strangers but between former neighbors who had once shared and contested a common world in the Susquehanna and Delaware valleys. Marie and Barbara's captors, for instance, brought along French and German Bibles as trophies so that unfortunate captives might "prepare for death." Perhaps the most striking feature of the war—a feature that partly explains why colonists and Indians became so alienated from one another—was how violence dovetailed with the legacy of Indians and colonists' common world.²

The character of Indian-colonist relations on the New York and Pennsylvania frontiers dramatically diverged between 1754 and 1763, due in part to the structural differences between the two imperial frontiers. New York did not suffer the repetitive incursions of French-Indian expeditions that Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia did during the war. The Six Nations' powerful position vis à vis New France and the British colonies, and their wartime neutrality, shielded the New York frontier from most Franco-Indian offensives (the exceptions being Saratoga in 1745 and German Flatts in 1757).

New York maintained militia and numerous fortifications in the militarized New York-Iroquoia-New France borderlands that protected the inhabitants to a degree. Not until the American Revolution did New York experience *la guerre sauvage* in all its destructiveness. Iroquois villagers and New York colonists living in the Mohawk Valley coexisted until the mid-1770s; by contrast, chronic colonist-Indian murders and violence, borne of the Seven Years' War, consistently threatened the peace on the Pennsylvania frontier after 1758.

The demilitarized and defenseless structure of Pennsylvania's settlement frontier predisposed its inhabitants to pursue violent retribution against all Indians without distinction. The Quaker leadership and population of the colony eschewed violence, there were no militia to mobilize, no large caches of arms and ammunition to distribute, few fortifications, and only a few native communities on the colony's borders. Ordinary people living on the Pennsylvania frontier had encountered mainly Iroquois warriors passing by in their attacks on their southeastern enemies, but virtually none had any experience fighting alongside Indian allies—the Pennsylvania and Six Nations alliance had worked all too well in removing most Delawares, Shawnees, and Susquehanna Indians. As a result, most settlers suspiciously looked upon most Indians as enemies rather than as potential allies. The landscape, as we have seen, was one of dispersed farms concentrated in valleys separated by long mountain ridgelines (in contrast to the more sharply defined ethnic communities clustered along the Mohawk River in New York). It would be difficult to imagine a colony more vulnerable to attack and unprepared for war when it erupted in Pennsylvania's backcountry in 1754.
The Seven Years’ War began not in Europe but in America, on the frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia. Between 1748 and 1754, imperial rivalry smoldered in the Ohio Valley. Ohio Indians, caught between the rival British and French empires, called the valley home and were determined to keep it free from European encroachment. As British traders moved into the valley in the 1740s, diplomats in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and New York turned their eyes toward the Ohio Valley, mesmerized by its bountiful resources; soon, Indian nations like the Twightwees became trading partners and nominal allies of the British. Virginians and Pennsylvanians, particularly colonial land speculators and their enterprises such as the Ohio Company of Virginia, claimed possession of the coveted valley. New France also asserted jurisdiction over the area, recognizing its strategic importance as a communications route to Illinois and Louisiana. Determined to drive out the English traders and to stop the seepage of their Indian allies to the English, the French sent an expedition commanded by Céloron de Blainville to assert French sovereignty along la belle rivière in 1749. The Ohio natives, however, were indifferent to Blainville's bluster. Only when French troops invaded the upper Ohio valley in 1753 did they succeed in cowing the local natives. Although Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingos resented the French invasion, they saw the situation as a "marriage of convenience" in which they could deflect British advances then divorce their French allies. The French established a chain of forts along la belle rivière—at Presque Isle, Le Boeuf, Venango, and Duquesne—that barred British expansion into the interior.³

In 1754, Virginians, particularly a brash young militia colonel named George Washington, precipitated open conflict in the Ohio Country. The French had coolly received a letter, delivered by Washington in 1753, from Governor Robert Dinwiddie warning them to leave the Ohio Valley. Washington and his Virginia militia returned to the Great Meadows in May 1754 and skirmished with a party of French soldiers on a diplomatic mission; the French commander, Ensign Joseph Coulon de Villiers de Jumonville, and nine French soldiers were killed in the melee. The conflict escalated when a combined French-Indian army forced the surrender of Washington's militia at his aptly-named stockade, Fort Necessity. Believing that conflict could be contained in North America without a declaration of war, the British government dispatched two regiments under Major General Edward Braddock to eject the French from British territory. Instead, a largely Indian army, accompanied by French-Canadian militia, nearly annihilated Braddock's army along the Monongahela in July 1755. British military ineptitude also meant that they lost all hope of retaining any Ohio Indians as allies. The French, Ohio Indians, and far-western Indians now had an open road from Monongahela to Maryland—courtesy of Braddock's army—on which to advance deep into the heart of the British

Colonies. From 1755 to 1758, Shawnees, Delawares, Mingoes, Ottawas, Potowatomis, Ohio Iroquois, Caughnawagas, French-Canadian militia, and French regulars utterly devastated the British settlement frontiers in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. They destroyed farms, crops, and livestock, captured small and large frontier forts, and killed over 1,500 frontier settlers and took about 1,000 captive. Thousands of colonists became refugees and large sections of the frontiers were nearly depopulated. At times it seemed that the British colonists were fighting themselves more than the French and Indians because the colonies were beset by political turmoil and internal dissent. While the French had imperial motives for their attempts to paralyze two of the wealthiest British colonies, the Indians' war aims were to secure their sovereignty and landed independence. These divergent strategic aims were reflected in the choice of targets: joint French-Indian attacks typically went against British forts or supply/communication routes; attacks undertaken solely by Indian warriors usually struck colonial settlements. When fighting ceased after the Treaty of Easton in 1758, the Ohio Indians had largely won the war, obtained concessions from the Pennsylvania government concerning prior land frauds, and pushed back colonial settlements. The pejorative terms that colonists and modern historians use to describe their expeditions--"raids" for "plunder" and "booty," "devastations" and "ravages"--detract from the highly organized and successful military campaign that

Shawnees, Delawares, Mingoes, and other natives mounted from 1755 to 1758. The natives defeated every regular British military force sent against them and their French allies: George Washington's, Edward Braddock's, and James Grant's forces all suffered catastrophic defeats due primarily to Indians' military prowess.\(^5\)

The Ohio Indians' preeminent goal was to drive back the frontier settlers who had earlier invaded their lands and to reach an accommodation with the British that would bring them territorial security. As historian Matthew Ward argues, "If the inhabitants of Virginia and Pennsylvania, the British colonies that had shown the most interest in settling the Ohio Valley, could be convinced that the cost of continuing a war to gain possession of the region was too high, the Ohio Indians could retain their homelands."\(^6\) With the exception of the Quakers, however, most frontier colonists failed to ask why the Delawares, Shawnees, and other natives were fighting in the first place. Instead, colonists were determined to avenge what they saw as "massacres" and "atrocities" carried out by "savages" whose actions they thought resembled the instincts of wild animals. Why did ordinary colonial farmers and Indian villagers pursue extremely violent measures and come to possess an all-consuming hatred of each other? What were, as Charles Thomson inquired, the "causes of the alienation" of Indians and colonists from one another?\(^7\)


\(^6\) Ward. "Fighting the 'Old Women'." 301.

\(^7\)Charles Thomson. An Enquiry into the Causes of the Alienation of the Delaware and Shawanese Indians from the British Interest and into the Measures Taken for Recovering Their Friendship (London: J. Wilkie, 1759). A Presbyterian schoolmaster, Thomson wrote a rare and humane work for its times, based in part on his conversations with the Delaware sachem Teedyuscung, that presented Delaware
In December 1754, on the eve of the conflict, Richard Peters expressed to George Croghan his disagreement with the Assembly's suggestion that Ohio Iroquois refugees at Aughwick (Croghan's trading post) be brought within colonial settlements for better protection and supply. Reflecting on previous relations between Indians and settlers, Peters composed an epitaph to the failure of those peoples to coexist: "Will it not be impossible for Indians & White people to live together? Will there not be an eternal Intercourse of Rum and a perpetual Scene of quarrelling?" Although Peters was primarily concerned with keeping the Indians at Aughwick to bear the brunt of any French and Indian attacks on the province, his rhetorical questions were partially prophetic. Not more than a year after Peters wrote the letter, the Ohio Indians and their French allies waged la guerre sauvage on Pennsylvania. 8

Historians have pursued various explanations for why war came. No matter how peaceful and amicable Indian-settler interactions were, the settlement frontier's expansion had been an unmitigated disaster to the Indian peoples living in the Susquehanna and Delaware watersheds. Most historians point to the onslaughts of disease, trade, dependency, liquor, and missionaries; European settlements also ecologically transformed a distinctly Indian landscape. Other historians point to murders and the diplomatic crises that they caused. James Merrell's recent work presents the frontier as official negotiators saw it: "one task, one trip, one crisis at a time."9 While murders unquestionably alienated grievances that led them to make war.

8EA. 1st ser., 2: 214.
9Merrell, Into the American Woods, 40.
colonists and Indians from one another, they were relatively uncommon before 1755 (the high-profile cases occurred in 1722, 1728, 1743, and 1744). A close analysis of the mistreatment, misunderstanding, and violence that arose in the context of ordinary colonial farmers and Indians' everyday encounters better explains how and why the seeds of warfare and racial hatred sprouted in the 1750s.

Modern historians, who tend to focus on Euroamerican "Indian hating" and incidents such as the Paxton Massacre, have failed to plumb the depths of Indians' growing hatred of the colonists. While Ohio Valley natives did not develop an identity as "red" Indians, their attitudes toward Europeans increasingly focused on their whiteness and on their destructiveness to native societies. Natives had long distinguished Europeans by their ethnic (e.g., German or Irish) and colonial (e.g., New York or Pennsylvania) backgrounds. But as early as 1743, a Shawnee warrior dismissed such distinctions between Virginians and Pennsylvanians: he exclaimed that "the white People are all of one Colour and as one Body, and in case of Warr would Assist one another." During the war, many Indians' faces "were quite distorted with rage," as Moravian emissary Christian Frederick Post discovered in his 1758 journey to the Ohio Country in 1758. The Delaware warrior Captain Jacobs, reported escaped captive John Craig, said that the Indian allies "would carry on the War against them [the colonists] as long as there was a Man of them alive." John Cox reported that during his captivity, that "Delaware,

Mohiccon, and Minsha" warriors' "whole Conversation was continually filled with
Expressions of Vengeance against the English, and Resolutions to kill them, and lay waste
their Country." Later, before his captors departed to attack the Scots-Irish at Paxton, "the
Indians said they were resolved to kill all the white folks, except a few, with whom they
would afterwards make a Peace." Post, messenger of peace in 1758, recorded in his
journal the unalloyed hatred of Euroamericans he experienced. The people of Sankonk, or
Shingas' Old Town on the Beaver River, "received me in a very rough manner. They
surrounded me with drawn knives in their hands, . . . running up against me, with their
breasts open, as if they wanted some pretence to kill me. I saw by their countenances they
sought my death."11

The deep enmity that Post felt was also expressed on the bodies of war captives
whom the Indians tortured and put to death. After Armstrong's Kittanning raid, the
Delawares tortured and killed Mrs. Alexander McCallister, the wife of a Tuscarora Valley
squatter, perhaps to vent their frustrations over the defeat and to discourage other
captives from running away. They tied her to a small sapling and burned her. If she was
the same "English woman" that Marie Le Roy and Barbara Leininger saw at Kittanning,
Mrs. McAllister suffered an extremely violent and painful death:

First, they scalped her; next, they laid burning splinters of wood, here and there,
upon her body; and then they cut off her ears and fingers, forcing them into her
mouth so that she had to swallow them. Amidst such torments, this woman lived
from nine o'clock in the morning until toward sunset, when a French officer took


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compassion on her, and put her out of her misery . . . . When she was dead, the Indians chopped her in two, through the middle, and let her lie until the dogs came and devoured her.

Hugh Gibson, who witnessed the spectacle, recorded that the Delawares "shot her, and threw her remains upon the embers."12

The Indians' actions were not expressions of innate "savagery" or "brutality" as colonists believed and as older historical narratives portrayed them. Rather, these actions were rooted in the immediate social context which most Indians had known: a world in which contact with Euroamerican colonists was a frequent and often unpleasant occurrence. In the first half of the eighteenth century, ordinary settlers were the object of Indian complaints both individually and collectively. In 1735, Tagotolessa ("Civility") came to Philadelphia to brighten the chain of friendship, bringing with him a gift of skins and a request that the Proprietors "assist in composing any Differences that may arise between the Irish people, who are come into these parts, and these Indians, who intend to live & dye where they are now settled." Earlier that year, Tagotolessa spoke in behalf of Whiwhinjac, a Conoy sachem, that "they desire that the settlers & young men near Conestogoe & their other Towns, may be directed to treat them with Kindness and Respect like brethren." Individual settlers such as Samuel DuPuy, a well-to-do landowner living near the Delaware Water Gap, infuriated the Indians with their aggressive treatment. Count Zinzendorf recorded that "while at his house, [DuPuy] had some Indians arrested

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12"Narrative of Marie Le Roy and Barbara Leininger," 410; "An Account of the Captivity of Hugh Gibson among the Delaware Indians of the Big Beaver and the Muskingum, from the Latter Part of July 1756, to the Beginning of April, 1759." Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 3d. ser., vol. 6 (1837): 141-53. at 144.

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for robbing his orchard." In 1731 the Conestogas complained of a Marylander named Crissop who was "very abusive to them when they pass that way." He was alleged to have beaten "one of their women who went to Get Apples from their own Trees." Given such treatment, many Indians familiar with the European settlements came to associate them with evil spirits and diseases such as smallpox.\textsuperscript{13}

European observers often corroborated the Indians' grievances. Government officials and intermediaries such as Conrad Weiser and Shikellamy were, of course, more cognizant than most of the obstacles to peace. But observant colonists occasionally petitioned the government to reform the Indian trade, restrict the flow of rum, and restrict settler/hunters from invading Indian hunting grounds. Rev. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg learned from Conrad Weiser that natives' attitudes toward Europeans had come to focus on both their whiteness and destructiveness:

\begin{quote}
toward the white people as a whole [the Indians] have a deeply rooted prejudice and secret mistrust and . . . they say that the white people should have remained on their own ground and lived there and not have bothered them. We came over here with no other purpose than to take their land away from them, to decrease their catch of game, fish, and birds, to drive them farther into the wilderness, to make their life more difficult.
\end{quote}

James Smith, who was taken captive by the Delawares during the Seven Years' War, also gained a new perspective on colonial society. Smith's adoptive Delaware brother, Tontileaugo, noted with approval when Smith gave venison to a Wyandot warrior who was visiting Muskingum. Tontileaugo asked Smith whether he had also given the

Wyandot "sugar and bear's oil, to eat with his venison." When Smith replied that he left the condiments in the canoe, Tontileaugo exploded: "you have behaved just like a Dutchman. Do you not know that when strangers come to our camp, we ought to give them the best that we have?" Smith noted that he called German settlers "Skoharehango, which took its derivation from a Dutch settlement called Skoharey" [Schoharie, N.Y.]. Tontileaugo, who apparently never received "the best" that the German settlers had, sharply contrasted Indians' and colonists' hospitality ethics.14

The Seven Years' War represented a crise de la conscience for many Pennsylvania colonists but especially Quakers. Why had the Delawares and Shawnees gone to war against the people of William Penn? One of the first attempts to find the answer came in 1756. The Pennsylvania governor sent the Oneida sachem Scaroyady and métis interpreter Andrew Montour to the upper Susquehanna Valley to discover from neutral or friendly Delawares and Shawnees what the Ohio Indians' grievances were. They brought back disconcerting news. The Indians spoke of fraudulent land deals, traders who cheated them, and the settlers' inhospitable behavior:

When we lived among them they behaved very ill to us; they used us like Dogs, they often saw us pinched with want and starving, and would take no Pity of us; sometimes we were in Liquor, a Fault which you are sensible we cannot always avoid, as we cannot govern ourselves when we come where Liquors are; when we were in this Condition they turned us out of their Houses and beat us, so that when we came to be sober we were not able to get up... Now Uncles, can this be called Brotherly Treatment? dont' you imagine such Usage must raise Ill Nature in

During and after the Treaty of Easton in 1758, Quakers encouraged the Indians to enumerate their reasons for going to war. The Quakers and other colonists recognized that the Proprietors' dealings with the Indians were less than fair. They were determined to achieve a just peace with the Ohio Indians and return to the beneficent policies of William Penn. While the Indians most often mentioned being cheated out of their lands, unfair trade practices, alcohol, and corrupt traders, settlers were also singled out as a provocation for war and vengeance. Indeed, some of the Indians' first targets were settler communities at Tulpehocken, Penn's Creek, and newly-settled areas west of the Susquehanna.

Recent historians have typically analyzed wartime backcountry society in terms of its demonstrable violence and racialized hatred of all Indians. Euroamericans' mass killings of Indians at places such at Kittanning (1756), Conestoga (1763) and Gnaddenhütten (1782) presaged later massacres at Sand Creek and Wounded Knee. In many accounts, historians present ordinary settlers as cardboard "Indian haters" committing atrocities upon Indians. Yet as James Merrell recently noted, "the sources of American anger, fear, and hatred that fueled these atrocities are unclear." Preexisting cultural ideas such as the

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15 [MPCP: 4: 64-72.]
16 [MPCP: 8: 198-99, 247; Jennings. "Brother Miquon: Good Lord!." 207-10; idem., Empire of Fortune, 253-81, 323-48, 369-404.]
civilization-savagery dualism certainly shaped ordinary settlers' thinking about natives.

Travel literature such as Gottlieb Mittelberger's *Reise nach Pennsilvania* (1750) may have given European immigrants to the colony an inaccurate and vague impression of Indian society and culture. But most European frontier settlers formed their attitudes toward natives and their cultural practices through personal experiences with neighboring or traveling Indians. Misunderstandings over property and reciprocity in colonial farmers' meetings with Indians often led to violent clashes and predisposed them to despise all Indians once open warfare erupted in 1755.

Thousands of natives—Iroquois, Delawares, Shawnees, Conestogas, and others—traveled to and from Philadelphia during the first half of the eighteenth century. Whenever they came to brighten the "Chain of Friendship," they passed through innumerable colonial settlements (especially along the Tulpehocken Path leading southeast from Shamokin). Colonists' complaints routinely came to the provincial government's attention. Farmers were most often angered by offenses such as Indians stealing or killing their livestock, helping themselves to tempting orchards and cornfields, and "barking" the farmers' trees for shelters. Settlers undoubtedly resented the Indians' damage to their property, especially when such offenses seemed chronic. Lt. Gov. James Hamilton warned an Iroquois delegation in 1749 to "Chastise your unruly Indians, . . . or they will certainly draw on them the resentment of the Country People, who will not be restrain'd from


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taking vengeance.\textsuperscript{19}

The traveling Indians had a different perspective on their interactions with backcountry settlers. An anonymous Six Nations spokesman revealed that two alien economic mentalities were the more fundamental cause of settler-Indian conflicts. He addressed the Provincial Council in 1737 that "amongst them there is never any victuals sold, the Indians give to each other freely what they can spare, but if they come among our People they can have none without paying." Conrad Weiser, however, responded that Europeans have "distinct Properties & Interests, & none of us can demand from another Victuals or any thing of the kind without payment." Many of Weiser's contemporaries observed and were recipients of Indian hospitality. As the naturalist John Bartram noted during his journey from Philadelphia to Onondaga:

[Indian] hospitality is agreeable to the honest simplicity of antient times and is so punctually adhered to, that not only what is already dressed is immediately set before a traveller, but the most pressing business is postponed to prepare the best they can get for him, keeping it as a maxim that he must always be hungry.\textsuperscript{20}

The Indians expected reciprocal treatment when they came to white settlements. As their diplomatic imagery showed, the Indians were in alliance with Pennsylvania and the inhabitants thereof. The natives' interactions with Pennsylvania's inhabitants were therefore crucial indicators of colonists' feelings of good will. In addition, many Six Nations embassies had travelled through many Susquehanna Indian towns that had long

\textsuperscript{19}MPCP 5: 401, 408-10. For settlers' complaints and the government's reaction, see PA, 8th ser., 4: 2938, 3085, 3257, 3261, 3466, 3508, 3759; MPCP 3: 219-215; 4: 86-87; 5: 409-11.

\textsuperscript{20}John Bartram, Observations on the Inhabitants, Climate, Soil, Rivers, Productions, Animals, and Other Matters Worthy of Notice Made by Mr. John Bartram in His Travels from Pensilvania to Onondaga, Oswego, and the Lake Ontario, in Canada (London: Whiston and White, 1751), 16.
been centers of hospitality. As a Moravian at Shamokin reported, "many strange Indians pass through the town whom they must feed." The contrast between the hospitality of the Susquehanna towns and the tight-fistedness in the Christians' settlements must have been starkly apparent to travelling Iroquois. Farmers jealously guarded "their" trees, orchards, livestock, and crops when Indians tried to "steal" them. The Indians' frustration was clearly evident in the Iroquois speaker's message.21

Yet the colonists' misunderstandings of the intricacies of Indian reciprocity customs should not be over-emphasized. Neighborliness and reciprocal obligations also bound contemporary European societies together. It was the conjunction of similar hospitality ethics that enabled setters and the Indians to interact peaceably. Although there was disagreement between them, it was more often over different conceptions of property and monetary exchange than a fundamental inability of colonists to understand Indian notions of hospitality or usufruct. When Indians at the 1744 Lancaster Treaty stripped the bark off the walnut trees on John Musser's plantation, the colonist learned "not to oppose or differ with the Indians about it, since they wanted the bark to form their Cabins" and instead petitioned the government for relief.22


The combination of alcohol and different hospitality ethics produced violent incidents during Indian-settler meetings along the roads to Philadelphia. When a travelling Iroquois "Struck a White man with his Hatchet and offered to Stick a Nother with his Knife," a gang of colonists returned and pummeled the offending Indian. They had beat him so badly that "he could hardly walk," Conrad Weiser reported. When an Iroquois warrior was murdered on the way to Philadelphia, the Iroquois delegation believed that the culprits were "the White People at whose House the Indians got Liquors" (drunken Indians were the apparent murderers). Enebriated natives occasionally staggered into colonial settlements demanding liquor; they were either "with some Difficulty persuaded to leave" or they injured themselves or the residents. The provincial officials were usually quick to attribute any crimes or depredations to "the rude behaviour of the Indians." They in fact contributed to the rash of violent incidents by consistently giving "provisions and Gallons of Rum" to the Indians at the conclusion of every conference to "Comfort them upon the Road." Many colonists, such as the indentured servant William Moraley, thus encountered drunken Indians "in the Fields in their Return, . . . so drunk, that they could not stir from the Place." By acquiescing to Indians' requests for rum on the return journey, provincial rulers failed to appreciate how a trickle of rum could turn into a freshet of hostility and violence.  

The written record provides only partial evidence for the frequency of rape or sexual assault committed by Europeans and Indians in their routine interactions. If a 1707 conference at Conestoga provides any indication, colonists and traders living close to Indian settlements may have had clandestine or open relationships with native men and women. No sooner had the lieutenant governor and his party returned from Conestoga than the Assembly sent a remonstrance to William Penn in England, complaining that "some who went with thy Lieutenant to Conestogae to visit the Indians, committed vile Abominations with them." In 1750, a drunken Indian assaulted Anna Hunter, an eight-year-old girl living at Paxton. When a neighboring Nanticoke Indian named John Toby came to the house, Elizabeth Hunter sent Anna to "fetch some Tin Vessels from the Suggars trees, Least the Indian might steal them." As she did her chores, John Toby "took hold of her and said that he must lie with her, and so throwed her down and Lifted up her Cloaths, and hurted her very much." Elizabeth testified before Conrad Weiser that "the Child was very much Hurt her Private Parts Being Bloody and Swelled." Weiser succeeded in committing John Toby to the Lancaster jail but such incidents—certainly lingered in the minds of the Paxton settlers and fueled their animosity toward their Indian neighbors. Indian peoples were probably victims of sexual assault, but being unfamiliar with colonial legal procedures, they lacked easy access to courts and magistrates that would have recorded their complaints.24

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24See PA, 8th ser., 1: 770; MCPP 2: 300; Conrad Weiser deposition, Lancaster County, February 15, 1750, Elizabeth Hunter deposition, and Elizabeth Bethy deposition, in Conrad Weiser Correspondence, 1741-1766, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
Given the record of misunderstanding, harsh words, mistrust, and violence, it is remarkable that in the fall of 1755, some frontier Pennsylvanians simply did not expect the Indians to attack them. Conrad Weiser reported shortly after the Penn's Creek attack in October 1755, "the people down here seem to be senseless and say the Indians will never come this side [east] of Sasquehannah River." Daniel Dulany, the provincial secretary of Maryland, remarked that "the people of Pennsylvania flattered themselves that the Indians would spare them, and indeed, it was so late before they attacked, that many people suspected they had some grounds to rely upon the mercy of the savages." While many farmers had fled the frontiers in terror after Washington's defeat and news of Indian attack in 1754-55, many stayed at their farms to harvest crops. Mary Jemison, taken captive by a Franco-Shawnee war party from the Pennsylvania frontier in 1755, remembered that her father "knew that the enemy was at no great distance from us" in early 1755. But he decided to remain for another season, believing that when British and colonial forces advanced into the Ohio Country, "the enemy would be conquered and compelled to agree to a treaty of peace."\(^{25}\)

When Indian attacks began in earnest along the Pennsylvania frontier in late 1755, they terrified, angered, and above all, mystified the European settlers. Historian Paul A.W. Wallace correctly noted that "what gave the invasion a peculiar pall of horror was that local Indians—innocent, shiftless, companionable fellows as they had seemed a few

\(^{25}\text{MPCP. 6: 647; Daniel Dulany quoted in John H.B. Latrobe, ed., "Military and Political Affairs in the Middle Colonies in 1755," PMHB 3 (1879): 22; James S. Seaver, A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison, with a foreward by George Abrams (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 5.}
weeks before—were among the scalping parties." The naturalist John Bartram, who had explored much of the Pennsylvania backcountry before the war, captured a crucial source of the settlers' astonishment: "most of y' Indians which are so cruel are such as was allmost dayly familiar at their houses eate drank & swore together was even intimate playmates." Bartram, who had personally observed the deep cultural interplay that had occurred between settlers and neighbor Indians in the decades before the war, perceived the settlers' feelings of betrayal—emotions that rationalized and aroused their desire for harsh retribution against natives.26

The colonists' bellicosity toward Indians was partly a product of the atmosphere of peace that existed between Indians and Europeans in the years before the war. What particularly galled the colonists was how Indian warriors used their intimate knowledge of the English language and of the settlements to their advantage. Accounts of frontier raids and most captivity narratives prominently reported both English- and German-speaking Indians who were at one time familiar faces among the settlers. In one of many examples, Conrad Weiser reported an Indian attack on a group of isolated settlers in which the Indians "spoke to them in High Dutch, be still we wont hurt you." Thomas Baird, who was captured in 1758 and escaped soon after, "knew several of the Indians, particularly James Lingonnoa, Indian Isaac's brother, who with others, enquired after several People in Marsh Creek." Even as late as 1758, when Frederick Post and a delegation of Indians passed by Chambers' Fort on the Forbes Road, "some of the Irish people, knowing some

of the Indians, in a rash manner exclaimed against them, and we had some difficulty to get
them off clear."27

After the Paxton Boys’ slayings of the Conestoga Indians in 1763, the Rev. John
Elder remarked that “the storm which had been so long gathering, has at length exploded.”
The brewing storm was fueled by the settlers’ deep desire for retribution and what they
saw as self-defense. One incident involving Conrad Weiser and a frontier mob provides
evidence of just how powerful their desire for vengeance was. Even "friendly" Indians--
diplomats, messengers, and refugee communities--were the most accessible targets. The
settlers first asked Weiser, "Why must we be killed by the Indians and we not kill them?
why are our Hands so tied?" The mob was "so enraged against all the Indians, & would
kill them without Distinction . . . They cried out that so much for an Indian Scalp they
would have (be they Friends or Enemies) from the Governor." When Weiser refused to
consider this, "some [began] to Curse the Governor; some the Assembly; called me a
Traitor of the Country who held with the Indians and must have known this Murder before
hand." The mob progressed from lashing out against the Indians, the governor, then the
Assembly, and finally Weiser himself. Conrad readily emphasized, "I was in danger of
being shot to death."28

27 PA, 1st ser., 2: 511-12; Pennsylvania Gazette, May 10, 1756; "Two Journals of Western Tours,
by Charles Frederick Post," in Reuben Gold Thwaites, Early Western Travels, 1748-1846 (Cleveland:
Arthur H. Clark, 1904), 1: 238.
28 John Elder, quoted in Frank J. Cavaioni, “A Profile of the Paxton Boys: Murderers of the
Weiser, quoted in Wallace, Conrad Weiser, 414.
The nature of the war the colonists experienced best explains why they almost
instantaneously turned against Indian enemies and friends alike in 1755. *La guerre
sauvage* was a total war waged not against professional armies and elaborate fortifications
but against individual families, their lands and houses, and their identities. Colonists
expected wars to be fought between armies and had never experienced a war where they
were the strategic targets. From the Leiningers' or Le Roys' points of view, the Indians'
war methods were completely arbitrary and brutal, their attacks terrifying in their
invisibility. Indian warriors slipped through the cordon of frontier forts that the
government erected from 1755 to 1757 and destroyed settlements at will. War parties
struck like the lightning and disappeared just as quickly. Able to live off the land and to
elude colonial pursuers with ease, Indian warriors painted both red and black were easily
demonized by the colonists. 29

Indian warriors struck at the jugular of backcountry society: its close family, kin,
and ethnic ties that were the basis of community. The landscape also ceased to be
Euroamerican. In a matter of hours, Indians could annihilate entire settlements by killing,
capturing, and driving away its residents and laying waste the countryside. Almost the
entire population of Penn's Creek was killed or captured in October 1755. The ninety-
three settlers who remained in the Great Cove in 1755 suffered forty-seven killed or
captured. Families and extended kin networks were destroyed and separated. One

29 See Ward, "La Guerre Sauvage," chapters 3, 5, and 8; idem., "Fighting the 'Old Women,"" 297-
320. On the relationships between the settlers' houses, lands, and identities, see Jill Lepore, *The Name of
83.
representative account noted that "One of the men had a Daughter with him that is yet missing, and the other man had a Wife & three or four children that are also missing."

Colonists' great pains to record in letters and newspapers every settler killed or captured reflected a deeper concern about the destruction of families. Stories that seemed particularly tragic--such as living infants found in their dead mothers' arms--became the stuff of legend.30

The settlers' petitions to the government reveal a profound sense of frustration over their losses and utter helplessness that partly explains their desire for retribution against any Indian. Matthew Smith, one of the Paxton Boys, defended his actions in 1763 by pointing out that "no man, unless he were living at that time in Paxton, could have an idea of the sufferings and anxieties of the people." The settlers' perception of the random and arbitrary Indian attacks, along with the provincial government's initially pusillanimous response, only exacerbated their feelings of helplessness and vengeance. Dispersed homestead locations made defense doubly difficult and further led to feelings of isolation: petitioners from Lancaster knew that they were "in a great degree separate and disunited by means of our distant abodes." To make matters worse, most petitions mentioned rumors of impending French-Indian attacks, which took on a life of their own, leaving panic, hysteria, and a sense of deathly anticipation in their wake. The power of rumor in

the backcountry, which exacerbated feelings of helplessness and uncertainty, probably accounts for much of the settlers' perceived need to blame someone—anyone. As William Trent put it, "How long will those in power by their Quarrels suffer us to be massacred?" Another petitioner was even more blunt: "so many Mouths crying for Vengeance against their Murderers, and yelling at the negligence & insensitivity of the Administration, to whose inactivity there are so many sacrifices." The governor, the Assembly, Quakers, Roman Catholics, Moravians, and British army commanders were all objects of the colonists' wrath.31

Indian attacks also struck a nerve among patriarchal frontier families and wounded the male colonists' sense of manhood. Often powerless to stop the Indian warriors, patriarchs were reduced to despair over the "broken remains of our dismembered families." To watch as one's family was dismembered literally and metaphorically was more than some men could bear. In addition, a husband or father might see his wife's or children's bloody scalps stretched over hoops by their captors. Mary Jemison's father, Thomas, was reduced to depression over his powerlessness to stop a French-Indian war party from capturing his entire family in 1758. Mary remembered that he was "so much overcome with his situation—so much exhausted by anxiety and grief, that silent despair seemed fastened upon his countenance, and he could not be prevailed upon to refresh his sinking nature" by eating food. By contrast, Mary's mother, Jane, was a bulwark of

strength to the entire family during their hard march back to Indian country. Thomas had "lost all his ambition in the beginning of our trouble, and continued apparently lost to every care—absorbed in melancholy." Frontier families who survived the attacks often became refugees and were instantly reduced to abject poverty. Once prosperous farms that represented bastions of independence to frontiersmen and decades of toil were reduced to ashes. The male colonists' inability to provide for their displaced families also contributed to their wounded pride. As one pamphlet emphasized, "hundreds were reduced from plentiful & independent circumstances to a State of Beggary & Dispair."

Another writer queried, "Shall the free born Subjects of Britain, the brave and industrious Sons of Pennsylvania, be left naked and defenceless—abandon'd to Misery and Want"?

Most British officers would have scoffed at the "brave and industrious Sons" of Pennsylvania. Frontier patriarchs were expected, on the one hand, to ably defend their households and female dependents. But the British army also expected the hardy frontiersmen to take "manly steps for defence" by effectively serving as rangers. Given the Indians' all-out war against the settlement frontier, however, frontiersmen could not rightly abandon their perhaps destitute or refugee families to join the military.

Consequently, British officers and colonial officials cast aspersions on the frontiersmen's manhood, accusing them of cowardice and lukewarm support while others fought their battles. During Pontiac's War, when Pennsylvania settlers' again felt the Indians' wrath,

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Col. Henry Bouquet disparaged the colony's young men when they did not enlist in great numbers for his 1764 expedition. He wrote to John Harris that even the men who enlisted went as "Pack Horse Drivers and Waggoners, Employ for which a Coward is as fit as a brave man." Particularly denouncing the Paxton Boys as cowards, Bouquet asked, "Will not People say that they have found it easier to kill Indians in a Goal, than to fight them fairly in the Woods?" He contrasted Virginia's "brave militia" who provided volunteers without pay against Pennsylvania's cowardly frontiersmen who "chuse to remain peaceably at home & leave it to others to fight [their battles with] wild Indians." In a world where men were "judged from their Actions and not from Words," British officers deemed the Pennsylvania frontiersmen's deeds somewhat lacking from 1755 to 1763. Frontier inhabitants responded by contrasting their steadfastness in the face of extreme cruelty with the complacency of colonists closer to Philadelphia. They characterized themselves as the industrious "worthy bleeding Men" who staunchly absorbed Indian attacks while effeminate Quakers refused to bear arms.33

Ordinary colonists also pointed out the extreme emotional effects of Indian warriors' common practice of mutilating the corpses of their relations. Stories of Indian "atrocities" that appeared in colonial newspapers and in later history books cannot be taken *prima facie*, since their authors may have exaggerated, distorted, or fabricated the accounts to highlight Indian "savagery." Whether accurate or enhanced, stories and rumors of atrocities ran like wildfire through the backcountry; they at once demoralized

the colonists and fueled their desire for retribution. Natives' frequent mutilations of their victims' bodies were expressions of their anger against the settlers; they symbolized Indians' "rejection of a common world," as historian Richard White argues. But they had an intended psychological effect on the survivors and colonial soldiers in pursuit. The Secretary of the Council noted that colonists' discoveries of mutilated bodies had "struck so great a Pannick and Damp upon the Spirits of the people" that effective defense was inhibited.34

Native mutilation of European bodies was doubly disconcerting because it was frequently directed at male and female reproductive organs. As historian Richard White suggests, "fighters who had rejected peace with its images of a common mother and common births now assailed actual mothers." Sheriff John Potter of Cumberland County reported "that a Woman of 93 years of age was found lying killed with her Breast tore off and a stake run thro' her Body." When unidentified Indians attacked and burned the Hoeth homestead in the Lehigh Valley, Frederick Hoeth's wife "ran out thro' the Flames, and being very much burnt she ran into the Water and their dyed. The Indians cut her belly open, and used her otherwise inhumanly." As provincial soldiers near Fort Augusta discovered, male colonists' bodies were not exempt from warriors' pointed disfigurements: one scouting party "found a man lying in the Road shott & scalped his Scull split open & one of the provincial Tomahawks sticking in his private parts." The psychological effects of the Indians' actions on the minds of colonial frontiersmen were apparent in a 1758 article in the Pennsylvania Gazette. It recounted a skirmish along the Savage River

involving nine Indians and two scouts, John Lane and Griffith Johnson. The two scouts fired on the Indian camp and felled one Indian; “Lane ran in to scalp his Man, but whilst he was stooping down, his backside being towards them, the Indians fired at him.” One bullet “went through the Crotch of his Breeches, making two holes in them, and he very narrowly escaped being served as bad as, or worse than, being scalped: for the bullet just grazed—and took off a small Piece of the Skin.” Lane survived the Indians’ circumcision and finished scalping the Indian warrior.35

Though initially demoralized when they came upon the mangled remains of fellow colonists, frontier people were soon filled with inveterate rage. When frontier crowds marched on Philadelphia in 1755, they insisted that they would “rather be hanged than to be butchered by the Indians.” They carried mutilated bodies to illustrate their plight and demanded that the government wage an equally total war against native populations, beginning with the institution of scalp bounties “for every Indian which they kill.” Pennsylvania instituted scalp bounties in April 1756, an act that only encouraged animosity toward “friendly” Indians and contradicted the government’s desire to protect them. The measure was virtually useless militarily. As James Axtell notes, “English scalping parties could at best make the Indians think twice before leaving their own villages; at worst they could find themselves outfoxed by superior woodsmen and wind up as hairy hoops in those same villages.” In practice, scalp bounties resulted in brutal slayings of both friend and enemy Indians. In the spring of 1756, one group of New Jersey settlers plotted not only to murder a family of peaceful Indians living in New Jersey but to take them to

Pennsylvania to collect the bounties. At Philadelphia they "were to swear that they were
enemy Indians, and they had killed them in the Province of Pennsylvania." They killed the
mother of the Indian family named Kate. Scalping enabled the colonists to respond in kind
to Indian warriors' mutilations of colonists. When Paxton settlers captured an enemy
Indian in 1755, they "brought him down to Carson's House, where they examining him,
The Indian begged his Life and promised to tell all what he knew." Conrad Weiser
sarcastically noted that "(shocking to me), they shott him in the midst of them, scalped him
and threw his Body into the River." When no live natives could be found, colonists might
desecrate Indian remains, as the scout John Lane did after escaping from his Indian
captors. Although stripped naked and tied up, Lane escaped and found the remains of an
Indian who had recently been buried. He dug him up, "took away his Match coat, and
scalped him with a broken Stone." Nearly four years of frontier bloodshed made ordinary
people despise and fear all Indians. Their hatred often took on ironic proportions: during
the provincial government's 1757 peace negotiations with Teedyuscung and the eastern
Delawares, some inhabitants of Easton threatened to ruin any hope of ending the attacks
on their own habitations. When a woman stormed into town hysterically reporting that
"her Husband and some of her Children were killed by the Indians," rumors careered
through the town. Conrad Weiser sent out scouts to verify the woman's claims, which
turned out to be false. But the rumor and the resulting panic threatened to turn into an
ugly confrontation:

The cry of the common People, of which the Town was full, was very great against
the Indians, & the poor People [the Indians] did not know what to do or what to
say, finding all the People so enraged and using such Language . . . . The common
People behave very ill, in asking the Indians unbecoming Questions, and using ill Language.
In the end, Weiser "had the good Luck to pacify both the white People and the Indians."

Visible and invisible reminders of Indian "brutality" kept the memory of frontier wars painfully alive in the colonists' minds for decades. The Pennsylvania countryside was littered with the human wreckage of *la guerre sauvage*. Ann Mary Duck recounted her family's travails to the Board of Property in her 1760 caveat against another settler's survey. The stresses of becoming refugees during "the first Indian War" may have cost her husband Henry his sanity: he was "depriv'd of his Senses and continues to wander through the Country like an Ideot." One young girl, who had been "shot in the Neck, and through the Mouth, and scalped," apparently survived her wounds. In 1766, a widow named Cunigunda Jager sent a petition to the Pennsylvania Assembly seeking relief for her daughter Catherine, a former captive:

that her said Daughter is a very unhappy young Woman, having spent in the Indian Idleness those Days of her Life in which Girls learn to qualify themselves for Business, and is now unable to support herself; and what makes her Misfortune still greater, she has a Child by an Indian Man, for which other young Women look upon her with Contempt and Derision.

So great was the community's disdain for Indians that they viewed Catherine Jager as polluted and defiled by what had probably been a consensual relationship with an Indian man. Another young woman, Catherine Smith, a blind ten-year-old orphan in 1760, had been taken captive in 1756 and freed by Armstrong's men during the Kittanning raid. Along with other war orphans, the Pennsylvania Hospital sheltered and cared for Catherine for three or more years. The managers requested that Catherine, "a child of a

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mild and tractable temper, and promising genius,” should be “placed in some family of
reputation, in order that she may be instructed in such business as may be proper for her
circumstances.” The colonists' deep wounds—physical and mental—festered with a putrid
hatred of Indians for decades.37

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Kittanning, Delaware Indian Town, Allegheny River, September 1756

On Monday, August 30, 1756, seven companies of the Pennsylvania Regiment's
Second Battalion under Col. John Armstrong departed Fort Shirley in the Juniata Valley
on a daring mission to attack and destroy the Delaware Indian town at Kittanning. They
advanced westward along the Frankstown Path, guided by former English traders who had
traveled that route in more peaceful times. The colonial soldiers were determined to exact
vengeance for the raids that Pennsylvanians had suffered in 1755 and 1756.

For Armstrong, the mission was even more personal: his brother, Edward, had died during
an unsuccessful defense of Fort Granville against a joint French-Indian force in early 1756.
Armstrong's men arrived near Kittanning on the night of September 7, 1756. Amazingly,
they had made the trek across the mountains undetected. Guided towards the town by the
moonlight and by the sounds of Delawares' dancing and drums, Armstrong deployed his
men and prepared for battle at dawn. The colonists, through the reports of escaped
captives, had learned that Kittanning was a major staging point for French-Indian

37 Minutes of the Board of Property, PA 3rd ser. 2: 592; Pennsylvania Gazette, April 1, 1756; PA
8th ser., 7: 5883 (Catherine Jager); Pennsylvania Gazette, May 8, 1760.
expeditions against the Pennsylvania frontier. Destroying Kittanning and its Indian population would alleviate the frontier attacks, perhaps redeem British captives, and restore the soldiers' wounded sense of manhood. Kittanning was also home to two of the most prominent and feared Delaware war leaders, Shingas and Tewea (or Captain Jacobs). 38

Tewea knew the colonists better than most Delawares. He had lived along the Juniata, had been involved in land negotiations with a settler named Arthur Buchanan, and had received the name "Captain Jacobs" because of his resemblance to a German farmer in nearby Cumberland County. Like other Delawares, Tewea joined in the exodus to the Ohio Country to escape British colonists' intrusions on their lands; he settled at the town of Kittanning along the Allegheny River in the 1750s. When war began on the frontier, he was clearly determined to have revenge upon the Pennsylvanians. In 1755-56, he and Shingas led war parties against colonists in the 1754 "New Purchase" lands; in August 1756, Jacobs was largely responsible for leading a joint French-Indian force against Fort Granville and capturing it; this fort was located near his old home on the Juniata. Colonists particularly feared Captain Jacobs and had placed a $700 bounty on his head. 39


39Hunter, "Victory at Kittanning." 378; C. Hale Sipe, The Indian Chiefs of Pennsylvania (reprint, Lewisburg, Pa.: Wennawoods Publishing, 1997), 269-74. A Scottish interpreter named McDowell, who was working for French employers, told one English captive that Captain Jacobs had boasted, "he cou'd take any Fort that wou'd Catch Fire, and would make Peace with the English when they had learned him to make Gunpowder" (MPCP 7: 232).
The combat at Kittanning on the morning of September 8, 1756 demonstrated the depths of Delawares and British colonists' mutual hatred after just a year of open warfare; it also suggests that the colonial soldiers' retributions against Indians were interwoven with proving their manhood. "With great eagerness," the provincials advanced in columns of companies through the cornfields surrounding the town. Dogs barked warnings and the Delawares stirred from their log cabins and longhouses: one provincial soldier remembered that at "the first house we came to, the Indian came out, and held his hand, as shading the light from his eyes, looking towards us, until there was five guns fired at him; he then ran and with a loud voice, called shewanick, which signifies whitemen." Native warriors from the town and across the river rallied, sounded their war cries, and sent away most of the women, children, and elderly. Captain Jacobs was alleged to have cried out, "the White Men were at last come, they would have Scalps enough." Soon Armstrong's men found themselves at a great disadvantage as superior Indian marksmanship "seldom mist of wounding or killing" the attackers. Firing from loopholes in their log houses, the Delawares inflicted heavy casualties on the provincials. Armstrong and his officers retaliated by burning the Delawares' homes and calling on them to surrender. But this was a fight to the death between mortal enemies. One warrior, perhaps Captain Jacobs, called out that "he was a Man and would not be a Prisoner; Upon which he was told in Indian he would be burnt." The warrior answered that he did not care and mocked the novice provincials for carelessly exposing themselves to musket fire.40

Delaware warriors, some with their wives reloading the weapons, continued to fight despite the smoke, flames, and searing heat. One warrior, "to show his Manhood began to sing" his battle or death song. Captain Jacobs, according to one captive's report, killed fourteen or more soldiers as his wife reloaded his muskets; he replied to the soldiers' threats to burn his house, "they might if they would; he could eat fire." He continued to fight until seven musket balls felled him. Provincials indiscriminately gunned down men, women, and children who attempted to flee the flames. Most Delawares probably died from asphyxiation or from exploding ammunition. As Armstrong reported, "With the Roof of Cap'L Jacob's House, when the Powder blew up, was thrown the Leg & Thigh of an Indian, with a child of three or four years old, to such a height that they appeared as Nothing, & fell in the adjacent Corn Field."41

Having heard a rumor of the arrival of French troops from Duquesne, Armstrong's forces withdrew and were able to elude Delawares harrassing them. In one last skirmish, the provincials shouted to the Delawares, "your town is on fire, you dogs you." In the burning town, the natives counted anywhere from seven to seventy casualties. Armstrong's forces lost roughly seventeen killed, thirteen wounded, and nineteen missing; they also freed eleven captives. Despite Armstrong's heavy losses, the destruction of Kittanning lifted the flagging morale of the Pennsylvania colonists. It provided the frontier settlements a brief respite from Indian attacks and enabled certain Delaware factions to

41"Hugh Gibson's Captivity among the Delaware Indians," 143; PA 1st ser. 2: 769-70.
seek peace with the English. \textsuperscript{42}

The Pennsylvanians' attack on Kittanning was a defining moment in the colony's history. It symbolized how the Seven Years' War transformed colonist-Indian relations; it established both a precedent and a paradigm for future mass killing of Indians and the total destruction of Indian towns and crops. \textsuperscript{43} Soldiers came away with twelve Indian scalps and trophies of their campaign, including "Jacobs Horn and Pouch, and many Belts of Wampum." British colonists hailed the Kittanning raid as "the greatest Blow the Indians have received since the War began," and clamored for more Armstrongs, more Kittannings, more dead Indians. A ballad that appeared in the Pennsylvania Gazette, "Ode to the Inhabitants of Pennsylvania," reflected changing sentiments about native peoples on the colony's borders, particularly the need to destroy Indians to prove white manhood:

\begin{quote}
Rouze, rouze at once, and boldly chase
From their deep Haunts the savage Race,
Till they confess you Men.
Let other Armstrongs grace the Field;
Let other Slaves before them yield,
And tremble round Du Quesne. \textsuperscript{44}
\end{quote}

The deeper cultural significance of the Kittanning raid was essentialized in a commemorative medal that the Pennsylvania government had struck for Armstrong and his officers for "signal Proofs of Courage and personal Bravery." The medal cut by clockmaker Edward Duffield and struck by silversmith Joseph Richardson was the "first

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{42} "Robert Robison's Narrative," 162; Hunter, "Victory at Kittanning," 390-93.
\item \textsuperscript{43} Myers, "Pennsylvania's Awakening," 399, 407, 414-16.
\item \textsuperscript{44} Pennsylvania Gazette, October 14, 1756 (plunder); September 23, 1756 ("greatest Blow"); September 30, 1756 ("Ode").
\end{itemize}
medal (created from dies) awarded by any of the North American colonies or cities to their soldiers for war services." The reverse of the medal shows a provincial officer (probably Armstrong) directing his troops with the Delawares' log cabins (with window frames and panes) burning in the background. Off to the side, a soldier fells an Indian with his musket; the Indian falls lifeless into the Allegheny River. In a colony which had mythologized its founder's friendly relations with the Delawares, its leaders and its peoples now celebrated the killing of Delaware men, women, and children.45

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45 Catharine C. Dann, "Kittanning Destroyed," unpublished manuscript, December 11, 1998, 2, 7-9, 15-17; Pennsylvania Gazette, February 17, 1757 ("courage").
CHAPTER 4

MAINTAINING PEACE ON THE NEW YORK-SIX NATIONS BORDERS
DURING THE ERA OF THE SEVEN YEARS’ WAR

The German Flatts, Oneida Country, November 1757

In late November 1757, nearly two hundred Mississaugas and Canadian Iroquois and around sixty-five French marines and militia embarked on an expedition against New York. Their target was a prosperous settlement called the German Flatts in the upper Mohawk Valley. Settled by Oneidas for centuries and the Palatines since the 1720s, it was the far-western periphery of European settlements when the Seven Years’ War in America began in 1755. The German Flatts was defended by a substantial star-shaped redoubt called Fort Herkimer and a series of five blockhouses in the surrounding settlements. The French commander, François-Marie Picoté de Belêtre, and the principal Indian war leaders orchestrated a stunningly successful attack that began around 3:00 AM on the morning of November 12, 1757. Bypassing Fort Herkimer and its garrison, the French-Indian party fell instead on the Palatine settlement and the five blockhouses. The surprised German settlers’ defense was futile. Around 40 settlers were killed and around 150 others were taken captive back to New France; many houses, barns, outbuildings were burned to ashes. The German Flatts, once a “valuable settlement” with “as fertile a piece of ground as any perhaps in the world,” was now a smoldering “scene of desolation and distress.” The attack “had Struck such a Pannick in the remainder of the Inhabitants” that they began...
moving away their possessions and were preparing to flee.¹

The attack apparently confirms what we have long known about early America: that warfare and violence were common features of everyday life. Many historians today rightly emphasize the chronic conflict between New France, Indian nations, and the British colonies in North America. There can be no doubt that imperial conflict in the eighteenth-century defined peoples’ lives in fundamental ways. Current historical emphasis on Euroamerican “Indian hating” in the Seven Years’ War might lead one to expect a backlash of bloodthirsty German settlers murdering Indians as the Paxton Boys did in Pennsylvania. But this major attack, and other small raids against the colony, did not lead to a breakdown in peaceful relations between the Mohawk Valley colonists and Indians.

This is not to argue that cultural tensions were either insignificant or peripheral. But why were there no Paxton Massacres in New York, no Frederick Stumps, no mass murders of Indians by the New York settlers at anytime from the Seven Years’ War to the Revolution? The Seven Years’ War and its aftermath in Pennsylvania and the Ohio Country was a bloodletting on a grand scale, as colonists sought revenge for the successful French and Indian attacks on their homes and families. As Chapter 5

demonstrates, there were approximately thirty-five (35) incidents of murder in the greater Pennsylvania region from 1760 to 1774 in which at least 100 Indians and colonists died. But in New York-Iroquois borderlands, as Table 1 (pp. 210-12) shows, the incidence of violence, let alone murders, was drastically lower. From 1756 to 1774, six (6) Indians were murdered by colonists or British soldiers while five (5) colonists were murdered by Indians. The New York Council, with minimal exaggeration, informed Lord Shelburne in 1766 that “they knew of no Violence or Murders committed on any Indians bordering on this Government.” In fact, the everyday relations on the New York-Iroquois frontier were more similar to New France, where contact between French-Canadian habitants and réserve Indians was also peaceful in tone.² This chapter explains why the Seven Years’ War strained, but did not completely sever, the cultural accommodation that prevailed on the New York-Iroquoian borderlands. Unlike Pennsylvanians, the New York settlers and Indians had forged strong personal, family, economic, religious, social, and military ties that bound their communities together beyond the stresses of two wars. This chapter shows, for the first time, just how interwoven European and Indian communities were on the Mohawk frontier. At no other place in Britain’s mainland colonies were Indians and settlers as culturally integrated and economically interdependent as on the New York-Iroquois borders.

The attack on German Flatts tells a different, more complex, more ambivalent story: a story about the possibility of European and Indian communities peacefully

coexisting and creating mutually beneficial relationships in the context of the world-wide Seven Years’ War. During and after that conflict, Pennsylvania’s frontier settlers lashed out against peaceful refugee Indians and Moravian Indians who remained in the colony. But in the Mohawk Valley, German Flatts settlers and their Oneida neighbors sought a common trading and military alliance that would secure neutrality for both parties during the Seven Years’ War. What made it possible for the Palatines and Oneidas to envision such a framework for peace?

On the seemingly prosaic page of a Schenectady merchant’s account book is the following entry dated October 1756: “To M’r George Weaver of the German Flats 38000 Black Wampon @ 32/6 £61,,15,,0.” Weaver also received shipments of wampum in 1755 and 1757. Who was George Weaver and what was he doing with 38,000 beads of black wampum--enough to make dozens of wampum belts (the *lingua franca* of Indian diplomacy)? Other account books reveal that Urey (George Weaver) and other Palatine settlers received several shipments of rum (one of which contained 33½ gallons!), strouds, blankets, linen, ribbon, vermilion, and pigeon shot—all items commonly used in the fur trade and diplomacy. Weaver was one of many farmer-traders at the German Flatts who had close economic ties to Oneidas, Tuscaroras, Onondagas, Oswegatchies, Kanawakes, and other Iroquois (many of whom were women coming to trade). The Germans had connections to Albany and Schenectady merchants who had been the longtime trading partners of the Canadian Iroquois. Weaver, for example, obtained wampum with the help of Albany merchant David Vanderheyden, who was involved in the Albany-Montreal fur trade. The wampum beads were readily available, for Peter Kalm
observed that "many people at Albany make wampum for the Indians, . . . by grinding and finishing certain kinds of shells and mussels."³

Perhaps no other settlers in mainland British North America had such intimate daily interactions with nearby natives. With the Mohawks to the south and east, the Oneidas to the west, and the Oswegatchies to the north, the German Flatts settlers sat at a native, not a European crossroads. The Palatine settlers not only maintained a thriving trade with the Iroquois but conducted their own diplomacy separate from the British government. Both the Germans and Iroquois perceived that they were increasingly vulnerable to attack in 1756. French and Indian forces had successfully cut off the British from the Great Lakes, destroying Fort Bull and besieging Fort Oswego in 1756. The German Flatts, and the British Fort Herkimer (or Kouari), marked the colony's exposed far-western periphery. Both the Palatines and Oneidas resented the fort's presence and saw it as an inviting target that would tend to attract, not repel, enemy thrusts. The Palatines communicated to the Oneidas their resentment of "the ill treatment they receive from the English, meaning the Troops, who past and repast that Way, as well as from those posted there." Even village leaders such as Han Jost Herkimer were not immune


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from marauding soldiers who “Tieraniece over me as they think proper” and “take a prerogative power . . . Not only by Infesting my house, and taking up my Rooms at pleashure, but takes what they think Nesserarie of my Effects.” At least one German, old George Klock of Canajoharie, “frequently called, and held private meetings with the Indians, at which, he and some others of ye. Germans liveing in that quarter, have endeavoured by false tales, & artfull insinuating to create differences, and misunderstandings, between the Army Inhabitants and Indians.” Along with Weaver, Klock was responsible for sending “treasonable Belts & Messages” to the Indians and French.4

Beginning in the fall of 1756, the Palatine community conducted negotiations on Weaver’s wampum with their Oneida neighbors, the Oswegatchies, and the Governor-General of New France, Pierre Rigaud de Vaudreuil. The Palatines sent a letter to Vaudreuil saying that they “looked upon themselves to be in Danger as well as the Six Nations, they were determined to live and die by them, & therefore begged the protection of the French.” The Palatine-Oneida alliance came into sharper focus during a December 1756 conference between Vaudreuil and other Iroquois. One of the Oneidas’ belts contained this message: “We inform you of a message given us by a Nation which is neither French nor English, nor Indian, and inhabits the lands round about us. . . . That Nation has proposed to annex us to itself in order to afford each other mutual help and defence against the English.” Vaudreuil responded, “I think I know that Nation. There is

4SWJP vol. 2: 679 (ill treatment), 526-27 (Herkimer), 534-35; vol. 3: 443, 453; vol. 8: 1009 (treasonable belts); vol. 9: 676, 679, 681 (fort not a defense), 919; vol.10: 338 (Klock); DHNY 2: 509-15 (Fort Bull); Steele. Warpaths. 199-200.
reason to believe that they are Palatines.” But Vaudreuil would not tolerate such neutrality, just as the British did not tolerate the Acadians’ neutrality; he offered the Germans a choice--either be considered as enemies or “remove to him, [and] he would receive them with open arms and give them lands.” The Oneidas and Palatines vacillated as they tried to shield their arrangement from French and British eyes. For example, the Oneidas told Vaudreuil that they had “not given our answer” to the Palatines, but other actions make it clear that they already had: Oneidas promised that “they would Give them [the Palatines] Notice when Ever they found them in Danger of Being Attacked.” In at least one instance, the Oneidas redeemed a Palatine captive from the Oswegatchies, who later complained to Vaudreuil about it. The French governor concluded that the German “Nation” had negotiated “with a view only to guarantee its settlements and itself against the incursions of my warriors and children.” He warned that “its trick will avail nothing; for whenthoever I shall think proper, I will dispatch my warriors to Corlac [the French name for New York].”

From his seat, British Superintendent of Indian Affairs Sir William Johnson was almost blind to the extent of the Palatine-Oneida alliance. He knew from Indian informants of the German Flatts trade. The British commander-in-chief, the Earl of Loudoun, thought it “a very bad practice” since Oswegatchies and Kanawakes might obtain arms and ammunition there. Johnson condemned Urey Weaver as a “very bad
Man" for sending of "a Quantity of Wampum last Fall to Canada by an Indian in the French Interest" but did not know exactly what messages the belts contained. While Johnson doubted the Germans' fidelity, he later admitted to Loudoun that "Justice requires me to declare that I have never discovered anything in the Germans behaviour which would justify the Accusation laid to their charge." Even the wily George Croghan and John Butler investigated the stories and wrote back to Johnson that they could find no evidence of Palatine-French correspondence! Johnson was solely concerned with how the Palatines were "intermeddling" in the superintendent's business.6

The Palatine-Oneida alliance was not merely one of wartime exigency but an outgrowth of longstanding economic, linguistic, religious, and personal ties that had transformed the identities of both peoples. The Oneidas sent four belts of wampum to Vaudreuil that he would "restrain his Indians from committing Hostilities any where upon [the Mohawk] River, particularly upon the German Flatts, as it will be in effect destroying of [sic] us, for we get a great deal of Provisions from the Settlements there, & reap many Advantages from our Neighbourhood with the Settlers there." The Flatts was a major source of provisions, rum, and services. Blacksmiths at the German Flatts repaired Oneida weapons and metalware; Canajoharie Mohawks had their corn ground into flour at George Klock's gristmill. When one of Sir William's agents met with the Oneidas in 1757, the sachems complained of "the Great Quantities of Rum Sold them at the German Flatts" and asked Johnson to put a stop to it. But the Oneidas made an exception for rum's use at

6SWJP 2: 723 (bad practice); vol. 9: 676, 679, 681 (Justice requires), 699 (wampum); 720-21, 725, 854-55, 857; vol. 13: 95.
“Marriages, Christings & Burials” and asked that Nicholas and Uriah [George] Weaver and one Crissman be allowed to continue sales. The Oneidas and other Christian Iroquois desiring baptism or marriage ceremonies visited Palatine churches where Palatine settlers occasionally acted as godparents or sponsors. There may have been a few intermarriages as well: the Palatine leadership sent a letter to the Governor General of New France pleading “not to due them any hurt as [they were no more white people but] Oneidas and that their Blood was mixed with [the Indians].”

The relationship was, on the whole, harmonious and strong enough to outweigh the tensions that beset it. Germans and Oneidas competed as portagers at the Oneida Carrying Place between the Mohawk and Oswego Rivers. Oneidas objected when a few German squatters began taking up lands at the Carry in the early 1750s. Oneida sachems told Johnson that “As to the Germans who live there its only by our permission, for they have never paid for the land they are settled upon.” Like their Mohawk brethren, the Oneidas “received them [the settlers] in compassion to their poverty and expected when they could afford it, that they would pay us for their land.” In a familiar cycle, the Germans had “grown rich [and] they not only refuse to pay us for our land but impose on us in every thing we have to do with them.” The Oneidas warned these Germans “to go about their business and remove from our land.”

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7SWJP 9: 832 (“many Advantages”—emphasis mine): 2: 664 (rum), 692 (blood mixed—emphasis mine); John Butler Account Book, 1755-1775. Box 3. Item 75. Willis T. Hanson Colonial Manuscript Collection. NYSL (see June 1766 entry for blacksmith work); SWJP 4: 54 (Klock’s gristmill).

8DRCHNY 6: 985 (permission), 857-58 (Oneida-German portagers) SWJP 6: 412 (Germans as laborers).
Why, then, was the Palatine-Oneida alliance ultimately unsuccessful in securing both groups a modicum of neutrality? In part, because it worked all too well. The Oneidas provided the Palatines with "every piece of Intelligence" that came to them regarding French-Indian strikes on the Mohawk Valley. There were literally dozens of separate rumors, reports, and warnings that the Iroquois passed on to the Palatines; over time, the settlers became complacent and discounted the Indians' warnings. For example, the Palatines had advanced notice of the November 12 attack from two separate Oneida messengers. The sachem Canaghquiesa also urged the Germans to "collect themselves together in a Body at their Fort, and secure their Women Children and Effects and make the best Defence they could." But the Germans, Canaghquieson explained, "laughed at me and slapping their Hands on their Buttucks said they did not value the Enemy." The Oneidas also sent a belt of wampum "to confirm the Truth" of Beléstre's impending attack but it went unheeded.9

The Palatines, according to Cadwallader Colden's later assessment, had "trusted to a private Neutrality entered into between the Mohawks and the French Indians, in which the Inhabitants of the Mohawk river were included." He faulted the Palatines for being "so infatuated under this security that they gave no ear to the repeated intelligence" of Beléstre's approach. Johan Jost Petri, writing from Montreal after his capture, was angry that "our people have been taken by the Indians and French (but the most part by our own

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Indians) and by our own fault.” Petri’s assessment of Palatine complacency and Iroquois duplicity was accurate. Some of the francophile Oswegatchies (among whom were recently settled Oneidas and Onondagas) were trading partners in one breath and attackers the next. Perhaps Onontio’s pressure to commit to the French resulted in some Oneidas participating in the attack on German Flatts (though some Iroquois withdrew from the attack when they realized the target). The Oneidas thereafter endured accusations of being co-conspirators.\(^{10}\)

The greater significance of the attack’s aftermath is that the Iroquois and German Flatts settlers renewed their trading ties after the Seven Years’ War. In fact, Oneidas and Tuscaroras came to the ruins of German Flatts to conduct the Condolence Ceremony for the survivors shortly after the attack. The sachem Canaghquiesa stated that “we have condoled with our Brethren the Germans on the Loss of their Friends, who have been lately killed and taken by the Enemy... that Ceremony being over 3 Days ago.” The renewal of local relationships between Indian and European communities was almost outside the realm of possibility in post-1763 Pennsylvania. In fact, when Pennsylvania traders began to reestablish ties with the Ohio Indians after Pontiac’s War, a mob of Cumberland County frontier settlers called the “Black Boys” ransacked and destroyed

their Ohio-bound goods. During the dozens of Indian conferences that took place in the Mohawk Valley in the 1760s, Johnson relied on the German Flatts settlers to provision traveling Indians; he even requested that Rudolph Shoemaker purchase and store wheat for Iroquois use in the winter and spring. These abiding community ties help to explain both the continuance of peace in the 1760s and why the Oneidas sided with the American rebels during the Revolution.11

The remainder of this chapter argues that the Palatine and Oneida communities' relations were not anomalous. It argues that diplomatic, military, economic, material culture, linguistic, religious, personal, and familial ties sustained a period of coexistence between Indian and European communities in the Mohawk Valley that lasted until the American Revolution. The Seven Years' War unfolded along the Mohawk Valley in a far different way than on Pennsylvania's or Virginia's frontiers. The Six Nations were determined to preserve their neutrality in this latest imperial showdown between France and Britain. In Iroquois eyes, as one sachem informed the Canadian Governor, "The English your Brothers & you are the common Disturbers of this Country." The Iroquois were, in William Johnson's words, "a People who have never considered themselves as Principals in the present War, anxious for their own security & courted by both sides."

Neither the French nor the British had the power to tip the balance of Iroquois power to

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their favor. The Six Nations were able to preserve a rough neutrality until 1759-1760, when large numbers of Iroquois warriors advanced with the British against Fort Niagara and Montreal. Iroquois neutrality shielded the Mohawk Valley from direct and sustained French or Indian attacks; the German Flatts' destruction was truly the exception to the rule. The hardest-hit areas of the New York frontiers were Orange and Ulster counties, northwest of New York City, whose defenseless western bounds were subject to Delaware and Shawnee attacks.12

Despite their desire for neutrality, the Six Nations faced intense social and economic stresses from the continuous operations of British and French forces on Iroquoia's periphery. The presence of foreign armies on their lands and increased fort-building in the Mohawk Valley-Oswego corridor greatly aggravated many Iroquois, though they had initially requested the forts' construction. Military campaigns began in earnest in 1755 as British armies targeted French forts at Crown Point, Niagara, Duquesne, and Louisbourg. Both the Niagara and Crown Point expeditions failed to achieve their objectives, though William Johnson's forces scored a tactical victory over the French at Lake George in 1755 that buoyed British morale after Braddock's defeat at Monongahela. Johnson's Mohawk allies, however, suffered heavy losses, including the venerable Hendrick Theyanoguin. The momentum having swung to the French, Vaudreuil orchestrated a stunning offensive against his enemies that maximized New France's strengths. From 1755 to 1757, French regulars, highly skilled Canadian militia, and their native allies inflicted catastrophic defeats upon British armies and devastated the

12SWJP 9: 669. 904; Parmenter, "At the Wood's Edge," chap. 4; NYCM, vol. 25, passim.
vulnerable frontiers of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. In 1756, Britain's outlet to the Great Lakes, Fort Oswego, fell to a French-Indian force; Fort William Henry at the southern tip of Lac St. Sacrament surrendered after a short siege in 1757. When Bellestre's men fell on the German Flatts it seemed that the French would triumph in North America. French officer Louis Antoine de Bougainville heard telling rumors that Pennsylvania "would make itself an independent republic under the protection of France." Given French successes, William Johnson was mostly unsuccessful in his attempts to influence the Six Nations from 1755 to 1758, though he had secured the assistance of Mohawk, Oquaga, and Schoharie warriors during the war. It seemed to him, and other British officials, that "the old Co√. Chain was very much rust-eaten & held so loosely by the 5 Nations" and was in danger "of slipping out of their hands."13

Both Johnson and his contemporaries gauged his effectiveness by how well he "managed" the Indians and brought them into the British interest. But his true significance as Indian superintendent rested in his mediation of local disputes between the Iroquois and colonists. Johnson's authority and status continued to rise during and after the Seven Years' War. In 1755, General Edward Braddock commissioned Johnson to superintend Anglo-Iroquois relations and to command the Crown Point expedition. Johnson's victory at Lake George won him transatlantic prestige: in 1755 the Crown awarded him a baronetcy and in 1756 appointed him Superintendent of Indian Affairs of the Northern Department. Sir William regularly communicated with British cabinet ministers, the Lords

13Bougainville, Adventure in the Wilderness, 191; SWJP 9: 838; Steele, Warpaths, chap. 10. Indicative of his flagging prestige, a rumor circulated among the Iroquois in 1757 that Johnson was going to step down from his position as Superintendent: see SWJP 9: 836.
of Trade, British army officers, and colonial governors. Both Warrighiyagey’s new
powers as royal superintendent and the simple fact that he resided in the Mohawk Valley
made him an effective mediator of local disputes. He was not a distant colonial official
who rarely assuaged Indian grievances or punished recalcitrant colonists. Pennsylvania’s
Conrad Weiser also lived on the frontier like Johnson. But Weiser’s employ as an
interpreter and his ethnicity lessened his effectiveness in his employers’ eyes. Johnson
believed that acculturated Mohawks, like the réserve Indians in Canada, could live
amongst the settlers as “orderly a people as any of our Lower Class are” and consistently
worked toward that end. But he believed that “the Motion [toward civilizing] must flow
from themselves, & that they must fall into it when our increas’d Numbers place them
more in our Neighborhood.” Through hunting, farming, and Christian teachings, Johnson
believed that the Mohawks could be “usefull Members of Society.”

Johnson’s frequent meetings with the Iroquois—his homes were always filled with
Indian guests—enabled him to maintain a rust-free Covenant Chain and to mediate any land
or property disputes, murders, or crimes that occurred on New York’s frontiers. As
chapter 1 demonstrated, Johnson’s generosity and knowledge of the Condolence
Ceremony enabled him to meet Mohawks’ and other Iroquois’ material and emotional
needs like few British officials of his time. He also advocated Iroquois rights in many land
disputes with colonists and New York officials. As he remarked to Colden in 1764, “I am
everry day more & more convinced of y⁰ necessity there is for a method to do the Ind⁰

14SWJP 5: 530; 6: 618; 7: 597, 599-600; on Johnson’s political connections, see Hamilton, Sir
William Johnson, 113-200; Anderson, Crucible of War, part 2. For colonial officials views of
interpreters, see Merrell, Into the American Woods.
Justice in a Summary way as well with regard to property."  

A dispute between the Schoharie Mohawks, Oneidas, and Germans in 1758 provides an excellent example of how Johnson cooled tempers and restored harmony. Some Oneida families had wintered in Schoharie Valley to hunt. They complained to Johnson that they were in “a starving Condition” due to game’s scarcity and “the Sullenness & ill temper of the Inhabitants of that Settlement.” The white settlers were angry “on Account of some Pigs &c which were killed by some Indians lately” and were “so much out of Temper that they will not give an Indian a Morsel of any thing tho ever so much in want, but give them ill language.” Johnson provided the Oneidas with money to buy provisions, told them that he would “enquire into the Affair & have it settled,” and encouraged the natives to remain on friendly terms with the settlers. He sent the trader Jelles Fonda with instructions to warn the Schoharie settlers of “the ill consequences of their differing with the Indians,” to maintain a “good Agreement” with the Indians, and “to make a collection of Indian Corn &c. for such as are now in want of Provisions.” Fonda convened a meeting of Schoharie and Mahican Indians and other colonists at the house of Josias Swaart. The chief sachem Seth presented three strings of wampum affirming his village’s friendly disposition. A Schoharie warrior named David related that only one pig had been killed and that the colonial family did not vilify the Indians as first reported. The Schoharie colonists later “returned him [Sir William] their hearty thanks for the early Steps he had taken to prevent the late little differences which had happened between them & the

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15 Johnson to Colden. December 11, 1764, Colden Papers 6: 397. For examples of Johnson’s mediation, see SWJP 5: 274. 9: 767, 10: 501-502 (Condolence Ceremony); 9: 803, 10: 49-51, 60, 87 (provisions); 9: 596 (dream fulfillment) and the vol. 14 Index.
Indians their Neighbors from going further.” The colonists’ use of the word “Neighbors” was demonstrated by a collection of corn for needy Indians.16

Johnson’s personal example helped to stabilize the Mohawk Valley in wartime. He fortified his stone house, stockpiled muskets, small cannons, and ammunition there, and sent out tenants to scout the surrounding area. Whereas Pennsylvanians and Virginians deserted the frontiers in droves, many settlers and Indians in the Mohawk Valley felt confident enough to remain at their homes. During King George’s War, according to Cadwallader Colden, “this Province remain’d in Peace the Farmers at the plow on their frontiers while New England was in many places desolated with fire & sword & sometimes so near our borders as to be seen from thence.” William Johnson confided to his uncle Peter in 1749, that “As to Your own Settlements near me, the Mohawks will defend that [& me] I am not afraid of.” In 1764, after nearly a decade of war, Johnson boasted to Colden that he settled “above 100 Familys dureing the heat of the War, to the North, & North Westward of y’ greatest part of it, and they were never molested.” Europeans felt safer having the Mohawks as neighbors and allies: Johnson believed that “without the nations in our neighbourhood continue our friends, the Inhabitants will all abandon their settlements.”17

One reason why colonists and Indians smoothed over their differences was the common military threat that they faced: the French and their Indian allies. Both Indian

16SWJP 10: 63-65, 79-80 (Schoharie dispute).

villagers and European settlers participated in joint military expeditions throughout the
eighteenth century to defend the valley that they shared; as Johnson told the Mohawks in
1755, “our mutual safety & honour is at stake.” Mohawks, Schoharies, and Oquagans all
requested that forts be built for their protection during the war. Many New York
colonists in military service were stationed in Mohawk Valley forts or scouted alongside
Mohawk, Oquaga, Mahican, or Schoharie warriors. Pennsylvania’s settlers had no history
of fighting alongside Indian allies and saw little distinction between friend or enemy
Indians. During King George’s War, Johnson helped to organize frequent scouting parties
of colonists and Indians; in 1747, for example, a “party of fifty Indians, & as Many
Christians” went out against the French. The same pattern was even more evident in the
Seven Years’ War. In 1755, Mohawks accompanied twenty of Johnson’s tenants who
“who went & ranged the Woods in his Neighborhood.” Leonard Spaulding recorded in
his 1755 diary that “I was sent for to go a Skout fort of 4 [forty four?] of us went for five
days their being ten Indians with us.” As a result, the Mohawk Valley colonists were said
to have been “good Marksmen, some used to Indian Fighting.”

Increased militarization of the Mohawk Valley meant that forts became important
loci of cultural contact and contention. By 1756, the British maintained garrisons at

\[18\] SWJP 1: 147, 638, 640, 847; Leonard Spaulding Diary, 1755-1782, p. 8, NYHS. For other
examples of joint war parties composed of colonists and Indians, see DRCHNY 4: 247 (1696); NYCMSS
57: 56 (January 9, 1712); SWJP 1: 60, 64, 72-73, 78, 80, 116, 146-47, 525, 638, 882; vol. 2: 295, 575,
816; vol. 9: 473, 645, 724, 774, 780; NYCM 21: 267 (September 4, 1747), 289 (February 18, 1748), 296
(March 28, 1748); John Henry Lydus Correspondence, Misc. Mss. L, NYHS (esp. John Henry Lydus to
John Stoddard, September 19, 1747, which mentions a party of 317 Christians and 390 Indians scouting
near Crown Point). For Mohawks, Schoharie, and Oquaga requests for forts, see SWJP 1: 276, 484, 513,
27, 1746)
Albany, Schenectady, and forts Hunter, Hendrick (at Canajoharie), Herkimer, Bull, Oswego, Edward, and William Henry. These garrisons created many hardships for nearby Indian communities. Since eighteenth-century armies were cesspools of disease, Indians suffered from epidemics such as the 1757-1758 smallpox contagion that claimed many lives. Armies also threatened the Indians' subsistence. Soldiers and batteauxmen killed Indian livestock and stole corn. British forces drove immense herds of cattle up the Mohawk Valley to Oswego which trampled Indian corn fields in the lowlands. As a result, Mohawks and Oneidas suffered crop failures during the war.

The interactions between Iroquois and colonial soldiers, however, reveals a pattern of trust and familiarity that the Regulars lacked. In fact, British regulars were responsible for many of the murders and assaults against Indians that occurred on the New York frontiers during the Seven Years' War (see Table 1). British officers' haughty mistreatment of their Iroquois allies mirrored their disdain for colonial militia. Mohawks reported in 1757 that the garrison and commander of Fort William Henry "used them very ill . . . took them by the shoulders & turned them out like Dogs." In one particularly egregious case of British aggression, regulars "emptied a chamber pot upon [a Mohawk] and shrew him with snow balls"; they then entered Tiononderoge and assaulted and wounded a number of Mohawk men and women with fists and cutlasses. Indians responded in kind: at Fort Brewerton, Indians ransacked the garrison's garden and expressed their dissatisfaction over the fort's presence on their lands. One officer at Fort
Herkimer awoke to find his garden plundered and horses stolen.\textsuperscript{19}

To prevent further hostilities, the Mohawks, Schoharie, and Oquagas favored colonial militias—not regular troops—as fort garrisons. In their frequent requests for protection, the Indians may not have anticipated the disputes and bad feelings that might arise from the British military’s presence. But by 1756, Tionondege and Canajoharie Mohawks were reported as being “averse to having Red Coats as they call ‘em put in their Forts.” The Canajoharies told Johnson to order the regulars away and to “order a Number of the Country pople Such as we are Acquainted with to garrison this Fort.” A year later, the Mohawks specifically requested the appointment of militia officer Peter Schuyler to the garrison. Their trust in colonial militia was not replicated anywhere in Pennsylvania or Virginia in the 1750s and 1760s.\textsuperscript{20}

Beyond the exigencies of war, both European and Indian communities on the Mohawk frontier had longstanding social, familial, economic, religious ties that emerged from the Seven Years’ War largely intact. Their ability to forge common bonds depended upon effective communication. Villagers and settlers were not dependent upon interpreters who acted in an official capacity such as Conrad Weiser or Arent Stevens.\textsuperscript{21}


\textsuperscript{20} NYCM 25: 92-93 (October 14, 1755); SWJP 9: 392, 461 (Red Coats), 548 (Country People), 600, 626; vol. 11: 40-41.
There were large numbers of farmers, traders, smiths, and artisans who could speak an Iroquoian dialect or a trade pidgin. The ethnic diversity of the Mohawk Valley necessitated a certain linguistic *savoir-faire* among Europeans. In 1776, an American officer stationed in the Mohawk Valley, Joseph Bloomfield, remarked that “it is not uncommon here to hear the different English Scotch, Dutch & Indian Languages talked at one time.” On another occasion, he heard English, German, Dutch, French, Mohawk, Oneida, Seneca, Cayuga, Tuscarora, and Onondaga spoken: “The most of these Tongues I heard daily spoke and one Person in particular a frenchman can speak French, English, Low-Dutch & the five Indian-Languages.” The African woman who interpreted Dutch, Mohawk, and English at her master’s house at Schenectady in the winter of 1745 could only have acquired Mohawk through habitual conversations with nearby Mohawks. Canajoharie and German Flatts settlers’ conversations were of sufficient complexity to arrange rent and land tenure arrangement with the Iroquois; they were also well-versed in the uses of wampum.21

Taverns and colonists' homes were often the scenes of conviviality, exchange, and violence; it was in these intimate settings that colonists and Indians learned each others' languages and manners. As early as 1704, The Albany Common Council ordered constables to fine tavernkeepers for "all Indians & Negros found in any Tavern" on the sabbath day. Warren Johnson described how a party of Indians left Fort Johnson and went to a nearby tavern, where they feasted on bear, wild turkey, and rum. Mohawks imbibed rum and the music and dance styles of the European taverngoers: Warren later "heard an Indian playing many European Tunes, & pretty well on the Fidle." In 1751, Canajoharie sachem Hendrick requested that the Governor take action against colonists' liquor sales: Clinton issued orders to the Sheriff of Albany to "forbid the two Tavernkeepers living in the Mohawk River selling any Rum or other spirituous Liquors to the Indians on pain of being prosecuted . . . and to charge them to shut up their Houses til the Indians return from Albany." Joseph Clement sold liquor "within 20 yards" of Johnson's house; no sooner had the Indians received guns, trade goods, and provisions, then they "immediately go to his house & spend all there." Native sachems complained that "our grown people have become so addicted to liquor that unless some stop be put thereto, we shall soon be a ruined people."²²

George Kast's frequent encounters with traveling Indians illustrates the ambivalent atmosphere of social interactions. The Kast family came to New York in 1709 and

eventually settled at the German Flatts; George Kast’s family lived along the principal east-west Indian path and provided lodging and provisions to Iroquois and colonial travelers. Daniel Claus described it as “the last plantation inhabited by white people” before the Oneidas’ country. He noted the ordinariness of Kast’s meetings with the natives—that “the Indians visited him quite often and never departed emptyhanded.” Kast’s daughter Sarah (who married Teady Magin) was especially well liked and was later a highly influential loyalist among the Iroquois during the American Revolution. Another visitor later noted Nanticokes, Onondagas, Oneidas, Tuscaroras, Senecas at the house of “their German host.” Kast’s hospitality did not mean acceptance of Indian ways: he once chided Moravian visitors, “Why did we wander around in the woods, and not live like other Christians? For we would derive no benefit, but be obliged to live like cattle among the Indians, and spend a miserable life.” Kast clearly did not like or fully understand Indian manners and lifestyles. As a result, the friendly meetings became “unpleasant when they came drunk because they were apt to take whatever they could find; if one hindered them, the evil only grew worse.” Kast told his guests of a recent visit in which an Indian had taken his food cooking on a fire. When Kast pushed him away, the Indian left, returned with a gun, and killed two of Kast’s horses. Both the German and his Indian guests were clearly not incapable of communicating and interacting in nonviolent ways—witness Kast and an Indian in the same house, sitting beside a fire, and awaiting a meal—but different notions of hospitality and property introduced conflict into their
Routine social and economic interactions produced unmistakable tension, hostility, and occasional violence and crime, especially when alcohol was involved. Mohawk sachems told the Rev. John Ogilvie of a 1754 incident involving two young men who went “to the House of one Jury Klock & there stole a Cagg of Rum.” The two men “set down by the Way to drink, & being very drunk, a very smart contention arose, one of them took up a Stone & struck the other on the Temple, upon which he fell down Dead upon the Spot.” The nearly ceaseless flow of traveling Indians, traders, batteauxmen, and soldiers also occasioned disputes and confrontations. A group of forty seven traders who traveled to and from Oswego complained in 1754 of their treatment at the Mohawks’ hands: “they board our Battoes, with axes, knives etc& by force take what Rum they think proper hooping and yelping as if they Gloried in their depredations and threatning Murder to any that oppose them.” The traders indicated that the Mohawks and Oneidas also turned away German laborers who competed with them to portage batteaux and trade goods at the Carrying Place. Iroquois making their way to Johnson Hall for formal conferences occasionally killed colonists’ livestock or extorted provisions from them. Some Oneidas coming to Albany in 1754 “assaulted, and forced Rum from Daniel M:Michal, and frightned Not Only his family But Also his Nabors” (the Oneidas, however, called the

23Doblin and Starna, Journals of Claus and Weiser. 38-39; for evidence of Kast’s interactions with the Iroquois, see “Diary of J. Martin Mack’s, David Zeisberger’s and Gottfried Rundt’s Journey to Onondaga in 1752.” in Beauchamp, Moravian Journals. 113-14, 152, 178-80 (wander), 211. For Sarah Maginnis (nee Kast), see Jones, Palatine Families of New York. 1: 438 and Graymont, Iroquois in the American Revolution. 13. 144, 158.
On the other hand, Indians and colonists' interactions produced personal, sexual, and occasional marital ties. Like William Johnson, who counted Indians among his friends and family, ordinary settlers formed friendships with nearby Indians. The exchanging of names also indicates their familiarity with one another. Oneidas and Mohawks alike were known by German or Dutch names such as Hans Ury, Catarina, or Johan Jost and Indian reciprocated with names like "Kouari" (bear) or "Yokum" for Joachim. A small band of Mohawks at George Klock's in Canajoharie were "alway's living at his house." William Johnson once spent a sleepless night at Klock's brother's house nearby, for "by their Singing dancing & other noise I was disturbed during the whole night." In the Cherry Valley, Oquagas were "not troublesome to [Joachiam Falkenberg] tho they often call at his House." The Indians called him "Yokum." While the account is susceptible to memory's manipulation, one early settler family's oral history recorded how their ancestor's farm on the Mohawk River was "a favorite resort of the Indians for fishing purposes, and particularly of the Indian boys." She recalled how a young Mohawk boy named "Brandt" "remained several days at a time" with her two brothers.\textsuperscript{25}


\textsuperscript{25}SWJP 4: 316-17, 177; Francis Halsey, ed., A Tour of the Hudson, the Mohawk, the Susquehanna, and the Delaware in 1769 by Richard Smith (Fleischmanns, N.Y.: Purple Mountain Press), 122; Jeff N. Clyde to Lyman Draper, February 11, 1878, Joseph Brant Papers, Draper Manuscript Collection, Series F, State Historical Society of Wisconsin 5F74; See also SWJP 1: 208; 10: 776. On naming see the appendices of Sivertsen, Turtles, Wolves, and Bears, 207-69.
Such intimate relations became worrisome to British officials when it involvedenegade traders, white Indians, army deserters, French settlers, indentured servants, or
African slaves who might sway the Indians' minds against them. African slaves in the
Mohawk Valley and other areas of New York and Pennsylvania forged their own ties with
the Indians that facilitated resistance to their British owners. One slave from Virginia
ended up as Abbé François Piquet's servant at the Iroquois mission town at Oswegatchie.
He urged Piquet that if New France granted land and provisions for New England's
slaves, that "these Negroes would be the most terrible enemies of the English"; they would
then fight to preserve New France and their freedom. Piquet's Virginia servant was one
of many slaves who fled to Indian country or to New France hoping to escape bondage.26

While the Iroquois and other eastern natives sometimes returned the runaways,
they occasionally adopted and married them. The 1820 New York Supreme Court case of
Solomon Parmalee v. Henry Welch sheds light on one such intermarriage between
Africans and Indians. Parmalee sued Welch, a black man, for a debt of $16.50. Welch
"rested his defence on the ground that he was an Indian within the Statute" [which
apparently made him immune from prosecution]. Welch offered as a witness "one
Hendrick Aupaumut who testified that said Welch was always considered as an Indian
descended from the Nanticoke tribe in Maryland--That Welch was regularly admitted . . .
That he knew the Welch family on the Mohawk whilst they were held in Slavery but

Quarterly 54 (October 1970): 361-81, at 367-68; DRCHNY 6: 738; NYC MSS 60: 163-70 (May 10 and 16,
1717 petitions regarding slaves who ran away to Indians at Minisink); vol. 83: 253 (August 15, 1757);
supposed the mother was a squaw." Solomon U. Hendrick, the clerk of the Stockbridge tribe, testified with "their book of Records" in hand, that Welch had long been admitted since July 1800. Bartholomew Calvin testified that "he always considered Welch a member of the tribe—Always understood his mother was a Squaw and thought he must be at least half blood That he had always understood her mother was a squaw and originated from Maryland. That Welch's father was not an Indian." For the plaintiff, John Moyer testified that "he had known Welch's father and Mother between fifty and sixty years—That she was not called a Squaw—That they were in servitude to one Klock and he has understood Welch's maternal grandmother was a slave and thinks he has seen her but is not certain—He has heard a report that the Welch family were freed from slavery by proving Indian blood." Discounting the Stockbridge Indians' evidence, the court did not believe that Welch sufficiently proved his Indian identity and ruled in favor of the plaintiff.  

Interrmarriage and sexual liaisons, which had the potential to strengthen ties between the European settlers and Indians, occurred with greater frequency on the New York-Iroquois frontiers than in Pennsylvania. The legacy of seventeenth-century Dutch-Indian intermarriage and William Johnson's own example may have made intermarriage more socially acceptable than it was on other British frontiers. Johnson's correspondence makes clear that his colonial guests had sexual relations with native women. Johnson once

27 Writ of certiorari and return to writ, Solomon Parmalee v. Henry Welch, Jr., 1820, New York Supreme Court of Judicature, Writs of certiorari, error, habeas corpus, and mandamus, Box 6, Folder 11, NYSA, Series J1025 (I thank archivist James Folts of the New York State Archives for bringing this source to my attention).
promised Goldsbrow Banyar that if he visited, he would “introduce you to a Princess of
the first Rank here, who has large possessions, as well as parts, provided I could be
assured of your paying her more civility than you did to the lady I shewed you at Albany,
and dischargeing ye necessary Duty, wh. men of years and infirmities are seldom capable
of.” On his return from Philadelphia in 1755, Hendrick, Molly Brant, and other Mohawks
traveled by way of Albany where Molly met twenty-seven-year old Capt. Staats Morris of
the New York militia. According to Daniel Claus, “Cap' StM' fell in love with Ms. Mary
Brant who was then pretty likely not having had the smallpox.” Charles Lee, a British
officer stationed at Schenectady, wrote to his sister in 1756 that “I have liv’d a great deal
among the Mohawks and have pick’d up a little of their language.” He found the
Mohawks to be a “much better sort of people than commonly represented” and favorably
noted their hospitality, friendliness, and civility. Lee’s sister may have been surprised to
learn that her brother also had a “Mohawk wife.” Friedrich Rohde, traveling through
Oneida lands in 1802, remarked on an Oneida chief who “was bred by a white, a German
to boot, and a Negro in Canada; and is consequently a mulatto.”

Historians cannot know the full extent of intermarriage between Europeans,
Africans, and Indians, since many Mohawk Valley church records were destroyed during
the American Revolution. But documentary traces suggest a fair number of cross-cultural
unions or individuals who chose to live in Indian communities. Even after the Revolution,
at least one Indian-European marriage was recorded at the German Flatts Reformed Church in 1788 between “George Martin (Indian) & Catharin (white).” Other Indians with European names were married in the German Flatts church in the 1780s, but the ethnicity of each partner is not clearly defined in the record (e.g., “Jacob Dachstaeder the Indian & Lea.” At the very least, the existence of a Palatine and Oneida families with the surname “Dachstaeder” shows great familiarity and intimacy, at most, a history of intermarriage. Other examples include a German named Peter Spelman or Owiligaska, was married to the daughter of the Shawnee leader Paxinosa. Hans Croyn’s (or Crine) nickname, “white Hans,” and his description as a “whiteish Indian living at the Mohocks” suggests his European parentage. Captives such as Jemmy Campbell, “an Irish lad who was taken at Oswego, and is married to an Oneida,” chose to live among their spouse’s people. John Stacey, captured during the British debacle at Sabbath Day Point in 1757, married another white captive from Kanawake, where they continued to live. Other documentary references do not establish intermarriage but show that Indians accepted and adopted whites such as “one Hamilton, who lives among the Indians” or “a white fellow that Lives here in the Sinachass [Senecas’ Country].”

The frontier churches where these marriages were blessed were arenas of a common religious culture. It is unclear whether Indians and Europeans worshipped

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29 For Dachstaeders, see Simms, *Frontiersmen of New York*, 165 (Anna Dockstaeder was a patentee of the German Flatts in 1725); SWJP 2: 575 (Ury Adam Dogstader was listed in an Indian account book); Arthur C.M. Kelly, *Baptismal Record of German Flats Reformed Church (Fort Herkimer Reformed Church), 1763-1795, 1811-1848, 1896-1899* (Rhinebeck, N.Y., 1983), 60, 69, 76, 82, 91; also in Sivertsen, *Turtles, Wolves, and Bears*, Appendix E, 259-62. For other examples of intermarriages, see SWJP 8: 210 (Stacey), 235; vol. 9: 779 (Spelman), 795 (Hans Croyn), 864 (Jemmy Campbell), 871 (Hamilton); vol. 10: 564 (white among Senecas); Graymont, *Iroquois in the Revolution*, 225 (white Hans); Kelsay, *Joseph Brant*, 110 (Johnson’s métis son marries a white captive).
together, or if the European congregations witnessed the Indians’ ceremonies, or if the
Europeans considered them part of their extended flock. As chapter 1 showed, Europeans
and Mohawks at Canajoharie had strong religious ties. Three Mohawk sachems in a
petition insisted that “Our Cristein Brotheirs and We ar all on and wee will not have our
Church Pulld down for Wee are [one] Church and wee wil not peart wee ar grown up
together and wee intend to Live our Lifetim to githeir as Brotheirs.” Also suggestive of
joint worship is David Zeisberger’s account of an Onondaga man “who spoke to him
about the singing in the Low Dutch Church at Albany, imitated it, and asked if we did the
same in our Church.” Frontier settlers’ attitudes toward their Indian neighbors may have
been more favorable as a result of Christian Indian baptisms or weddings in their churches.
Some Christian Mohawks, such as Theyanoguin’s brother Abraham, were held in great
esteem by Europeans. Abraham was a lay preacher and spiritual leader to the Canajoharie
Mohawks. Europeans unequivocally praised Abraham’s character and spirituality; even
the stringent Jonathan Edwards described him as “a man of great solidity, prudence,
devotion, and strict conversation; and acts very much as a person endowed with the
simplicity, humanity, self-denial and zeal of a true Christian.”

A few hundred Indians were baptized, christened, or married in churches at
Schoharie, Canajoharie, German Flatts, Albany and Schenectady. According to the record
books of the Dutch Reformed Congregation at Schoharie, approximately two-hundred and

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30Petition of Hendrick, Abram Peterson, and Others to George Clinton, February 8, 1753, IIDH
Reel 15; Beauchamp, Moravian Journals Relating to Central New York, 1745-1766, 204; see also the
evidence of joint worship; Jonathan Edwards, quoted in Sivertsen, Turtles, Wolves, and Bears, 147-48;
Lois M. Feister, “Indian-Dutch Relations in the Upper Hudson Valley: A Study of Baptism Records in the
fifty-one Mohawks, Schoharies, Mahicans, Oquagans, and other Indians were either
baptized or married there from 1731 to 1778. Significantly, the majority of the baptisms
and marriages had European sponsors or witnesses, usually Palatine or Dutch church
members such as Bartholomew Vroman, Hendrick Hagedoorn, Johannes Lawyer, Josias
Swaart, and many others. In 1748, Indians (probably from Schoharie or Oquaga) told
Albert Van Slyck of Schenectady that “they together with the [Christians]” are willing to
pay [the Rev. Johannes] Schuyler of Schoharie, to visit them 3–4 times a year to “Christen
& marry our People.” The relationship continued until the late 1750s, when Schuyler
apparently abandoned his post. Someone else filled Schuyler’s shoes, for Joseph and
Peggie Brant’s second child, Christina, was baptized by a German clergyman at Schoharie
in 1769. In 1761, Conrad Frank reported that twenty to thirty Oneidas came to the Flatts
“to have their Children Christened & Likewise to have Some of them Married.” Other
extant church records in the Mohawk Valley demonstrate that Indian baptisms and
marriages were common occasions in frontier congregations. At the Dutch Reformed
Church at Caughnawaga, at least seven Indian infants were baptized in the late 1750s and
early 1760s. At German Flats Reformed Church and nearby Stone Arabia Lutheran
church, twelve Indians were either baptized or married from 1762 to 1792. These
numbers, however, do not reflect a full counting since some of the church records were
destroyed during the American Revolution.31

31SWJP vol. 1: 130 (Schuyler/Schoharie); vol. 3: 407 (Oneidas/German Flatts); vol. 9: 629, 716
(Schoharie and German Flatts); DRCHNY 8: 551 (Schuyler); Roscoe, History of Schoharie County, 359-
60 (Joseph Brant); Kelly, Baptismal Record of German Flats Reformed Church, op.cit.; Royden W.
Vosburgh, ed., “Records of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Caughnawaga,” “Records of the
Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of German Flats in Fort Herkimer, Town of German Flatts, Herkimer
County, N.Y.” and “Records of Trinity Lutheran Church of Stone Arabia in the Town of Palatine in

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As in its religious life, Mohawks and Iroquois remained central participants in the Mohawk Valley’s economic life, despite the overall decline of the fur trade in the eighteenth century. Historians’ pronouncements that the Mohawks and Iroquois more generally were economically dependent and diplomatically irrelevant peoples by mid-century are inaccurate. As chapter 1 has shown, the circular argument that Mohawks were forced to cede land because it was their last commodity is specious. Mohawks and Oneidas’ economic adaptations meant that they made a living in increasingly the same ways that European farmers did—by selling their produce in local markets. Their adaptations, as David Guldenzopf has shown, transformed older familial, economic, and political relations in Mohawk communities; economic inequality developed in Mohawk villages as individuals or families took advantage of greater access to sources of wealth and status. On the whole, most Mohawks lived no worse than poorer European farmers and often had access to trade goods that they did not. It is inaccurate for historians to paint portraits of frontier settlers as independent subsistence farmers who eschewed market relations, while highly skilled Indian farmers and hunters only a few miles away are said to be the most abjectly dependent peoples. Revolutionary war soldiers who saw Iroquois communities firsthand marveled at their prosperity and abundance; Iroquois loyalist claims also show the general prosperity of their communities on the eve of the Revolution. The economies and material cultures of Indian and European frontier Montgomery County. N.Y.,” in New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 1914 and 1917 [also reprinted as appendices in Sivertsen, Turtles, Wolves, and Bears, 207-62]; Records of the Mohawk Indians at Fort Hunter, New-York Historical Society, also contain examples of European settlers acting as sponsors for Indian children at baptism; Rufus Alexander Grider Scrapbooks, NYSL, 1: 60 (Palatine Church record transcription).
communities merged as both groups became economically interdependent.  

Both the Mohawks’ and Oneidas’ example demonstrates that many Iroquois had productively adapted to European agricultural techniques and keeping livestock. By the 1770s, Mohawk and Oneida communities were highly prosperous. In his travels through the Mohawk Valley, Richard Smith encountered Joseph Brant at Canajoharie. Smith described Brant as “a considerable Farmer possessing Horses and Cattle and 100 acres of rich Land at Canejoharie. He says the Mohawks have lately followed Husbandry more than formerly, and that some Hemloc Swamps when cleared will produce good Timothy Grass.” Another traveler noted the “several Indian towns, where they have some cows, cultivate some corn, and imitate the European settlers,” though he did not believe the Indians would “make good farmers.”

The European settler communities were greatly dependent on the Iroquois. The Mohawk Valley was famous for its wheat production and grain exports, but local farmers also sold their produce locally to the Iroquois. They provided innumerable goods and services to traveling and resident Indians, especially during conferences and treaties (for which they were entitled to reimbursement). Table 2 (pp. 213-14) shows the common types of services that settlers provided for Indian peoples and travelers who were a daily presence in the Mohawk Valley. At William Johnson’s homes, Indians occasionally lived

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32Guldenzopf, “Colonial Transformation of Mohawk Iroquois Society,” chaps. 5-6; Shannon, Crossroads of Empire, 25-27, 30, 163-65; Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, chaps. 9-11.

as year-round residents. Moreover, there were dozens of conferences that involved hundreds, if not thousands, of natives. For example, at the German Flatts conference in 1770, Johnson estimated that "near 2400 Indians" attended, making it one of the largest events of its kind ever held. Basic human needs had to be addressed by British officials such as housing, food, clothing, and medical care for Indian guests. Johnson spent a total of nearly £3400 at the German Flatts conference in 1770, some of which made its way to local settlers like Rudolph Shoemaker for goods and services provided to the Indians. While there is no way to quantify settlers' services, there can be no doubt that their cumulative effect on the local economy was sustained and substantial, given the many conferences in the Mohawk Valley. Moreover, settlers were regularly asked to provide transportation, provisions, crops, and services such as plowing fields for Mohawk and Oneida communities outside of formal conferences.34

European artisans not only produced various Indian trade goods but often wore their handicraft, especially "Indian shoes" or moccasins, "Indian shirts," and "Indian stockings" (leggings). Indian and European women (especially widows needing income) typically sewed Indian shirts for local merchants. William Johnson paid the widow Butler £1.13.6 for making sixty-seven Indian shirts; William Powell’s wife earned £1.11.6 for making sixty-three shirts. Shoemakers or leatherworkers crafted "Indian shoes" for Indian, colonial, and army use. Indian shoes were among the most common items listed in

34 For settlers' services to the Indians, see NYC M 25: 46; NYC MSS 58: 173-75 and 62: 148; SWJP vol. 2: 566-645. vol. 3: 158-82; vol. 7: 807-9, 817 (2400 Indians at German Flatts), 856-64, 894 (£3400 in expenses); vol. 9: 595, 647, 649, 655; vol. 10: 472; vol. 12: 690; also the accounts of the Indian Affairs Department, listed in SWJP 14: 266. For examples of Indians living at Johnson’s homes, see SWJP 7: 737, 9: 462, 655, 778, 874; for wheat production see Charles Gehring, “Agriculture and the Revolution in the Mohawk Valley,” (St. Johnsville, N.Y.: Fort Klock Historic Restoration, n.d.).
merchants' account books and ordinary settlers acquired them so often that moccasins appear to have been their footwear of choice. European settlers involved in the Indian trade could justly claim to have "spent a great part of their lives in hard Labour amongst the Indians." Frontier settlers not only made items for the Indian trade but avidly participated in it themselves. As George Weaver's example shows, ordinary farmers could be well-versed in Indian diplomacy and the uses of wampum. Eighteenth-century account books' ledgers show that settlers commonly acquired Indian trade goods that they later sold or bartered with local natives: rum, vermilion, wampum, blankets, powder, shot, strouds, and linen. In 1764, Onondagas were reported to have "Gone Down in Order to sell their [wild ginger] Roots to the Widow Maginnis [Sarah Kast]" who gave them rum and other goods in return.  

Natives typically offered furs, agricultural produce, and ginseng and ginger roots in return for necessaries. Ginseng harvesting offers an excellent illustration of the merging

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36 SWJP 11: 398 (Maginnis). See the evidence cited on German Flatts farmer-traders; Unidentified Account Book, Schenectady, N.Y., 1756-1764, Box 16, Campbell Family Papers, NYSL (contains accounts for German Flatts farmer-traders, including shipments of rum, wampum, vermilion, pigeon shot, and various kinds of cloth; Unidentified Account Book, Schenectady, N.Y., Box 18, Colin Campbell, Account of Goods, Schenectady, N.Y., 1765-1766, Box 19, [Campbell & Andrews?] Goods and Accounts, n.p., 1761-1765, Campbell Family Papers (contains accounts for black strouds, vermilion, shot, powder, brandy going to minor Indian traders); John Sanders Account Book, 1752, NYHS. For dozens of references to colonial adoption of "Indian shoes," see Jelles Fonda Memorandum Books for 1769 and 1772, Box 4, Items 173 and 65; Jelles Fonda Common Account Ledger, October 1774, Box 5; and Jelles Fonda Account Book, 1762-1776, Jelles Fonda Papers, NYHS; John Butler Account Book, NYSL, op.cit.; Unidentified Account Books, Schenectady, N.Y., 1756-1764, Boxes 6 and 16, Campbell Family Papers, NYSL.
colonial and Indian economies. From 1751 to 1753, there was a ginseng "craze" in New York and New France in which colonial merchants wildly speculated. Mohawks and colonists commonly gathered native ginseng roots (*Ochlera*) in the woods for export to London and then to China. Ginseng was believed to possess aphrodisiacal and medicinal properties. German immigrant Daniel Claus and Sammy Weiser (Conrad's son), were in the woods with Brant Kanagaradunckwa "all day long" gathering ginseng. Claus reported, "I cannot adequately describe what a Furore there is round here over the famous Roots." The Iroquois ginseng harvest increased their economic ties to local settlers and merchants. J. Martin Mack, in a journey through the Mohawk Valley in 1752, observed around one hundred Oneidas and Cayugas digging for roots (probably ginseng but perhaps including other roots). The woods-savvy Indians gathered ginseng and then sold the roots "to the people hereabouts, or exchange them for goods with the traders." Local colonists such as the widow Sarah Magin bartered provisions or trade goods with the Indians for ginseng and then sold the roots to merchants. One colonist reported that ginseng was gathered at "two pounds, or ten Rhine guilders, per bushel, by the wild inhabitants" in 1752. Oneidas, Cayugas, Mohawks, and Tuscaroras who participated in the ginseng harvest could command the terms of the transaction with merchants. When William Johnson sent a string of wampum saying that he would buy ginseng, the Tuscaroras replied with a long list of goods that they wanted him to bring, excluding liquor.37

In 1753, however, "many adventurers or speculators in it were nearly ruined," as Gideon Hawley reported on the bubble's bursting. But what many historians do not realize is that ginseng continued to be a locally marketable commodity between Indian and European communities throughout the 1760s and 1770s. While the main period of speculation was 1751-1753, it continued to be gathered and accepted by Indians and merchants as a common medium of exchange for the next two decades on the New York frontier. For example, in 1774 Jelles Fonda stated his intention "to Buy 10000 Pound of Jensang" at the rate of two shillings per pound. He instructed his agent to employ Mohawks to gather and wash the ginseng roots in return for batteaux-loads of goods that he would send them.38

Mohawks and Oneidas were important participants in the cash economy of the Mohawk Valley. Aside from the presents that they received through the Indian Department, Mohawks obtained material goods from merchants and traders in exactly the same ways that European farmers did. Sir William's tenants, for example, paid for goods from an Albany general store with potash, peas, wood, butter, cows, and cash. Iroquois paid for their goods in nearly identical fashion with potash, corn, cranberries, venison, wampum, and cash. They also continued to bring in beaver, muskrat, otter, maarten, and deer skins and pelts. Merchants' account books show that Indians paid for many goods in

38Gideon Hawley, "Account of Services Among the Indians," MHSC 4 (1795): 53; Jelles Fonda to Stefanes Degova, September 13, 1774, in Jelles Fonda Papers, Folder 4, NYHS. See Benson, Peter Kalm's Travels, 435-37 for the ginseng trade in New France. For other references to ginseng's continued importance as a trade item in the Mohawk Valley, see SWIP 1: 311, 346-47, 373, 376; vol. 3: 311; 4: 325, 375, 642, 648, 578 (Sarah Magin); vol. 5: 341, 400; vol. 8: 276-77; vol. 11: 398, 581; vol. 12: 150-51, 168; vol. 13: 126; A. Cuyler to Jelles Fonda, February 26, 1766 and Account Book of Jelles Fonda, 1769, Box 4, Items 143 and 173. Jelles Fonda Papers (SC 7026) NYSL.
cash, to the extent that they were regular participants in the valley’s cash economy. Where did they obtain currency? One source was Sir William Johnson’s Indian Department, which frequently dispensed cash to sachems or visiting Indians to enable them to buy and redistribute provisions or other necessaries. In 1772, Johnson distributed £2000 to the Mohawks from various sources (apparently for land purchases and trade balances). Indian warriors often earned wages for their military service. The natives’ produce and goods also commanded market prices for which they were often given money (though they mostly bartered their furs and produce for consumer goods). The Canajoharie Mohawks’ tenants may have paid their rents in cash, though it appears that payment-in-kind was most common. Indians also worked as wage laborers on farms and alongside African and European batteauxmen plying the Mohawk and Oswego rivers. In his travels through New France, Peter Kalm noted that Indians living near the Quebec habitants were so busy harvesting ginseng, that “the French farmers were not able during that time to hire a single Indian, as they commonly do to help them in the harvest.” Warren Johnson commented that “An Indian makes 40£ & upwards yearly by hunting Winter, Spring, & Fall,” though he neglected to include other sources of income.39

The material worlds of Indians and colonists also merged over the course of the eighteenth century. On one level, colonial elites collected Indian "curiosities" and artifacts such as ancient pottery. William Johnson often acted as a middleman between British acquaintances and Indians. For example, one Samuel Cramer wrote to Johnson asking him to obtain "a piece of Ingenuity that rested with some of the Indians in your Neighbourhood which was an excellence they Poss[ess]ed in carveing a true representation or figure of themselves in their Proper Hunting Habits & their Bodys &ct Decorated in a Warlike manner both Sexes in their Different Apparells." Johnson himself maintained a collection of Indian artifacts, wampum belts, calumets, and various pelts. Merchant Daniel Campbell acquired a belt of wampum, moccasins, knife and sheath, leggings, tomahawk, beaver coat, and French trade musket for one colonial collector.40

For more practical reasons, ordinary Indians and colonists exchanged clothing, foodways, medicines, personal decoration customs, and craft goods. The settlers' acquisition of Indian trade goods, however, was often illicit. William Johnson complained that some colonists sold rum to Indians at treaty conferences in exchange for their newly-acquired clothing, tools, and weapons. He said that he was "frequently obliged to Arm and Cloath many Indians three times over on this account." More often, material goods were exchanged and customs learned at settlers' homesteads, taverns, or forts. In his Mohawk Valley travels, Warren Johnson saw "Several Indians, & Some white People blue

their Faces, (in a kind of Ridges) & nick their Breasts, &c: which is done by pricking the
Skin with Pins, till the Blood comes, & then applying Gunpowder to it; which will remain
for ever." He noted the merging of Indian and colonial foodways, such as "white People
& Indians [who] Eat bears' Flesh." Soldiers also partook of Indian fare, probably to
supplement their meager rations. Warren recorded the story of a sergeant stationed at one
of the Mohawk villages who "requested as a favour of the Indians not to make their Broth
soe very rich having put vast quantities of Lice in it for that Purpose." Similarly, Indian
women who visited their colonial counterparts either observed or were treated to a tea
service. Kalm recalled how William Johnson had told him that "several of the Indians who
lived close to the European settlements had learned to drink tea," especially Indian
women. Kalm claimed that the Indian women also imitated European women's custom of
drinking the tea hot. Indians imbibed the European custom of tea drinking and obtained
tea consumer wares such as pots, cups, and tongs. In 1750, an Onondaga sachem named
Onechsagerat invited Cammerhof and David Zeisberger to breakfast: he "set out a tea
table, consisting of two blocks used for crushing corn, and then he prepared some very
good tea, to which he added Indian bread. The tea cups were a very large spoon and a
wooden dish. The tea was boiled in a kettle which hung over the fire. . . It tasted very
good."41

Settlers may not have assembled vast collections of native "curiosities," but they
did acquire utilitarian items from the natives, such as traditional crafts (e.g., baskets,

41SWJP 2: 646, 497; "Journal of Warren Johnson," 259, 254, 266; Benson, Peter Kalm's Travels,
190-91; Beauchamp, Moravian Journals, 64-65.
bowls, and brooms). They frequently purchased “Indian shoes,” “Indian gartering,” and on one occasion, “an Indian cup,” from merchants who also dealt in the fur trade. The late 19th-century antiquarian and artist Rufus Alexander Grider recorded examples of colonial-era Indian goods still in the possession of Mohawk Valley families. He painted, for example, a “Birch bark Knife box & Wooden Sugar Bowl made by the Schoharie Indians when they lived at Vromans Nose [Onitsatchragarawe].” He also documented a Mohawk-made birch bark box with elaborate native iconography. A powder horn showing a colonist lighting his pipe from an Indian’s pipe richly expresses the world that both cultures shared.42

Indian medicines, derived from an extensive knowledge of plants, were of even greater interest to European settlers. During his travels in New France and the British colonies, Peter Kalm recorded many instances of Europeans learning of effective Indian medicinal cures. In the Mohawk Valley, he observed that “both Indians and Europeans, collect the root of the Geum rivale, and pound it.” The fever-reducing root, derived from a species of avens, was then either boiled or mixed with brandy. The fact that European women often related the detailed cures suggests their close contacts with Indian women or shamans in the course of their social interactions. The wife of Captain Lindsey at Oswego learned of a Iroquois remedy for toothache that used Anemone seeds. Mrs. John Henry Lydias was beset by severe pains in her legs and had to use crutches to walk. Then, “a native woman came to the house who cured her” by using the medicinal properties of a

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dogwood tree. Lydius also related Indian medicines prepared from iris root and sassafras.

By the 1760s, European settlers regularly sought out native shamans for treatment. Their actions suggest a trust of Indian medicines based on years of demonstrable effectiveness. Traveler J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur recorded in his 1774 travels that he was “greatly surprised when I was at Anaquaga [Oquaga] to see several white people from different parts of Pennsylvania who had purposefully come there to put themselves in the hands and under the care of some Indians who were famous for the medical knowledge. Several were cured while I was there.” In the upper Delaware Valley, he encountered a weaver’s family, who “when sick they had learnt of the Indians how to find in the woods the remedies they wanted.” By the early nineteenth-century, “powow books” were published in Pennsylvania containing Indian-derived medicinal recipes.

Collectively, the personal, religious, economic, and cultural bonds between Iroquois and European settler communities enabled both peoples to coexist for most of the eighteenth century. They also suggest that acculturation and dependency were two-way streets in the Mohawk Valley. Most important, the existence of peace between the British and their Indian neighbors was not something that governments, diplomacy, and alliances alone could accomplish. From natives’ perspectives, harmonious relationships at a local level were crucial indicators of the larger alliance’s salubrity. By the mid- to late 1760s, however, there were many unauspicious signs of future conflict in British-Indian

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The British conquest of New France in 1759-1760 brought no lasting peace to North America. Britain's postwar deficits, ministerial changes, and renewed assertions of parliamentary supremacy produced numerous imperial crises in the 1760s that dovetailed with crises unfolding in Indian Country (e.g., Pontiac's War). As the next chapter shows, when peace broke down between frontier communities in the Ohio Country, distant colonial and imperial officials were seemingly powerless to effect change. Indian nations there increasingly espoused united resistance to British trans-Appalachian settlement expansion. The settlers' unrestrained settlement and habitual murders and violence against Indians in Pennsylvania and the Ohio Country threatened to disrupt the whole of British America's Indian relations. In 1769, William Johnson confided to his friend Lord Adam Gordon that "matters seem to be Coming to a Crisis here both with regard to Whites & Indians."44

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44Sir William Johnson Manuscripts, Folder 9, Johnson to Lord Adam Gordon, April 4, 1769, (SC 7005) NYSL.
TABLE 1: INDIAN-COLONIST MURDERS AND ASSAULTS ON THE NEW YORK- IROQUOIS BORDERLANDS, 1756-1772

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>1756 (August)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victim(s)</td>
<td>Jerry or Showonidous (Tuscarora)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assailant(s)</td>
<td>British soldiers of the 44th Regiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Schenectady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circumstances</td>
<td>Jerry's severed head was found “Stuck upon a Pole in Camp” Murderers never brought to justice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1757 (April)</th>
<th>1757 (April)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adam Rypenberger</td>
<td>Mahican Indian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Indians--possibly Shawnee, Munsee or Mahicans from “Jenango” [Venango?]</td>
<td>Royal American Soldier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near Albany?</td>
<td>Road from Schenectady to Albany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rypenberger killed</td>
<td>Mahican wounded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWJP 9: 686; NYCMS 83: 71 (a-b)</td>
<td>SWJP 2: 686</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1757 (May)</th>
<th>1757 (July)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified Indian(s) killed, 1 wounded</td>
<td>2 Oneidas, possibly 1 Mohawk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Thomas Smith, Albany Trader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albany</td>
<td>German Flatts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript partially destroyed in 1911 NY State Capitol fire</td>
<td>Unclear what circumstances of Smith’s actions were: “The two Indians were helpless &amp; dead drunk when he knocked their brains out with a Setting Pole” Smith escaped and died at Ft. Niagara in 1761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1758 (January)</td>
<td>1758 (December)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiononderoge Mohawks</td>
<td>John McMichael (trader)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Regulars</td>
<td>Unidentified Cayugas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Hunter and Tiononderoge</td>
<td>Near Fort Stanwix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British soldiers, apparently enlisted men, assaulted several Mohawk men and women with fists and cutlasses; some Mohawks wounded; one attempted rape of an old Mohawk woman</td>
<td>McMichael was robbed and scalped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SWJP 2</strong>: 772-74; 13: 104-107</td>
<td><strong>SWJP 3</strong>: 28; 10: 82-84, 86, 88, 93, 95, 97-98, 962</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1759</th>
<th>1761</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thennewhannega (Cayuga)</td>
<td>Gustavus Frank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown, probably Albany resident</td>
<td>Oneida warrior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albany</td>
<td>German Flatts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibly revenge for McMichael's murder</td>
<td>20-30 Oneidas came to the German Flatts “to have their Children Christened &amp; Likewise to have Some of them Married.” They killed one of Stephen Frank’s hogs; when justice Gustavus Frank approached the Oneida to ask why he killed the hog, a scuffle ensued in which the Oneida shot and killed Frank and escaped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1763</td>
<td>1770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified Blacksmith</td>
<td>British soldiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified Senecas</td>
<td>Five Senecas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seneca Country</td>
<td>Near Fort Niagara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Senecas escaped to the Ohio Country.</td>
<td>Senecas plundered traders’ canoe, shot at and wounded British soldiers in a batteaux who agreed to ferry them across a river. One British soldier died of his wounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SWJP 10: 627-28</strong></td>
<td><strong>SWJP 7: 942-43, 993-94, 1052-54, 1076-77, 1117, 1125</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Settler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1713</td>
<td>Matthias Nack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1714</td>
<td>Gosen van Noord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1720</td>
<td>Albany blacksmiths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1755</td>
<td>Jacobus Mynderse and Peter Groenendyke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1755</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>Hendrick Fry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>Isaac Wemp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>Cornelius Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1758</td>
<td>Henry Wendal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1757</td>
<td>Hannis Eils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>Rudolph Shoemaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>Rudolph Shoemaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>Rudolph Shoemaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>Margaret and William Fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772</td>
<td>Hugh Lynch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5
THE TROJAN HORSE OF EMPIRE:
IMPERIAL CRISIS IN THE TRANS-APPALACHIAN WEST, 1758-1774

Mehmonawangehelak (Monongahela Valley), 1762

Native Americans knew it as Mehmonawangehelak, referring to the rich soil along its steep banks that occasionally broke off and fell into the river. European colonists followed suit with "Monongahela." Perhaps no other spot of rich Ohio Country soil was more notorious and contested in the 1760s than the Monongahela Valley, especially the Redstone Country, watered by the Monongahela's tributary, Redstone Creek (after the Lenape Machkachsenhanne). Mohawks, Mingoes, Marylanders, Virginians, Pennsylvanians, and Indian war parties all met and clashed in the Redstone Country. Colonial and Indian hunters, farmers, and warriors bartered, hunted, and planted corn together, and occasionally intermarried. But the Redstone Country was emblematic of how racially-charged violence undercut such symbiotic relationships: violence, murder, and mayhem erupted there in the late 1760s. From an imperial perspective, the Redstone Country epitomized everything that threatened the stability of the British Empire in North America: uncontainable illegal settlement, racial violence that threatened to renew open

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warfare with powerful pan-Indian confederacies, and combustible intercolonial land
disputes between Pennsylvania and Virginia.

Many colonial travelers passed through the Redstone Country in the 1760s on their
courses to and from Fort Cumberland and Fort Pitt. Along Braddock's Road, travelers
may have reflected on the failure of Indians and British colonists to negotiate a lasting
peace. The road was filled with the vestiges of conflict from the battlefields of the last
war: burned-out colonists' cabins, the rotting remnants of Fort Necessity, the rebuilt
ramparts of Fort Burd, and bleaching bones at Braddock's field. "Great quantities of
broken Bombshells, cannon, bullets, and other military stores [were] scattered in the
woods" at the site of Dunbar's camp. Despite rumors of another war, numerous colonists
could be seen on the road with their wagons, livestock, and possessions going to settle in
the Ohio Country with or without requisite military licenses. Always appreciative of good
land, travelers took note of the "hilly fertile Lands" of the Redstone Country. Interspersed
with meadows and cleared fields were stands of massive forty-feet-high walnut, oak,
chestnut, and cherry trees three-feet in diameter. As a later traveler put it, "the Land from
the foot of the Laurel Mountain to Fort Pitt is rich beyond conception." The bottomlands
along Redstone Creek attracted thousands of squatter families from Virginia, Maryland,
and Pennsylvania, who cleared the land, planted corn, and hunted the plentiful game there.
Their small log huts were the seats of such aptly-named plantations as "Extent,"
"Discord," "Pretention and Contention," "Fear Fax," and "Whiskey Mount." The nearby
garrison at Fort Burd, a small British stockade near the junction of Redstone Creek and
the Monongahela, was powerless to stop the settlers' encroachments despite its location in
the heart of the Redstone Country.

The convergence of native and colonial trails in the Redstone Country also produced a confluence of cultures. Thoroughfares such as Braddock's Road and its branches overlay a complex network of Indian trails (Braddock's Road, in fact, was once Nemacolin's trail). The Catawba Path, which ran from Iroquoia to the Southeast, came through the heart of the Redstone Country and other Euroamerican settlements along the Cheat River. The east-west Mingo Path facilitated both trade and warfare between the Mingoes and the Monongahela colonists. Hundreds of warriors on the Catawba path, mainly Iroquois, Delawares, Shawnees, Mingoes, went through the colonial habitations weekly, bartering with or demanding supplies from them. Some squatters homesteads "stood right on the war path, where [Indians] went from about Ft. Pitt to kill Catawbas in the south, often in parties of fifty or sixty." The Redstone Country was a granary for the British army, so there was plenty of corn, whiskey, and provisions to go around.

Despite cultural, ethnic, and linguistic barriers in the Redstone Country, the native and colonial inhabitants and passers-by communicated and created what were often amicable relationships. Travelers encountered pack horse drivers who "can talk ye Indian tongue" after frequent conversations. Former captives could be found among the settlers

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and the Indians and were "well qualified to speak the Delaware's language" and other native tongues. Travelers came upon settlements of pacifist Quakers from Pennsylvania and Dunkers from Maryland who "receiv'd them kindly." Lastly, Euroamerican women and men occasionally intermarried with Indian men and women. Most of these unions occurred in Indian communities where Euroamerican captives had been fully assimilated. One Indian-European couple familiar to the Redstone Creek settlers was Mohawk Peter and his wife. Quaker James Kenny recorded in his journal the close ties that existed between Mohawk Peter's family and other white families:

This Day came to y'River opposite y' Fort Burd, where Ind Peter and a White man was working at Corn; y' White man put me over in a Canoe, Swam y' Creature. I informed them of y' Indians breaking out agin which put them in Great fear; got Breakfast at Indian Peter's House & they talked that he & his family would come down in y' Contry amongst his Wifes relations. being a White Woman.

Kenny did not specify if Mohawk Peter's wife was an adopted captive or not; being from Kahnawake, Peter and a French-Canadian woman may have married.⁴

But "Great fear," uncertainty, and violence were also features of life in the Redstone Country, even when Indians were not "breaking out agin." The Delaware leader Killbuck informed the Rev. David Jones of a rumor that had given credence to Delaware fears that the English had "some design of enslaving them, or something of that nature": a Scottish highland officer "took one of their women as his wife, and went with her into...

Maryland about Joppa: and they heard, there he sold her a slave like a negro." Such rumors laid bare the suspicion and distrust at the heart of cultural meetings. Disputes over livestock, hunting, or property, fueled by ubiquitous liquor, often led to assaults, theft (usually horse-stealing), and murder. A Delaware warrior, Captain Peters, returning from an expedition stopped at John Ryan's house, somewhere between Redstone and the Cheat River. Captain Peters "wanted to take Some Rum from the White Man by the name of Ryan who in the Scuffle shot the Indian, and made his Escape to Virginia." In the spring of 1762 a party of soldiers from Fort Burd came upon a hunting cabin engulfed in flames: Cherokees who had escaped from their Iroquois captors killed the two hunters, Nathaniel Thomlinson and Jacob Aron (a former captive), and took their long rifles (the soldiers sent for Mohawk Peter to help mediate the affair).5

Travelers arriving at the forks of the Ohio confronted a monumental symbol of British power, Fort Pitt. Comparable in size and design to the British fort at Crown Point, the pentagonal Fort Pitt covered nearly eighteen acres of ground. The British garrisoned the fort beginning in 1759 and it played an important role in their attempts to extend imperial authority over nearby natives and faraway French possessions. Fort Pitt was also a military community consisting of soldiers, traders, camp followers, artisans, farmers, laundresses, and Indians. Missionary David McClure recalled that "the first object of our

attention was a number of poor drunken Indians, staggering & yelling throughout the Village. It is the headquarters of Indian traders, & the resort of Indians of different & distant tribes, who come to exchange their peltry & furs for rum, blankets & ammunition etc." Outside the fort was an ever-growing colonial village of "40 dwelling houses made of hewed logs." Colonists and Indians routinely met in the village. Some women at the settlement employed their skills as seamstresses to make calico "Indian shirts" with ruffles. One traveler noted "an Indian who had a white woman" there. A Cherokee warrior who had fought with Forbes' army in 1758, now an Iroquois prisoner, "was known by some of the Soldiers here who Spoke to him." Inside the fort, a round of drinks among Iroquois warriors and Virginia militiamen turned violent when "a Difference arose between them" and the Long Knives wounded three of the Iroquois and stole their trade goods. In the commandant's house, Col. Henry Bouquet frequently mediated such disputes and addressed Indians' grievances. Shawnees once complained to Bouquet of the increasing numbers of colonists' farms in the Monongahela Valley; Colonel Bouquet promised to have all of them pulled down.6

Redstone was a name familiar to British officials like the Earl of Shelburne in London and Sir William Johnson in New York. In 1766, an angry Shelburne instructed

Johnson, "The Violences & Irregularities of the Traders & Settlers cannot & must not be endured: The settlement at Red Stone Creek made as you observe out of the Boundaries of any Province is a striking instance of the Temerity of those Settlers." Illegal settlement and racial violence in places like the Redstone Country became an imperial crisis in the 1760s precisely when imperial officials were trying to rationalize the new empire that Britain had won from the French. British leaders crafted an Indian policy that tried to accommodate colonial land and commercial interests with the Indians' need for security. The key features of this new policy after 1763 included centralizing colonial-Indian relations in the Indian Departments, preserving peace on the western borders, checking unrestrained colonial expansion, and regulating the Indian trade. Controlling illegal settlement by creating a boundary line became an obsession of imperial agents trying to maintain peace in the Ohio Country. But as a mortified Sir William Johnson discovered, his "Schemes & endeavours for preserving or restoring tranquility" were frequently defeated by "the gross Irregularities of our worst Enemies the Frontier Banditti." From the perspectives of Whitehall or Johnson Hall, squatters jeopardized the whole edifice of empire. Throughout the mid- to late 1760s, British elites were terrified, as Sir William Johnson was in 1765, of a war "more [General] than the last [Pontiac’s War]" due to the colonists' "ungovernable passion" for lands.7

The dimensions of the crisis became fully apparent in the mid- to-late-1760s as squatters from Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania breached the Appalachian barrier—using British military roads—and settled and hunted on Indian lands in the Monongahela, Redstone, Youghiogheny, and Cheat valleys in great numbers. Squatters encroached on Indian lands, threatened orderly frontier development, imperiled the Indian trade, committed murders and violent acts upon Indians, and exhibited a disaffected, lawless, even rebellious spirit. Elites' perception of anomie and a breakdown in law and authority among the common people also fueled the imperial crisis. As the Pennsylvania Assembly queried in the aftermath of the grisly Frederick Stump murders in 1768, "Where can these Things terminate, but in Tumults, and a total Abolition of the Powers of Government?" In most cases, magistrates were unable to apprehend, let alone prosecute, the perpetrators of crimes and murders against Indians. "There is a manifest Failure of Justice somewhere," the Assembly continued, "From whence can it arise?" British ministers and imperial agents' worst nightmare was that ordinary settlers would spark another Pontiac's War with another powerful Indian confederacy. Rumors of a possible pan-ethnic meeting at the Shawnee towns along the Scioto River became widespread in 1766-67. Cognizant of their military weakness, British leaders also wished to avoid renewed warfare with the Indians, for it would mean wide-scale deployment of British troops, more expenses laid upon an


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already overburdened treasury, and more confrontations with stingy colonial assemblies that had ill-supported the empire in the past.8

Historians have become accustomed to thinking of imperial crises in terms of the colonial-metropolitan confrontations over the Stamp Act or Coercive Acts. Before colonial resistance erupted along the seaboard, however, imperial administrators and colonial governors were gravely concerned with the crisis that was unfolding primarily in the Ohio Valley. This chapter explains why and how the imperial crisis developed from the struggle for Ohio lands between imperial officials, colonial governments, squatters, and Indians. It also explores Ohio Indians' perspectives and their attempts to prevent colonization of the Ohio Valley. The imperial crisis was fueled by three interwoven processes: a burgeoning colonial population freed of French restraint and seeking opportunity and land on the frontiers, a vicious cycle of racial violence between local settlers and Indians, and a British army—an imperfect legatee of New France's empire—that actually encouraged colonial settlements. Those three processes were apparent on Pennsylvania's far western frontiers in the Ohio Valley during the 1760s. The legacy of the Seven Years' War in Pennsylvania and the Ohio Valley set in motion the fundamental processes shaping Indian-colonist relations in those regions for the next fifty years. In New York, by contrast, only the American Revolution radically overturned the intercultural coexistence that prevailed among New Yorkers and Iroquois through the

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1760s and into the early 1770s.

Ohio Indians' hopes for a lasting peace depended upon Britain's honorable fulfillment of the terms of the 1758 Treaty of Easton. They had not only won the war against Pennsylvania but secured key concessions from the colony's proprietors. Delawares and Quakers had exposed the Penns' dealings with the Indians, particularly the infamous Walking Purchase of 1737. Ohio Indians secured a degree of territorial integrity when the proprietors agreed to renounce most of the dubious 1754 Albany Purchase; British officials promised to reopen the trade and prevent colonial settlement west of the Appalachians. Commander-in-chief General Jeffrey Amherst assured the Ohio natives, "I mean not to take any of your lands ... they shall remain your absolute property." But his rhetoric belied the reality of the problem.9

In contrast to modern historians' interpretations, Ohio Indians never thought of the British Empire as a "restraining force": they knew that the British Empire and its army were instruments of colonial expansion. In 1759-1760, the British army consolidated its control over the valley's waterways to guard against French counterattacks and to support operations against New France's outposts in le pays d'en haut. The Delaware leader Tamaqua urged the British to "go back over the mountain, and to stay there." Promising only to drive off the French and to protect trade, Colonel Henry Bouquet told the Ohio Indians that the army would not dispossess them. Shingas, Tamaqua, and Pisquetomen had told the Moravian emissary Christian Frederick Post in 1758 that they did not

understand why the English did not bring "the news of peace [the Treaty of Easton] before your army [Forbes'] had begun to march." The Delawares took seriously the reports of traders, "many runaways," and captives who told them that the English and the French "intended to join and cut all the Indians off." Residual anger over the army's continued presence was apparent when Pisquetomen stormed into Quaker James Kenny's store in 1761 wanting to know "what y' English or y' General meant by coming here." Kenny quickly learned that the natives were "very jealous of y' English coming here with an army." Ketiushund, a sage Delaware sachem at Kuskusi, warned Post, "if the English would draw back over the mountain, they would get all the other nations in their interest; but if they staid and settled there, all the nations would be against them; and he was afraid it would be a great war, and never come to a peace again." 10

Unhappily, Ketiushund's prophecy was fulfilled. Instead of peace, the Ohio Indians found themselves enmeshed in a larger imperial framework that channeled them toward a renewal of hostilities. Jeffrey Amherst's parsimonious trade policies, privation in native communities, renewed settlement expansion, and news of the Anglo-French peace terms turned many Ohio natives toward war. The Indians could also deduce from Fort Pitt's size alone that the British army would not withdraw and sensibly feared that the army might be turned against their villages. The Ohio Indians "pointed out the Forts Pitt & Augusta, as the greatest Eyesores" from their vantage point. Fort Pitt's garrison ranged anywhere

from 300 to 700 during the 1760s, not counting the other regulars stationed at a dozen other outposts in the Ohio Valley and the Great Lakes regions. It seemed to many Ohio Indians that the English had "grown too powerfull & seem'd as if they would be too Strong for God himself." But many Indians, inspired by nativist prophets such as Neolin, held a "Vision of Heaven where there was no White people but all Indians"; they wanted a "total Separation" from whites.¹¹

From 1763 to 1765, Indian nations all across the Ohio Valley and Great Lakes waged war against the British, besieged their garrisons, and attacked their settlements. The network of British garrisons in the west fell like a house of cards, with the exception of Detroit, Fort Pitt, and Niagara. Pennsylvania and Virginia's frontier settlers again suffered tremendous losses and deepened their hatred of Indians. While historians refer to this conflict as Pontiac's War, its vast scale precluded one man's inspiration or control. After a series of early reversals, the British army launched a two-pronged foray into the Ohio Country in 1764. Henry Bouquet's and John Bradstreet's expeditions, however, did not militarily crush a "rebellation." Stalemate ensued as the exhausted parties made peace. Shortly after Pontiac's War, an Onondaga sachem reminded Sir William Johnson that "the chief cause of all the late wars was about Lands, we saw the English coming towards us from all Parts, and they cheated us so often, that we could not think well of it." For native peoples everywhere, the main issue remained their lands and they continued to unite

across ethnic lines in defense of them.\textsuperscript{12}

After two devastating conflicts within ten years, British leaders believed that establishing a clear boundary line between the colonies and Indian nations would ameliorate any impending war. The trans-Appalachian West after 1763 and before the Quebec Act of 1774 remained an unorganized area nominally subject to military authority and the Superintendents of Indian Affairs. British policy held that title to lands that they had wrested from the French rested with George III (Indians had only rights of occupancy) and that the commander-in-chief of British forces in North America could grant rights to settle in the new lands. The temporary Proclamation Line of 1763 forbade settlements west of the Appalachian Mountains until the Indian superintendents could negotiate a new border; colonies would then have room to expand. Knowing that a new purchase would occur in the foreseeable future, Virginia and Pennsylvania maintained claims to Ohio Valley lands through their charters, trading operations, and stalled ventures like the Ohio Land Company. A boundary line would prevent not only distended colonial settlement in the trans-Appalachian West but also the rash of Indian-colonist murders that imperiled the peace. In 1765, Sir William Johnson and the Six Nations negotiated a tentative line (the Ohio Indians had no voice in the negotiations). Johnson informed an assembly of Iroquois in 1765 that "the Plan of a Boundary between our Provinces and the Indians, (which no White man shall dare to invade) as the best and surest method of ending such like Disputes, & securing your property to you beyond a Possibility of

\textsuperscript{12}PA 1st ser., 4: 326.
necessary, provided the white people will abide by it." Between 1765 and 1768, efforts to iron out the boundary gained momentum, even as settlers' murders of Indians threatened to derail them. The Lords of Trade in 1767 argued that "the Establishment of this [boundary] Line will, in all probability, have the Effect to prevent the fatal Consequences of an Indian War that seems at present to threaten the Middle Colonies."13

Neither boundary lines nor the threat of war deterred the thousands of ordinary settlers who believed that "y& Land on this side y& Alegheny Mountain will be made a King's Governm' & that in 2 years or less time, there will be encouragement from y& King to Settle these Lands to this place, Viz Pittsburgh." No sooner had the ink dried on the Treaty of Easton than ordinary farmers and hunters began to settle and hunt across the mountains. Maj. Gen. Frederick Haldimand characterized the zeitgeist as a "spirit of emigration" that seemed to possess ordinary people. One descendant of an early settler recalled a common saying, that "land was to be had here for taking up." As early as 1761, Bouquet complained to Robert Monckton that "several Idle People from Virg' and Maryland made it a Practice to hunt along the Mononghehela, which gives umbrage to the Indians. Their scheme Seems to be to reconnoitre the Land, & I am told that several of those pretended Hunters intend to settle above & below Redstone Creek." The two migration streams running into the Ohio Country of the 1760s originated primarily in Pennsylvania and Virginia. While it is impossible to estimate precisely the numbers involved, the scale of illegal settlement was enough to confound contemporaries.

Travelers in the 1760s and 1770s always commented on the large numbers of colonists heading west on the major wagon roads. George Croghan marveled in 1770, "What number of families has settled since the congress, to the westward of the high ridge, I cannot pretend to say positively; but last year, I am sure, there were between four and five thousand, and all this spring and summer the roads have been lined with waggons moving to the Ohio." By the early 1770s there were perhaps twenty-thousand or more colonists living in the Ohio Country.14

Euroamericans' determination to obtain land is a major reason why the Ohio Indians found themselves again facing colonial encroachments after fighting two wars designed to prevent them. Despite their horrific experiences in the Seven Years' War and Pontiac's War, Pennsylvania and Virginia settlers were neither disinclined to return to their ruined plantations nor more respectful of Indians' territories. They were, as an awestruck Conrad Weiser put it, "in raptures about the Soil & Waters" of Ohio. John Struther's family, for example, migrated from Cecil County, Maryland to the Ohio Country in 1773-74 despite fears of impending war with the Shawnees. The colonists' land applications and caveats filed after 1763 provide a glimpse of their unquenchable thirst for land. Some of these applications contain stories of incredible persistence in the face of adversity.

Cumberland County residents William and Mary White, for example, were turned off their

property three times between 1750 and 1763: once by Richard Peters in 1750 and twice during wartime. Yet they and other settlers always returned to their tracts. Josiah Records' experience provides another example of how ordinary farmers undertook settlement of the western lands. Records and his brothers-in-law migrated from the Antietam Valley in Maryland to the Redstone Country in the spring of 1766. Traveling on Braddock's Road, they began clearing ground and planting corn, then returned to move their families over the mountains in time for the fall harvest. Josiah was, in addition to a farmer, an "expert hunter" who took his furs back to Hagerstown, Maryland, to barter for much-needed supplies.  

Hunters like Josiah Records were among the most troublesome colonists to flood into the Ohio Valley. Sgt. Angus McDonald, commanding the garrison at Fort Burd, complained to Bouquet that "Here Comes Such Crowds of Hunters out of the Inhabitence as fills those woods at which the Indians seems very much disturbed and say the white people Kills all there Deer." The hunters simply avoided the British garrisons and McDonald had to content himself with seizing the hunters' horses. In the woods they encountered angry Indian hunters who relied on the Monongahela Valley for wild game. Warriors passing through the area unable to subsist on game were forced to seek provisions at settlers' homesteads where disputes typically arose. Native hunters either

warned away the hunters themselves or complained "bitterly" to British officers that "a Number of White Men have been out the Whole season and Destroyed a Great quantity of game."  

Colonial farmers and hunters crossed the Appalachians with little thought of accommodating Indians because they envisioned no place for natives in colonial society. In 1750, Virginia trader Christopher Gist conversed with two Delawares, Beaver and Captain Oppamylucah, who "desired to know where the Indian's Land lay, for that the French claimed all the Land on one side the River Ohio & the English on the other Side." What place, they asked, did Indians have? Reflecting on the conversation, Gist admitted in his journal that "I was at a Loss to answer Him as I now also was." Was it the first time he had ever thought of "where the Indian's Land lay"? He told the Delawares that "We are all one King's People and the different Colour of our Skins makes no Difference in the King's Subjects; You are his People as well as We, if you will take Land & pay the King's Rights You will have the same Privileges as the White People have." But very few ordinary settlers, after two horrendous wars, believed that Indians were equally the king's subjects. With the French threat eliminated, they had even fewer reasons to see the Indians as allies. Many colonists, especially veterans, probably saw the western lands as theirs by right of conquest. In short, the British settlers believed that the edenic Ohio Valley "wants Nothing but Cultivation to make it a most delightfull Country"—a statement

that presumed a "natural" landscape devoid of all Indian inhabitants.\textsuperscript{17}

Colonists did not find a new Eden in the Ohio Country: they made one by killing Indians and erasing their presence from the landscape. The cycle of violence, revenge killings, and indiscriminate murder that had begun in the Seven Years' War and Pontiac's War continued unabated from 1763 to the Revolution and beyond. Historians have long emphasized settlers' violence and racial animosity as exemplified in the Paxton Massacre of 1763. No historian, however, has ever methodically charted violent incidents to understand the nature and frequency of intercultural murders. Table 3 (pp. 263-70) demonstrates just how dramatically the scale of violence increased in the 1760s and how violence fueled the flames of imperial crisis. During the period from 1760 to 1774 (excluding Pontiac's War), there were approximately thirty-five (35) incidents of murder in the greater Pennsylvania region in which at least 100 Indians and colonists died. Colonists committed approximately twenty-four (24) murders of Indians, while there were eleven (11) cases of natives murdering colonists.

Several patterns emerge from this evidence. First, chronic bloodshed kept Indians and Euroamericans constantly on the precipice of open conflict. It produced "universal uneasiness and discontent" among most northeastern Indian peoples. Second, a large number of murders—ten—were committed between 1766 and 1767 when imperial officials' perception of crisis was especially acute; the officials were especially fearful of another war with a pan-Indian alliance (fueled by rumors of a confederation centered at Scioto).

\textsuperscript{17}William M. Darlington, ed., \textit{Christopher Gist's Journals} (reprint, New York: Argonaut Press, 1966), 47.
Third, the violence in the Ohio Country was intensely personal: killings often occurred in the context of social or economic interactions such as drinking or trading. As the portrait of the Redstone Country demonstrates, Indians and settlers continued to interact in non-violent ways, establish mutually satisfactory trading relationships, and negotiate over land just as they had before the wars. But the new ingredients in these encounters were Indians' and colonists' mutual distrust and hatred. Third, colonists tended to commit mass murders of Indians and their families, express anti-Indian sentiments, and kill indiscriminately. From the gallows in 1766, James Annin declared that "he thought it a duty to extirpate the Heathen," even if it meant raping and killing a pregnant Indian woman who was "near the Time of Delivery." By contrast, Indians typically murdered individual colonists because of alcohol's influence, colonists' ill-treatment, or pecuniary motives. Indians destroyed colonial families only in wartime or to avenge the colonists' mass killings. The greater incidence of colonists' murdering of Indians reflects the "desire for revenge [that] burned deeply in the backcountry after the fighting in the pays d'en haut had ended." As Richard White observes, "for many backcountry people peace presented their first opportunity to kill Indians."  

For every instance of murder, there were many more cases of attempted murder, assault, and verbal harassment. The violence and maltreatment that Indians received at the hands of soldiers and settlers provided them with powerful evidence of true British
sentiments and a lack of good faith and feelings in the larger alliance. As a result, Delaware and Shawnee warriors increasingly favored war, as George Croghan reported in 1769: "the Worrrars Say they May as well [Die] Like Men as be Kicked about Like Doggs" and put into the Fort Pitt guardhouse for "Trifling Reasons." Natives who traveled through colonial settlements often felt the inhabitants' blind rage and verbal jabs. Sir William Johnson wrote in 1766 that Tuscaroras traveling through Pennsylvania "had been well used, by the Inhabitants, during their whole journey 'till they came to Paxton, the people of which Settlement have not only used them ill, but also robbed the Chief and others of sundry horses, &c." The prevalence of anti-Indian sentiments often made it impossible for colonists to tolerate the presence of natives. In a 1767 petition to the Assembly, a group of Bucks County residents complained that they had been "much Burdened & disturbed" by a group of forty Indians who had wintered in their neighborhood. The natives were "a heavy Expense to Us in furnishing them with Provisions, but have given Occasion of great fear and Terror . . . by their Extream insolence & rudeness in & about some of Our Houses, when Intoxicated." The colonists hoped that the Assembly would prevent the Indians from returning to the area; the whites warned that they were so infuriated that "We Apprehend their [the Indians] return would be Dangerous."19

19PA 1st ser., 4: 260, 273; SWJP 7: 182. For other instances of attempted murder, assault, verbal abuse, or rumors of such crimes, see PA 1st ser., 4: 217, 413; SWJP 12: 115 (cf. DRCHNY 7: 864) [rumor of prominent Iroquois warriors' death]; 12: 123 (reports of Indians' deaths elsewhere); 4: 769 (fragmentary account of two Indians killed at Redstone Creek); 5: 260 (fragmentary account of murder); 8: 9-10 (soldier assaulted near Fort Pitt); 9: 753 (accidental death). For instances of soldiers and colonists abusing Indians at Fort Pitt, see SWJP vol. 3: 459, 699, 724; vol. 7: 86, 182, 211-12; vol. 10: 135; vol. 11: 862. For examples of Indians' offenses against the colonists, see SWJP vol. 7: 942-43, 993-94, 1052-54, 1076-77, vol. 8: 227.
Colonial and imperial officials felt as though they were under siege in the 1760s. Pennsylvania's proprietors and elected leaders struggled to prevent open warfare as an epidemic of squatting, chronic violence, and challenges to the colony's boundaries in northeastern and southwestern Pennsylvania seemed to spiral out of their control. New Englanders poured into the Wyoming Valley and Virginians and Marylanders predominated in the upper Monongahela Valley, making Pennsylvania claims superfluous. The proprietors faced a familiar problem of how to control those who trespassed on their claims, and adopted a familiar solution—ejection—to deal with it. Colonial officials were more perplexed about the rash of colonists' murders of Indians. After two especially grisly murders in New Jersey, Governor William Franklin wrote to William Johnson in 1766, "It grieves me to hear that our Frontier People are yet greater Barbarians than the Indians, and continue to murder them in time of Peace." Johnson recounted to the Lords of Trade the string of nearly twenty Indians murdered throughout the colonies in 1766; he indicated that the "violent Spirit" of Indian-hating seemed to be more prevalent in the northern colonies rather than the southern colonies. He was stupefied by people who "were determin'd to bring on a new War tho' their own ruin may be the consequence."  

Gen. Thomas Gage personified the "dilemma of British policy" in the 1760s. Gage's letters, while disdainful of colonists and especially frontier people, reveal his deep fears of disorder on the frontiers; they illuminate the sense of fragmentation and chaos that haunted many colonial leaders in that decade. He argued that "the Same Causes will have

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the same Effects": that colonial expansion was the cause of the 1755-1763 war and was threatening to start another. Gage lamented the "Weakness of the Governments" and their impotent attempts to enforce proclamations against illegal settlement and trade. How, Gage reasoned, could they expect to obtain any more coercive power by extending their boundaries further westward? Gage feared a vicious cycle in which speculators would engross the newly purchased lands and squatters "would have the same Temptation as they have now, to emigrate beyond the Boundary." He concluded that "unless the Hands of Government are strengthened . . . the more the Provinces are extended the weaker they would be." The general and other colonial elites feared that the Ohio Valley would become "the Asylum of fugitive Negroes, and idle Vagabonds escaped from Justice, who in time might become formidable, and subsist by Rapine, and plundering the lower Countrys."21

Gage's experiences on the frontiers of the British Empire predisposed him toward a greater use of military power against recalcitrant American colonists. Governors, however, were reluctant to accept his "Offers to assist with the King's Troops," even though "they own that nothing but a Military Force could enforce obedience." The commander-in-chief proposed that the crown should finalize the boundary line and create a new colony, and that a "Military Government" administer the colony "as the only Expedient of having either Laws or Rules and Regulations duly observed, or the King's orders obeyed." In a letter to William Johnson, Gage announced that if the Indians

21Bailyn, Voyagers to the West, 3-56; PA 8th ser., 7: 6076; SWJP 5: 201, 12:376-77; Clarence Edward Carter, ed.. The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage with the Secretaries of State, 1763-1775. 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931-1933) 1: 278.
destroyed only the illegal settlements in a war, he would not immediately intervene, "tho
the killing of People must be shocking to Humanity." In a 1764 letter to Henry Bouquet,
Gage proposed a "Military Establishment" near Fort Pitt that included land grants of 100
to 150 acres "on Military Tenures," strategically situated for defense of the frontiers.
Bouquet agreed that Gage's plan was "the best that can possibly be formed for the Support
of advanced Posts, and a Barrier impenetrable to savages."22

Gage's anxiety apparently confirms prevailing historical interpretations that the
British empire restrained colonial expansion in the 1760s. While there is no question that
British officials favored restraint in theory, they were unable to practice it in fact.
Historians have long known that the British were but imperfect legatees of the French
empire in North America: British efforts to regulate settlement, trade, and the economy in
the 1760s failed abysmally. To understand why they failed it is necessary to move beyond
the policy directives emanating from Whitehall or Philadelphia and to look at what was
happening on the local level. The British military, and thus the empire, was ultimately
ineffectual as an instrument of settler containment because it was part of the problem: few
historians have recognized that the British army facilitated more than it contained the
spread of settlement. The evidence challenges the reigning interpretations that the British
Empire and army was a "restraining force on the activities" of Ohio Valley colonists and
that the Revolution broke the restless colonies' chains.23

22SWJP 12: 380, Gage to Bouquet, May 14, 1764; Bouquet to Gage, May 20, 1764, Bouquet Papers 6:
539, 542-44.
23Hinderaker, Elusive Empires, 170, 185 ("restraining force"); see also Robert Scott Stephenson,
The British military facilitated colonial settlement in three ways: its construction of roads, maintenance of military garrisons on Indian lands, and planting of selected colonists. First, the British army had opened two roads—Braddock's and Forbes'—during the Seven Years' War that enabled colonists to breach the Appalachian barrier that so many Ohio natives hoped would forestall British encroachments; both roads were improved in the years after 1758, thus permitting the movement of colonists into the Ohio Valley. The heavy traffic—families, supply wagons, couriers, livestock—on these roads astounded travelers in the 1760s and 1770s. Matthew Clarkson, an associate of the trading firm Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan, recorded in his diary nearly constant wagon traffic on Forbes' Road in 1766 (typically pork, victuals, trade goods, and flour going west and peltry returning east to Philadelphia merchants). Second, the army planted colonial communities—in the form of military garrisons—on the Ohio Indians' lands. In the early 1760s, the British army maintained a network of garrisons at Fort Loudoun, Juniata Crossings, Fort Bedford, Stony Creek, Fort Ligonier, Fort Pitt, Venango, Presqu'Isle, Fort Burd, and Fort Cumberland. Over time, many of these places came to resemble colonial towns rather than military garrisons. In 1760, there were already 146 men, women, and children living outside of Fort Pitt's walls; by 1761, the colonial population had swelled to 332 inhabitants. Third, British officers explicitly and implicitly encouraged colonial

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this chapter: we reached similar conclusions independently. Stephenson's study of British military society, however, does not consider Ohio Indian perspectives and communities nor does it examine the Land Records of the Pennsylvania State Archives. Some older narratives recognized the relationships between the British army and colonial settlement: see Alfred P. James, "The First English-Speaking Trans-Appalachian Frontier," Mississippi Valley Historical Review 17 (June 1930): 61-63; Solon and Elizabeth Hawthorn Buck, The Planting of Civilization in Western Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1939), 140.
settlements at both forts and along Braddock's and Forbes' roads. Just as Ohio warriors and headmen had feared, the British military presence was like a Trojan horse rolled into the Ohio Country: Apparently a symbol of goodwill and the maintenance of peace, the British army instead unleashed legions of Euroamerican settlers into the Ohio Country.24

Why was there such a discrepancy between British officials' rhetoric and the reality of illegal settlement in the Ohio Country? The uncertainty of boundaries and land titles, especially before the Proclamation Line of 1763 and the Treaty of Fort Stanwix of 1768, contributed to British vacillation over colonial farmers and hunters crossing the Appalachians. The Secretary of the Land Office, James Tilghman, observed that "It hath been the fate of several Colonies in America that the People have settled up to and even beyond their bounds before they have been ascertained." Moreover, British commanders' views must be distinguished from what they believed constituted illegal versus legal settlement. For example, Virginia Gov. Francis Fauquier wrote to Henry Bouquet in 1761, shortly after the latter had issued a proclamation forbidding colonists settling and hunting across the mountains. The proclamation, Fauquier complained, had given rise "to some Uneasiness in this Colony [Virginia]" especially the threat of prosecution by courts-martial. Bouquet responded that his proclamation applied only to those lacking "legal authority" and that he never intended to "invalidate the just right of any Person," such as

those holding prior grants to Ohio lands. Most important, military and imperial officials saw colonial settlements associated with the military as perfectly legitimate and wholly necessary; these colonists were exempt from the torrent of official proclamations forbidding hunting and settling.25

The sprawling settlements that soon flourished outside of British ramparts sprouted from small seeds. British officers throughout the 1760s explicitly encouraged colonial settlements, insisting that some were necessary to support the army in the field and its communication and supply lines. Col. Henry Bouquet, who oversaw British consolidation of the upper Ohio Valley from 1758 to 1765, played an instrumental role in the process of military colonization. In 1761, Bouquet argued that building way stations on the road from Forts Le Boeuf to Presqu'Isle "could give no just Jalousie to the Indians, if we build upon the Ruins of the French settlements." But unlike the French forts, where Indians could boast that they could still hunt outside the walls, British posts soon attracted small, bustling villages.26

Military officers in the Ohio Country explicitly encouraged the planting of three types of colonists: farmers/tavernkeepers, artisans, and army veterans. Bouquet, for instance, knew that the British army could not depend solely on shipments of supplies

25[James Tilghman], "Thoughts on the Situation of the Inhabitants on the Frontier," PMHR 10 (1886): 316-19; Fauquier to Bouquet, January 17, 1762; Bouquet to Fauquier, February 8, 1762, Bouquet Papers 6: 39, 45. Colonel Bouquet corresponded with individuals who entertained hopes of planting colonies in the Ohio Valley and desired "to form an estate in Pennsylvania"; his own plans for colonization were published posthumously in 1765 in William Smith's An Account of Bouquet's Expedition Against the Ohio Indians in 1764. See Bouquet Papers 5: 32-33, 214-15; 6: 169-70, 787. For licensed settlers' exemption from removal, see SWJP 11: 793.

from the east. In a memorandum entitled "Articles necessary for the Western Department in 1760," he thought it necessary to "establish Farmers at Bedford, Ligonier, Wetherhold, Cumberland, [Stewart's] Crossing, Guest, [and] F' Burd, and Pittsburgh, to raise oats, Indian corn, Wheat, and Rye, & *" and cited the "Power vested in the Command# officer to grant such Lands." Bouquet intended that licensed farmers occupy land only within view of the forts; but in practice the farmers began creating plantations throughout the surrounding countryside.27

Many of these licensed farmers, doubling as tavernkeepers, became permanent residents in the trans-Appalachian West. Taverns or way stations along Braddock's and Forbes' roads not only provided basic needs to travelers but secured British communications from the western posts to the seaboard. Bouquet early saw the need for "Some Taverns . . . along the Road at the Several Stages West of Bedford" to provide lodging and food for couriers, soldiers, and teamsters and fodder for their horses and livestock. Accordingly, tavernkeepers farmed large tracts of land to provide a steady supply of fodder. Bouquet blindly believed that Ohio Indians could not possibly object to taverns and would recognize the distinction between licensed colonists and unlicensed ones. His superior, Gen. Robert Monckton concurred, that "There can be no Objection to People Setting up Taverns on the Road between Bedford and Pittsburgh." Individuals like Margaret Stewart, who probably ran a tavern, applied for land in 1769 based on military license: She claimed 300 acres "on each side of the great Road including the eleven mile

Spring above Fort Legonier & an improvement made in 1762 by order of the Commander at Fort Pitt." While most colonists solicited the army, Bouquet in 1762 prevailed upon John Metcalfe, former salt master at Fort Pitt, to establish a tavern at Nine Mile Run on Forbes' Road "purely for accommodating the Army and travelers." Metcalfe's tavern evolved into a sprawling plantation that included more than sixty acres of crops and herds of livestock. Metcalfe claimed a whopping £1,474 in damages to his plantation sustained during Pontiac's War.

Skilled artisans and tradesmen were another group of colonists whom British officers licensed to settle in the Ohio Country, for their expertise was needed to maintain the army in the field. Every artisan or tradesman necessary for the functioning of a non-military community could be found among the British garrisons: teamsters, wheelwrights, coopers, blacksmiths, gunsmiths, carpenters, millwrights, bricklayers, masons, batteauxmen, tanners, and traders. Anthony and Jane Thompson operated a tannery near Fort Pitt and cultivated around twenty acres of land. After Anthony's accidental drowning, Jane continued to operate the tannery and filed for losses of £1,351 in hides and twenty acres of crops after Pontiac's War. Batteauxmen and ship's carpenters were particularly indispensable, for the British army principally relied on rivers for communication and supply between posts. The main trading firms operating from Fort

28Monckton to Bouquet, June 28, 1761; T. Hay to Bouquet, April 9, 1761; Ourry: Order to Hay, May 25, 1761. Bouquet Papers, 5: 587, 507-8, 401; Bouquet Papers, 6: 531 (Hugh Reed, tavernkeeper); New Purchase Applications, 1769, Land Records, Pennsylvania State Archives, microfilm reel # 1.9 (Margaret Stewart's application is # 325, dated April 3, 1769); Alfred P. James, ed., "The Early Property and Land Title Situation in Western Pennsylvania," Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine 16 (August 1933): 197-204 (Metcalfe). See also George Washington to John Blair, May 17, 1768, in Papers of George Washington, Colonial Series, 8: 87-88. Washington recognized the value of taverns in facilitating future settlement.
Pitt—Trent, Simon, and Franks and later Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan—sent hundreds of teamsters, ships carpenters, and boatmen to the Ohio Valley to facilitate trade with the Illinois Country. Twenty-three-year-old Jehu Eyre, a Philadelphia shipwright, took a party of sixteen boat builders to Fort Pitt in 1760; many eventually stayed in the area and obtained land.29

Veterans who colonized the Ohio Valley imparted a distinctly military character to the early settlements. Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the British regular army all instituted land bounties, with varying degrees of success, as incentive for provincials to serve in the Seven Years' War. As Robert Stephenson argues, "By identifying British soldiers as potential settlers rather than life-term enlistees, the regular army helped to close the gap between provincials and redcoats as it greatly expanded the pool of men with a deep personal interest in Ohio Country lands." Most important, soldiers came to expect that they would receive grants on French lands by right of conquest. "During tours of service sometimes stretching close to a decade," Stephenson points out, "soldiers acquired claims to land bounties, an intimate familiarity with the country, and membership in broad veterans' networks" that facilitated their resettlement on the frontier. Veterans like Scottish Sgt. Angus McDonald often settled in the areas they had become so familiar with or where they had traded among the Ohio Indians. After commanding at Fort Burd and farming bottomlands along the Youghiogheny River from 1760 to 1763, McDonald

obtained title to 295 acres near the fort in 1769. Upon leaving the service, soldiers sometimes brought their wives and children to settle; single men often met and married the many laundresses, cooks, seamstresses, and camp followers who were integral members of the military community. In his 1772 journey, the Rev. David McClure encountered veterans who had married during their terms of service and settled in the area. He attended the marriages of two couples living on the Monongahela: the grooms were "soldiers, who for want of some one to marry them, had lived with their women, several years." During times of conflict with natives, the veterans quickly returned to the ranks. At Fort Bedford during Pontiac's War, Capt. Robert Ourry noted that many of the farmers who took refuge there "have been in the Service of the Province, and are ready to engage in the Same now, if call'd upon." Sgt. Angus McDonald's long military career spanned the Seven Years' War, Pontiac's War, and Dunmore's War.30

Maintaining a distinction between settlers supporting the king's forces and illegal settlers proved to be immensely difficult in practice. In theory, the metropolitan government's imperial policymakers tried to restrain colonial expansion. Those responsible for executing imperial policy in North America--Jeffrey Amherst, Robert Monckton, Thomas Gage, Sir William Johnson, John Stuart--certainly lamented the

30Stephenson, "With Swords and Plowshares," 205-206, 16 (for more detailed analysis of land bounties, see 203-35); McDonald to Bouquet, April 20, 1763, Papers of Henry Bouquet, Series 21648, 19: 102 (permit to settle) [for a brief biography of McDonald see Bouquet Papers 5: 125, n. 1; Diary of David McClure, 109; Ourry to Amherst, June 22, 1763, Bouquet Papers, 6: 247. For other examples of soldiers-turned-settlers, see Bouquet Papers, vol. 5: 91, n.2; 184, n. 2; 299, n. 3; 316, n.7; 505, n. 2; vol 6: 75, n. 3, and the New Purchase Applications, 1769, Land Records, Pennsylvania State Archives, applications 34 (Aneas MacKay) and 613 (Henry Shyrock and William Shearer). For an analysis of women in eighteen-century military communities, see Holly A. Mayer, Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), chap. 1.
frontier settlers' lawlessness. But in practice, at a local level, British sergeants, lieutenants, captains, majors, and colonels frequently gave licenses to colonial families to settle in the trans-Appalachian West provided they could establish their usefulness to the king's troops.31 Once word of the British army's need for logistical support filtered back to Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, colonial families began pouring into the Ohio Country. Many came under the pretence of operating taverns or growing crops to support the army. Others simply applied to British officers for permission to build houses and farms: Lt. Archibald Blane, commanding at Ligonier, explained that "Every Day I have a number of People soliciting for Plantations." Other individuals attached themselves to families that did have military license. One hunter killed by Cherokees in 1762 came to the Ohio Country and "went and Joynd himself, to 2 men that had a permit, to hunt for the officer at fort Pitt." A befuddled Sergeant McDonald at Fort Burd wrote of the Redstone settlers coming to plant corn in 1761: "Some Says they had Leave from your honour Some from General monckton Some others from Sir Jn*St Clair." By the time McDonald learned of Bouquet's opposition to unauthorized farmers coming to plant corn, there were already "people who has been Clearing Ground all winter." Moreover, some officers were indifferent toward the colonists' encroachments and ineffectually executed their orders to warn off trespassers. Capt. Lewis Ourry, Bouquet's close friend commanding at Fort

31For examples of colonists who obtained land through military license, see the New Purchase Applications, 1769, Land Records, Pennsylvania State Archives (microfilm reel 1.9); applications of John Campbell (# 39), William Crawford (# 374), Thomas Hutchins (# 945), James Thompson (# 1207), Jacob Toup (# 3145), William Brooks (#3383); Robert Laughlin (#3479); William Henry Egle, ed., Minutes of the Board of Property, PA, 3rd ser., 1:609 (William Beaty v. Patrick Campbell), 672 (William Schooly v. Robert Adams), 728 (John Perry v. Robert Thompson); 2: 444 (Thomas Crafts v. Henry Spiers), 465 (Casper Taub v. George Croghan).
Bedford, wrote that "there are a great many People Settled all around me, within 3, 4-6, 8-10 Miles, and I never concern myself with them at all."  

Ohio Indians personally interacted with the "authorized" settlers who informed them that "they had the Kings orders for making settlements there, and that they would not suffer any Indians whatever, to pass over or hunt on them." How were Ohio Indians to know which settlers along Braddock's Road in the Redstone Country were authorized by the British army? Had the king allowed hunters to swarm over their hunting grounds? In official diplomatic meetings at Fort Pitt and Philadelphia, Indians were told that the king had never sanctioned illegal settlements on their lands. Not surprisingly, Ohio Indians found these distinctions specious and many warriors found the rumors that the British military was conspiring to destroy them and take their lands eminently believable. In a 1767 conference, in which George Croghan tried to explain British logic, the Indians appeared "as if they thought that all which was said to them, was intended only to amuse them & they declared plainly that they could not believe, but if it had been the King's desire to prevent his Subjects from making Settlements, in their Country," that it would be done.  

To assuage natives' fears and to contain a problem of their own making, the British occasionally took military action against illegal colonists. Proclamations warning the

32 McDonald to Bouquet, March 20, 1761; McDonald to Bouquet, March 29, 1761; Ourry to Bouquet, June 17, 1761, Bouquet Papers 5: 359, 380, 557; A. McDonald to Bouquet, April 15, 1762; Blane to Bouquet, June 14, 1762, Bouquet Papers 6: 78-79, 94-95. Capt. Harry Gordon, traveling by Fort Ligonier in 1766, noted that "There are some Inhabitants now and many more would assemble there, was any Rig[h]t of Possession or Property secured to them" ("Gordon's Journal, May 8, 1766--December 6, 1766," ISHLC 291).

intruders to remove themselves were routinely issued by officers at Fort Pitt. They often contained thinly veiled threats of unleashing disgruntled Indians on the squatters or withdrawing military protection in the event of renewed hostilities. Squatters' local relationships with Indians, however, drove the British officers to frustration. Only a year after the cessation of hostilities in 1764, squatters on Redstone Creek had befriended Mohawk Peter, his European wife, and children who were also settled there. The squatters took up residence near Mohawk Peter's cabin where, as James Kenny witnessed, "Ind" Peter and a White man was working at Corn." At Fort Pitt in June 1765, the Seneca sachem Ogista informed Col. John Reid, an officer of the 42nd Regiment, that "several white Families are settled on Redstone Creek, and have planted Corn, with Peter, a Mohawk Indian." Ogista distinguished between the hunters and farmers invading the Ohio Country. The Seneca told Colonel Reid that he did not wish to see the farmers "lose their Labour"; he would allow them to remain until they had harvested their corn, then they should be removed. When Ogista complained of the hunters in the Redstone country, he wanted them removed immediately. Yet farmers and hunters alike remained "white Families" and "white Hunters" in Ogista's eyes. Mohawk Peter and his family could remain at Redstone "as he is one of ourselves."

In the summers of 1766 and 1767, Gage authorized Major William Murray, commandant at Fort Pitt, to send out detachments of British regulars from Fort Pitt to expel squatters from the Redstone Country. Both expeditions failed. The first, in August

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34 Mohawk Peter often acted as a messenger between the Ohio Country and Illinois Country. See JSHLC 16: 571; for other references to Mohawk Peter, see the index to the Sir William Johnson Papers. 35 SWJP 11: 790-94 (quotations at 791).
1766, completely backfired, because it was "prevented by some of the Indians," probably Mingoes. When Murray later chided Kiasutha, the White Mingo, and other Indians at a meeting for giving encouragement to the squatters to stay, they agreed to accompany another detachment of British regulars. In 1767, Murray again marched a small contingent of regulars to the Redstone country. A few Indian sachems who accompanied him successfully persuaded the squatters to remove (or at least the hundred or so who answered Murray's summons). The British commander also sent out parties to destroy as many of their cabins as possible. Murray obediently reported his success to General Gage, but his success was fleeting.36

Indians' land negotiations with squatters in the 1760s are shrouded in mystery. While there is considerable evidence that Indians (primarily Mingoes) permitted some of the farmers to live in the Monongahela Valley, their exact motives are difficult to ascertain. Ohio Indians complained incessantly over illegal settlers; why, then, would they want to encourage any colonial families to remain? Perhaps the white families who attached themselves to Mohawk Peter's family were exempted. Another possibility is that natives wanted a few trustworthy colonial farmers along the Catawba path to provision their war parties. The Mingoes who accompanied Murray in 1766 stipulated that at least

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four settlers were to be left untouched, "to furnish their young men and warriors with corn as they pass and repass." James Kenny noted the presence of "Sutling Inhabitants" in Fort Pitt's environs who traded alcohol. George Croghan wrote simply that every farmer is a sutler, particularly of whiskey readily distilled from corn. Licensed traders at Fort Pitt complained that squatters in the Redstone country were trading with Indians and undercutting them. They complained that "a Number of Lawless persons have lately forced a Settle[ment and opened] a Trade at one half the Rates agreed upon by the Com[missary of ] Indian Affairs and the chiefs of the Indian tribes at this [post]." William Colvin's account book shows that he, and other squatters, "traded in a small way at his home near Brownsville as early as 1766." The Redstone's reputation for close colonial-Indian relations was remembered well into the nineteenth century. Either a freed slave or an Irishman, "Ready Money Jack" was a Redstone settler who later migrated to Kentucky. One Kentuckian who knew him informed ethnographer John Dabney Shane that Ready Money Jack "was from Monongahela country . . . was less afraid of Indians. People in that country were more accustomed to them." 37

By the end of 1767, imperial and colonial elites recognized that proclamations and parties of soldiers had completely failed to accomplish their aims. Not only did Indians interfere with the expeditions, but the human tide of settlement seemed unstoppable. No sooner had the burned cabins' embers died down than squatters returned to rebuild. George Croghan remarked to William Johnson in October 1767 that "not withstanding all

37Clarkson's Diary. ISHLC II: 357; "Journal of James Kenny, 1761-1763," 166; Hinderaker, Elusive Empires, 181 (Croghan); Ellis, History of Fayette County, 724-25; SWJP 6: 19; Perkins, Border Life, 38, 104.
the trouble that has been taken [to re]moove the People settled on Redstone Creek, & Cheat [River] I am well assured there are double the Number of Inhabi[tants] in those two Settlements that ever was before." A thousand Virginia settlers, Alexander McKee reported, were determined to settle at Redstone Creek and if the military opposed them, they would destroy an Indian village in retaliation. The British forces thus faced strong social inhibitions on the use of military force against civilians in peacetime. At a time when ancient fears of standing armies and tyranny were climaxing, direct British military action against settlers was fraught with risk. Thomas Gage feared the repercussions of accidental bloodshed in a skirmish between regulars and colonists. In a letter to Sir William Johnson, Gage warned that "if a Skirmish happens, and Blood is shed, you know what a Clamor there will be against the Military Acting without Civil Magistrates." He therefore sought to cooperate with and not to act independently of civil authority.

Moreover, the British military was increasingly incapable of taking decisive action against illegal settlement, for it was preoccupied with civil unrest along the Atlantic seaboard. The task of ejecting illegal settlers was again left to Pennsylvania's proprietors and they were more than willing to take up the challenge.38

Two developments in late 1767 and early 1768 gave Lt. Gov. John Penn and the Pennsylvania government added impetus. First, the home government authorized the Indian superintendents, Sir William Johnson and John Stuart, to negotiate a boundary line for all of the British colonies. The interests of expansionists in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, along with renewed assertions of Iroquois power over the Ohio

38SWJP 5: 504: 12:112, 374.
Valley, were brought to bear on the Ohio Indians. Pennsylvania's proprietors, who enjoyed close ties to Johnson, hoped that the superintendent would negotiate a boundary favorable to their interests. They looked to a land sale from the Six Nations to solve its disputes with squatters and other colonies. As fears of Indian disaffection grew in 1767, George Croghan asserted that "Nothing now, will in my opinion prevent a War [but] taking a Cession from them [the Six Nations], & paying them for their Lands." Just when British leaders seemed so close to finalizing a permanent boundary, room for colonial growth, and possibly a lasting peace, one of the most vicious murders of the colonial period occurred in the Pennsylvania backcountry.39

The actions of Frederick Stump and John Ironcutter, two German settlers living on Middle Creek in the Susquehanna Valley, threatened to turn colonists and Indians' worlds upside down. On January 10, 1768, six Senecas and Mohicans came to Stump's house and traded for liquor. It was said that Stump, who had been the subject of land disputes with Indians and proprietors, was "apprehensive" that the drunken Indians "intended to do him some mischief." Stump tomahawked the White Mingo, John Campbell, Cornelius, Jonas Griffy, and two of the men's wives. After throwing their bodies into ice-choked Middle Creek, Stump and his indentured servant John Ironcutter went to the Indians' hunting cabins a few miles away. There they butchered other unsuspecting Indians from White Mingo's party: a woman, two young girls, and a baby. Stump and Ironcutter burned the four bodies and the cabins to hide their crimes. Over a month later, one of the corpses washed up downstream on the Susquehanna. Local magistrates discovered that

39 SWJP 12: 374.
Stump had scalped his victim with such ferocity that "a large Scalp [was] taken off his Head, which took both his Ears."\(^{40}\)

It is impossible to exaggerate just how thunderstruck both native peoples and colonial officials were when news of Stump's actions reached them. Alexander McKee reported that Indian peoples in the west were angered; he knew that scalping, a declaration of war in native eyes, was "worse than murdering them." Since Senecas, Mahicans, and Delawares were among the slain, British America stood on the precipice of an apocalyptic war with Indian nations from Iroquoia to the Ohio Valley. A mortified John Penn wrote to Gage, "I am under the greatest Apprehensions that this unhappy affair will, at this Juncture, when the Indians are so much discontented by the Injuries already done to them, be productive of the most Calamitous Consequences." He assured Gage that "nothing on the part of this Government shall be wanting to remove all the Causes of their Complaints." But Stump and Ironcutter were never brought to justice. Briefly incarcerated in a Carlisle jail, Stump was freed by a sympathetic frontier mob who thereafter concealed him from local magistrates. From the native point of view, the government's inability to bring the murderers to justice betrayed great insincerity.\(^{41}\)

In the aftermath of the Stump murders, the Pennsylvania government initially condoled the affected Indian peoples through letters and speeches. The Assembly also allotted the huge sum of £3,000 for gift-giving during formal condolence ceremonies at


\(^{41}\)SWJP 6: 101-2 (McKee), 110, 122, 129; MPCP 9: 422 (Penn); on Stump's escape from jail and subsequent attempts to recapture him, see 9: 458, 462-65.
Johnson Hall in New York and Fort Pitt in the Ohio Country. It also enacted draconian measures to redress the natives' grievances over settlers' intrusions. In January and February 1768, Governor Penn and the Assembly worked out an "Act to remove the Persons now settled, and to prevent others from settling on Lands in this Province, not purchased of the Indians." The Assembly passed the legislation (which had actually predated the Stump murders) and Penn announced it in an official proclamation. The law authorized the penalty of "Death without the Benefit of Clergy" for illegal settlers who failed to remove after thirty days of receiving notice of the proclamation and were convicted. Exemptions were made for settlers with military licenses and for those who George Croghan had settled on his lands upriver from Fort Pitt. Since the temporary law was intended more as a carrot than a stick, no one was ever convicted or executed for trespass. Lt. Gov. Penn commissioned the Rev. John Steel, John Allison, Christopher Lems, and Capt. James Potter, all of Cumberland County, to travel to the Ohio Country "with all possible Expedition" and to inform the squatters of the proclamation. Focusing primarily on Redstone, Monongahela, and Youghiogheny, the commissioners were to gather the squatters together, read the proclamation, explain to them "the Folly and injustice of their settling upon the Indian Lands."

Steel and his companions arrived at Redstone Creek on March 21, 1768. The settlers had received advanced warning of the party's coming and had planned a meeting to

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42 MPCP 9: 481-82 (Lt. Gov. Penn's Proclamation); 483 (Commission to the Reverend Steel and Cumberland County officials). For the often heated dialogue between Penn and the Assembly, which occurred in the context of the debate over making Pennsylvania a royal colony, see PA 8th ser., 7: 6080-6179.
decide what to do. Steel addressed the meeting, read the proclamation, and reasoned with them that removing now "was the most probable Method to entitle them to favour with the Honourable Proprietaries when the Land was purchased." The squatters replied that they would petition the proprietors for preemption rights, assuming that they would purchase the lands soon. But they also maintained that the Indians were "very Peaceable, and seemed sorry that they [the settlers] were to be removed." Local Indians, probably Mingoes, had encouraged them to remain and "apprehended the English intended to make War upon the Indians, as they were moving off their People from their Neighborhood." Given natives' longstanding suspicions that the British army would one day be used against them, their fears of an impending attack after taking their colonial neighbors out of harm's way were reasonable. The squatters indicated that they would be willing to remove and promised that they would give the commissioners an answer on the following Sabbath.43

On March 27, 1768, the commissioners, squatters, and a group of Mingoes met in the Redstone Valley. Steel preached a sermon to the crowd which undoubtedly touched on obedience to magistrates. Hearing that eight Mingoes had come to Mohawk Peter's homestead, he requested that they witness the squatters' ejectment. Steel had entertained hope that the squatters were preparing to remove; he told them that "a few straggling Indians" might have encouraged them to remain at their plantations, but that most natives resented their settlements. Steel hoped that the Mingoes would support his mission but "they greatly obstructed our design," he later wrote. The Mingoes presented a string of wampum and announced their satisfaction with the commissioners' goals, but essentially

deferred any final action until the next conference at Fort Pitt. Sachems and colonial
negotiators could then decide what course to pursue. All hope of removing the squatters
evaporated when they heard the Indians' remarks.44

The commissioners noted an abrupt change in squatters' demeanor once they heard
that the Mingoes had declined to support their immediate ejectment; they "drop't the
design of Petitioning" and were "confirmed that there was no danger of War" with the
Indians. Since many of the settlers were from Virginia and Maryland, a few became
emboldened and declared their disaffection from the proprietors and their agents: "Many
severe Things were said of Mr. Croghan," Steel reported. One squatter named Lawrence
Harrison was particularly brazen in his remarks about Pennsylvania laws and government.

But there was one point on which all of them agreed: that "the removing of them from the
unpurchased Lands, was a Contrivance of the Gentlemen and Merchants of Philadelphia,
that they might take Rights for their improvements when a Purchase was made." The
squatters cited as evidence that two gentlemen named Harris and Wallace had been in the
area inspecting the Redstone country. Steel promised the Redstone people that he would
report this allegation to the governor. After failing to warn off the squatters, the
commissioners returned to Carlisle. Another proprietary expedition had ventured into the
backcountry only to have both squatters and Indians frustrate their plans.

Indians and colonists met at Fort Pitt in April and May 1768 so that Pennsylvania
could conduct condolence rituals for the Stump murders. Unfortunately for the Delawares
and Shawnees most immediately threatened by settlement growth, the Fort Pitt conference

44Ibid., 508.
was a prelude to another sale of lands without their consent. As many as 1,500 Iroquois, Delawares, Shawnees, Munsees, Mohicans, and Wyandots gathered at the fort; but the dialogue was dominated by George Croghan and Six Nations representatives, particularly the Iroquois "Half King" Guyasutha. The long-established collusion between Pennsylvania and the Six Nations meant that Ohio Indians' voices were suppressed. On the subject of illegal settlement, Croghan tried to enlist Ohio Iroquois support to eject Virginia and Maryland squatters in the Monongahela Valley (some of whom competed with established traders at Fort Pitt and lived on lands that Croghan himself claimed). The Iroquois refused to intervene: perhaps they knew of the Six Nations' intentions to sell the disputed lands at the upcoming treaty at Fort Stanwix. Guyasutha, a close ally of Sir William Johnson, "thought it most proper for the English themselves to compel their own people to remove." The Iroquois did not want "to incur the ill Will of those People"; the squatters would be removed, only to return "when the English have purchased the Country from us." Given the high frequency of violence in the Monongahela, the Iroquois did not want to "give them Reason to dislike us, and treat us in an unkind Manner, when they again become our Neighbors."45

The Treaty of Fort Stanwix (N.Y.), in the summer of 1768, was the culmination of Britain's efforts to regulate the colonial frontiers after the Seven Years' War. With over
three thousand natives in attendance, the conference was one of the largest Indian councils ever held in North America. Despite Ohio Indians' objections but with Sir William Johnson's support, the Six Nations relinquished their "claims" to most of the Ohio valley (including Kentucky). Johnson collaborated with speculators, proprietors, and impoverished Indian traders to secure large tracts of natives' lands. The boundary line in Pennsylvania, for example, ran from the Delaware River westward along the Susquehanna's west branch to the old site of Kittanning, then southwest along the Ohio River--most of the area that the proprietors had secured in the 1754 Albany Purchase but later renounced. The treaty was the culmination of a long pattern of proprietary land grabs designed to preempt squatters' and Indians' land claims and to secure new lands for settlement and speculation: Pennsylvania officially obtained rights to the disputed Monongahela Valley, including Redstone Creek. Despite the methods used to secure the purchase, British officials and colonists and Indian peoples hoped that the Stanwix line would bring peace. Well-qualified to judge the prospects of peace, George Croghan wrote in May 1768, "if the Boundery Line be settled with them this Summer and the Frontier Inhabitants observe a Friendly intercourse between them and such Indians as may go into the Settlements I am of opinion a Long and Lasting friendship may be kept up between them and his Majesty's subjects."46

But the treaty failed to resolve permanently the problems besetting Anglo-Indian relations in the Ohio Valley: it greatly stimulated colonial settlements and again precipitated conflict with the natives. Sir William Johnson disobeyed the Board of Trade's instructions to end the line at the mouth of the Great Kanawha River (where the boundary for the southern colonies terminated). The final line stretched all the way down the Ohio River to the mouth of the Tennessee River. While the British government was initially furious over Johnson's indiscretions, they eventually acquiesced to his fait accompli. In the explosive land rush that followed the treaty from 1769 to 1773, settlers moved into southwestern Pennsylvania, western Virginia, and Kentucky by the thousands. Land company representatives, speculators, surveyors, and ordinary farmers gleefully scouted out new tracts of land and poached on Indians' hunting grounds. Like the squatters whom Richard Peters confronted in the Juniata Valley, those who lived in the Monongahela Valley also were remarkably rooted and intransient. While proprietors may have objected to trespassers claiming rights to land based on their improvements, the idea of "squatter's rights" seems to have been a customary practice established over the course of the eighteenth century. Of the fifty-two households listed in John Steel's 1768 report, at least thirty-four (34) persisted in the area and the majority obtained either a survey or letters patent for their lands.47

47 For Steel's list of Redstone and Monongahela Valley squatters, see MPCP 9: 508-509; using the Land Records, tax lists, and county histories, I identified approximately thirty-four of the squatters. On the colonists' land companies and scouting trips, see SWJP vol. 7: 184-85, 1132, vol. 8: 834-35; Wallace, Jefferson and the Indians, chaps. 1-2; Hinderaker, Elusive Empires, 173-74; George Rogers Clark Papers, 3-9.
British actions between 1765 and 1774 constituted, as Richard White argues, an "abdication" of the "diplomatic middle ground" in the trans-Appalachian West. The imperial crisis on the Ohio Valley frontier increasingly dovetailed with the imperial crises over taxation, representation, and rights of British subjects. As Michael McConnell points out, Britain's fiscal problems, ministerial instability, the colonial resistance movement, and British regulars' movements from the frontiers to the seaboard all combined to produce "paralysis in British-Indian relations." Retrenchment led British military leaders to abandon many frontier outposts in the trans-Appalachian west, including Fort Pitt in 1772. From Thomas Gage's perspective, Fort Pitt was merely an "expensive and troublesome" entrepôt between the colonies and the Illinois Country. The general also seemed to take delight in the thought that "If the Colonists will afterwards force the Savages into Quarrells by using them ill, let them feel the Consequences, we shall be out of the Scrape."

The British cannily represented their withdrawal to the Ohio natives as a redress of their objections to the fort; some Indians, especially warriors, were "exceedingly well pleased" over the British army's departure and demolition of the fort. As George Croghan observed, "The 18th Regm' has been obnoxious always to them & no wonder from their Conduct." But Ohio Indians now faced hordes of defenseless settlers who were "greatly alarmed" and full of "Fears and apprehensions" regarding Indian attacks.48

48White. The Middle Ground. 321; McConnell, A Country Between. 237-38, 269; Gage to Barrington, March 4, 1772, Carter. Correspondence of Thomas Gage. 2: 600-601; MPCP 10: 71; SWJP 8: 286 (Fort Pitt expenses); "Letters of George Croghan," 433; SWJP 8: 645 (Indians "well pleased"); Davies, Documents of the American Revolution. 5: 44. 70, 201-3; PA 1st ser., 4: 457-58.
On the eve of the Revolution, then, the Ohio Valley was utterly decentralized, unstable, and verging on anarchy. It was, in Eric Hinderaker's words, "a kind of Hobbesian world, where only sheer force could effectively determine the outcome of events." Not only had the British army departed, but Pennsylvanians and Virginians squabbled over land, authority, and allegiance in the area. Sir William Johnson despaired of ever containing settlements because "these People are not to be confined by any Boundaries or Limits." The territorial dispute between the two colonies threatened to erupt into a small-scale civil war as rival magistrates, courts, and land offices competed for or enforced allegiances. In 1774, Virginia colonists, with the support of Virginia's royal governor Lord Dunmore, seized what remained of Fort Pitt, organized their militia, and claimed the region for Virginia. But the threat of Indian war and the colonists' commonly-held hatred of Indians again glossed over their many differences. War came to the Ohio Country in 1774 long before shots were fired at Lexington Green.49

Shawnees informed Alexander McKee in early March 1774, "We have had many disagreeable Dreams this Winter" about the explosive potential for conflict between Indians and whites. They were convinced that "constant assembling of our Brethren with Red flags" meant that "war is still apparent in their minds." The Shawnees' dreams were nightmarish indeed. In April 1774, in a bloody prelude to the warfare that was coming, a gang of Virginia ruffians began killing individual Indians and massacring Indian families; many of these Virginians believed that a state of war existed between the British and Indians. On April 16, Michael Cresap and a group of Virginians waylaid a trader's canoe

and killed a Delaware and a Shawnee; the most egregious murders occurred on April 27 when Daniel Greathouse and other Virginians enticed a group of ten Mingoes into their settlement and then massacred them, including a trader's pregnant wife. Many of these Mingoes, whose village was located across the Ohio River from the Virginians' village, had frequently traded with the colonists. A cycle of revenge killings began, as the Mingo sachem Tachnederus (or Logan) led warriors against settlements in the Monongahela Valley. Collectively, these killings supplied the pretexts for Virginia's war of conquest known as "Lord Dunmore's War." The British waged war against Shawnees, not the Mingoes who had launched the revenge attacks. Dunmore personally commanded the small army that attacked the Shawnees in October 1774. After the battle of Point Pleasant, the Shawnees sued for peace and essentially ceded Kentucky to the Virginians. Dunmore's War inaugurated another thirty-years of warfare over the Ohio Country.50

It has become almost a cliché that the American Revolution unleashed the floodgates of settlement and allied the new government with westward expansion. But under the British empire's oversight, the fundamental processes affecting Indian-colonist relations were set in motion during the pivotal decade of the 1760s: inexorable settlement expansion, maintenance of military communities in the trans-Appalachian West, a vicious cycle of racialized violence, and use of the army to force treaties that served proprietary

and trade interests of British elites. Unable to contain settlement, regulate trade, or impose order on their North American frontiers, the British empire abandoned the Ohio Country in 1773, leaving in its wake an enormous power vacuum. If the American Revolution struck the valley with notable ferocity, it was due to the area's decades-long instability and decentralization, conditions that the British empire helped to create.
## TABLE 3: INDIAN-COLONIST MURDERS IN GREATER PENNSYLVANIA AND THE OHIO COUNTRY, 1760-1774

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Victim(s)</th>
<th>Assailant(s)</th>
<th>Place of murder</th>
<th>Circumstances</th>
<th>Documentary References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1760 (February)</td>
<td>Doctor John, wife, two children (Delawares)</td>
<td>John Mason, James Foster, William George, and sons of Arthur Foster</td>
<td>Conodoguinet Creek near Carlisle</td>
<td>At Doctor John's hunting cabin</td>
<td>CR 8: 455-56, 709, 712; PA 1st ser., 3: 731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760 (May)</td>
<td>Unidentified Virginia soldier</td>
<td>Corporal Jonathan Swain (Virginia)</td>
<td>Unidentified Indians (perhaps Mingoess)</td>
<td>Bushy Run</td>
<td>Bouquet Papers 4: 572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761 (January/February)</td>
<td>Unidentified Indian</td>
<td>George Croghan believed that the assailant was &quot;some Indian who has been Abused here in his Liquor by the Soldiers&quot;</td>
<td>Near Venango</td>
<td>A British soldier later reported, Swain's &quot;Rifld Piece . . . [was] found upon One of the Mingos&quot;</td>
<td>Bouquet Papers 5: 294-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761 (June 24)</td>
<td>Thomas Hickman (Delaware interpreter)</td>
<td>Mingo man</td>
<td>Lt. James Piper, Pennsylvania Regiment</td>
<td>Path Valley</td>
<td>Bouquet Papers 5: 575-76, 588-89, 594-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unidentified: pr. Path Valley settler(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Near Fort Ligonier</td>
<td>Hickman traveling through the valley alone; died of gunshot wounds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Path Valley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hickman traveling through the valley alone; died of gunshot wounds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PA, 1st ser., 4: 65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1761</th>
<th>1761</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified Indian man</td>
<td>Seneca warrior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified Easton resident</td>
<td>British soldiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easton</td>
<td>Fort Venango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easton resident claimed the act &quot;was in defence of his Wife and Children, whom the Indian was about to murder . . . after coming several times to his House in the night time, disturbing him &amp; using him very ill.&quot;</td>
<td>Another Seneca later &quot;complained of his brother being killed by some of the garrison at Venango without any cause&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1762</th>
<th>1763 (October)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nathaniel Thomlinson and Jacob Aron</td>
<td>John Stinton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherokees</td>
<td>Renatus or Schonqueh (Mahican)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redstone Country</td>
<td>Northampton County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherokees who had escaped their Iroquois captors burned Thomlinson and Aron's hunting cabin and stole their rifles.</td>
<td>Stenton was a tavernkeeper; Renatus, a Moravian, was tried and acquitted in 1764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1763 (December)</td>
<td>1765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>20 Conestoga Indians</strong></td>
<td><strong>1-3 Shawnee warriors</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paxton Boys</td>
<td>James Bow and William Dice, Maryland militiaman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conestoga and Lancaster, Lancaster County</td>
<td>Near Pittsburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paxton Boys suspected Conestogas of collaborating with enemy Indians; some Conestogas were &quot;gone towards Smith's Iron Works to sell brooms&quot;; others &quot;lodged at one Peter Swar's.&quot; The Paxton Boys killed and butchered some of the Indians at Conestoga town; other Indians were killed in the Lancaster Jail on a Sunday morning while in protective custody.</td>
<td>Bow wanted to &quot;obtain the reward&quot; for a scalp and openly flaunted it to others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1766 (April)</th>
<th>1766 (June)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oneida Indian</td>
<td>Hannah and Catherine (Delawares?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Simonds (Seamon)</td>
<td>James Annin and James McKinzy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sussex County, N.J.</td>
<td>Moorestown, N.J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oneida had come to trade and was robbed and murdered by Simonds; a mob of 25 men freed Simonds from jail, but he was recaptured about 9 months later, tried, convicted, and executed. Witnesses said that Simonds said that &quot;he would destroy any Indian that came his way.&quot;</td>
<td>Annin and McKinzy had been &quot;on the Western Frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia&quot;; McKinzy &quot;gave them abusive Language&quot; and the men &quot;went to the Indians with Intent to ravish them, if they should refuse their Offers.&quot; Both were convicted and hanged: Annin declared &quot;he thought it a Duty to extirpate the Heathen.&quot; One of the women was &quot;near the Time of Delivery, and had Marks of shocking Treatment.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania Gazette, April 17 and 24, 1766, January 1, 1767; SWJP 5: 419</td>
<td>Pennsylvania Gazette, July 10, 1766, July 17, 1766, August 7, 1766</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mohawk warrior</th>
<th>Karaghiagigo and four other Iroquois</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1766</td>
<td>Samuel Jacobs</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between Forts Cumberland and Bedford</td>
<td>Near Fort Pitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mohawk warrior returning from southeast</td>
<td>This incident was only a rumor: Iroquois alleged that Karaghiagigo's party returning from the southeast were murdered, but they returned a few weeks later.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CR 9: 304-6, 352; *Papers of Francis Fauquier*, 3: 1340-41  
SWJP 12: 115, 123; *DRCHNY* 7: 864

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>&quot;Captain Peter&quot; Delaware warrior</th>
<th>Four to five Delawares and Shawnees (men)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1766</td>
<td>John Ryan</td>
<td>two unidentified white men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between Redstone and Cheat Valleys</td>
<td>Near Fort Pitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;The Indian named Captain Peters wanted to take Some Rum from the White Man by the name of Ryan who in the Scuffle shot the Indian, and made his Escape to Virginia&quot;</td>
<td>Indian hunting party was &quot;robbed and murdered&quot; by the two white men, who killed the men while they were sleeping but spared an Indian woman and child.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SWJP 5: 540; 12: 296, 308; *Papers of Francis Fauquier*, 3: 1435-39  
CR 9: 479; *Papers of Francis Fauquier*, 3: 1369; SWJP 12: 91-92

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Henry O'Brian, Peter Brown, and 8 Traders</th>
<th>Thomas Mitchell (trader)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1767</td>
<td>Unidentified Indians</td>
<td>Shawnees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ohio River west of Pittsburgh</td>
<td>Shawnee villages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In two batteaux loaded with £3000 in trade goods, &quot;attacked and Pillaged&quot; near the Falls of the Ohio</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CR 9: 469, 521  
CR 9: 469, 521
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1767</th>
<th>1767 (December)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John McDonald</td>
<td>Virginians and Indians killed and wounded in a skirmish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware Indian (perhaps metis)</td>
<td>Fort Pitt Virginia Backcountry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>&quot;after the Indians were entertained and fed, they robd the Man at whose house they were received, set fire to his Stacks and wantonly kill'd his Cattle. Upon this eleven young fellows persued them and came up with them when the fray began&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR 9: 470, 521; SWJP 9: 524</td>
<td>Papers of Francis Fauquier, 3: 1435</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1768</th>
<th>1769</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White Mingo (Seneca), Cornelius (Mohican) John Campbell (Mohican), Jonas Griffy (Stockbridge or Jersey Indian), three women (White Mingo's Cornelius' and Campbell's wives), two girls, and a child</td>
<td>Seneca George (younger)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick Stump and John Ironcutter</td>
<td>Peter Read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Creek</td>
<td>Middle Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indians were drunk and allegedly threatened Stump while they were at his house. Stump and his indentured servant John Ironcutter killed the Indians at his house and the Indians' nearby hunting cabins. Stump and Ironcutter scalped their victims, threw some of the bodies into ice-choked Middle Creek, and burned the rest of the bodies.</td>
<td>A canoe full of colonists fired upon a party of Indians fishing from the shore; Read incarcerated, tried, and acquitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1769</td>
<td>Cheat River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1769</td>
<td>Fort Pitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1769</td>
<td>Fort Pitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>Fort Pitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1771</td>
<td>Monongahela Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1771</td>
<td>Redstone Creek</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Haley was a runaway indentured servant; fell in with the two Indians on the trail; killed the Indians in camp
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year/Date</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1774 (April)</td>
<td>One trader killed, one wounded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jacob Scott, William Hacker, Eliza Runner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Three Cherokee warriors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monongahela Valley (Redstone Country) Ohio River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bald Eagle hunted with Monongahela settlers and was well-known by them. Cherokees waylaid the traders' canoe, belonging to trader Richard Butler and stole the traders' goods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Veech, <em>Monongahela of Old</em>, 88; Sipe, <em>The Indian Wars of Pennsylvania</em>, 489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PA, 1st ser., 4: 499, 569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1774 (April 16)</td>
<td>Delaware man and Shawnee man Unidentified Indian and Virginian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Cresap and party of Virginians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ohio River near Wheeling Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cresap's party ambushed a canoe piloted by a trader named Stephens who employed the Shawnee and Delaware men; according to Stephens, Cresap boasted that &quot;he wou'd put every Indian he met with on the river, to death.&quot; Canoe's goods taken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DRCHNY, 8: 462-63; PA 1st ser. 4: 512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1774 (April 27)</td>
<td>Michael Cresap and party of 15 Virginians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grave Creek near Great Kanawha River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cresap's party pursued 5 canoes containing 14 Indians and skirmished with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DRCHNY 8: 463; PA 1st ser., 4: 511-13; George Rogers Clark Papers, Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library, 8: 3-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1774 (April 27)</td>
<td>1774 (May)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10 Mingoes killed (mainly kin of Mingo leader Logan); others wounded</td>
<td>Joseph Wipey (Delaware)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Greathouse and party of Virginians</td>
<td>John Hinkson and James Cooper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio River and Yellow Creek</td>
<td>Westmoreland County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greathouse's Virginians lured a group of Mingoes across the Ohio River under the pretence of trade (the Mingoes and Virginians had traded before); the Virginians then killed the Mingoes and their kin who came to search for them; one of the victims was a trader's pregnant wife.</td>
<td>Wipey was an interpreter and messenger well-known to the local settlers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1774 (June-July)</th>
<th>1774 (June-October)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Captain Francis McClure; Lieut. Samuel Kinkade (wounded)</td>
<td>William Speir or Spicer, wife, four children on Ten Mile Creek; two men on Dunkard Creek; man at Old Fort Redstone; Matthew Gray; Colman Brown on Simpson Creek; John Robertson's family in Holston valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logan and Mingo war party</td>
<td>Logan and Mingo war party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Mile Creek, Westmoreland County</td>
<td>Monongahela, Holston, and Clinch Valleys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mingoes ambushed a party of Virginia rangers pursuing them</td>
<td>Revenge for killings at Yellow Creek</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In early December 1773, a somber Sir William Johnson sent urgent letters to the governor of New York, William Tryon, and to Gen. Frederick Haldimand in New York City. He alerted the government to intercept a German farmer named George Klock, “a fellow of notorious bad Character who has long by various Artifices continued to defraud the Indians in Land Matters, and create Divisions amongst them.” Johnson had just learned that he had “lately gone to New York, or Philadelphia, with three Stragling indians originally of Conajohare, but Persons of no consequence, with a design to carry them to London on some mischevious purpose.” Johnson described Klock as “an old German farmer in this Country who speaks the Mohawk language a little.” He denounced him as “the most troublesome, and worst man that I ever knew” and even went so far as to say that Klock was “on[e of the g]reatest Villains on this Continent.”

Johnson was even more piqued when Klock and his Canojocharie companion set sail for London in the vessel *Sir William Johnson*, a snow launched in 1772 and christened in his honor by the London merchant John Blackburn. Both Klock’s voyage and his choice of sailing vessels were intentional acts of defiance of Johnson’s authority and symptomatic of ordinary peoples’ boldness in the Boston Tea Party. The German farmer

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1*SWJP* vol. 3: 328, 647; vol.5: 237; vol. 8: 935-36, 938; *DRCHNY* 6: 362; 8: 405-6, 478.
either cajoled or shanghaied a Mohawk from the village of Canajoharie, located across the Mohawk River from his own farm. But this Mohawk individual was probably from the small band of Canajoharies who had become permanent residents at Klock’s house. The German farmer’s voyage was but the latest round in his decades-long disputes with British authorities over land and legitimacy in the Mohawk Valley. The journey of Klock and the Mohawk on the snow Sir William Johnson perfectly symbolized how their paths had intersected and collided on the eighteenth-century New York-Iroquois borderlands.

Because Klock’s journey occurred during the intensifying imperial crisis between Britain and its colonies, it reveals the localistic nature of the Revolution’s origins in the Mohawk Valley and the growing fissures between European and Indian settler communities. The Revolution provoked not one but three civil wars: within the British empire between the colonies and home government, within each of the thirteen colonies between rebels, loyalists, and the disaffected, and within certain Indian nations. The war ripped apart families, friendships, churches, and communities all across America. The ancient unity of the Iroquois Confederacy was also fractured, as Iroquois fought against Iroquois. There was nothing inevitable about the Revolution and the violent direction it took. But by 1780 a racially charged total war raged along the entire Stanwix border line from New York to Kentucky.

The Revolution touched the New York and Pennsylvania frontiers in far different yet similar ways. The children of Pennsylvania settlers and Ohio Indians who came of age after the Seven Years’ War had known nothing but violence; the Revolution was simply the latest intensification of widespread fighting in unabated conflict since the 1750s. It exacerbated the established patterns of vengeance killings, racial hatred, and relentless settlement expansion evident before the 1770s. On the New York-Iroquois frontiers, the Revolution virtually erased the limited cultural accommodation that had prevailed there. British and Iroquois loyalists decimated the New York frontier settlements, killing or capturing hundreds of their former neighbors and burning their homes and crops to ensure their total privation. Jelles Fonda, the Mohawk Valley trader who knew the Iroquois well, confided that he was “mostly afraid of our former Neighbours the Mohawk Indians, who are now in Canada and are our worst Enemys.” The destructive border conflicts resulted in the loyalists’ and Mohawks’ dispossession from their homes and lands. By war’s end, Euroamerican and Iroquois communities were shattered and coexistence was not a possibility.

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On the eve of the Revolution, the Mohawks, Oneidas, and Tuscaroras living closest to European settlers believed that they were “threatened to be Dispossessed of our just Property, by those whom we always considered as our Children, and who have had all their possessions from us.” Settlers swarming like locusts and the Mohawks’ mosaic of land sales meant that by 1770 there was only a “mere trifle of Property remaining in [the Indians’] hands.” But Iroquois anxiety over land was only one of the cumulative pressures they felt. The activities of missionaries such as Anglican John Stuart among the Mohawks and Presbyterian Samuel Kirkland among the Oneidas and Tuscaroras created religious schisms that made the Iroquois more susceptible to political disunion; Kirkland’s overt support for the American cause, for example, also swayed his Oneida and Tuscarora followers. Events elsewhere also undermined Iroquois accommodation of the New York colonists. The Paxton Massacre, the Stump murders, and other colonists’ assaults on Iroquois sharply illustrated that most British colonists would not maintaining the peace. The Paxton Massacre haunted the Mohawks, who believed “it would be their own fate one day, or another.” The Wyoming Valley controversy, dating to the 1750s, intensified as Pennsylvania and New England settlers dispossessed the Delawares living there and largely dismissed Six Nations’ objections. British officials established a boundary line between Indian nations and the mainland colonies at the 1768 Fort Stanwix Treaty; but colonists violated the border line by moving onto Iroquois lands in the Susquehanna Valley.5

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As Chapters 1 and 2 have demonstrated, the struggle for land on the eighteenth-century Mohawk frontier was a triangular contest between the original native inhabitants, colonial officials, and local European settlers. The Klock family and other Palatines settled in the upper Mohawk Valley in the 1720s or 1730s. George’s father Henrich Glock emigrated to New York in 1709 with other Palatines, a group, as we have seen, with a long history of negotiation with Mohawks over land tenure and of conflict with large colonial landholders. Klock was initially on good terms with his Canajoharie neighbors across the river and regularly traded with them. For example, he constructed a grist mill where Indians came to have their corn ground. It was during these routine encounters that George learned to speak Mohawk and negotiate with Indians over land use and possession. In 1747, Klock’s trading caught the attention of William Johnson, then the “Colonel of the Six Nations.” Johnson wrote twice to Klock telling him to stop selling liquor. The German trader replied to the messenger that Johnson could go hang himself.⁶

From the Indians’ perspective, the Europeans whom they “always considered as our children” rebelled against their native parents after establishing themselves on their

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lands. In 1761, Klock escalated the conflict over the Canajoharies' lands when he and his partners purchased the quit claim to Livingston's fraudulent 1731 patent that encompassed Canajoharie itself. Johnson remarked that "in all my life I never saw a People so enraged as they [the Mohawks] were at it." To impart legitimacy to his Canajoharie claims, Klock needed to obtain requisite Indian deeds. His *modus operandi* in these land purchases was to get individual Mohawk men or women drunk and then coax, bribe, or force them to sign deeds to cede lands over which they had no individual authority. On one occasion, he met with three or four young Mohawk men out hunting and invited them to his house; after getting them drunk he pressed the men to sign his crooked deed.7

The Canajoharie Mohawks felt particularly threatened because Klock's actions overturned the harmonious and symbiotic relationships that they had forged with their German-speaking tenants who had "lived on sd. Land about twenty years, unmolested by any one." Fortunately, Klock appears to have been the exception to the rule in the Canajoharie neighborhood, for the Mohawks emphasized that "none of the rest of the Germans have used us as Geo. Klock."8 The Mohawks were furious when Klock served ejectments on some of their tenants in the winter of 1761-62 and informed the rest that they should thenceforth pay rents to him. The Mohawks defended their white tenants

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8 *SWJP* 4: 54 (other Germans); 3: 649 (twenty years); for the Canajoharie tenants' side of the story, see Deposition of John Diffendorf, Solomon Miers, Jacob Keller, and Henry Miers, January 14, 1762, Duane Papers, Legal-Misc. Box, 1666-1770, NYHS; see also the John Tabor Kempe Papers, Misc. Microfilms, Reel # 49 (Case of The King v. George Klock), NYHS; Alexander Papers, Box 48 (Court Papers), NYHS, and the references in Index to the *Sir William Johnson Papers* (v. 14) under the headings of Klock and the Canajoharie Patent.
through vigorous protests to Johnson. Despite facing prosecution for trespass, the white 
tenants defended the Mohawks’ rights. Three Canajoharie Germans petitioned Sir 
William to induce Klock to sign a release so that the lands would revert to the Mohawks. 
They also testified against Klock in law suits that the New York government brought 
against him in the 1760s.9

Klock’s disputatious and litigious nature begat schisms among the Mohawks, his 
European neighbors, his church, and his own family. A small band of twenty Mohawks, 
for example, splintered from the main settlements at Canajoharie and moved to the north 
bank of the river to Klock’s farm. These natives were “allways living at his house,” 
generally supportive of his claims, resentful of Johnson, and argumentative with their kin 
at the main settlements (some of this small band may have been relative newcomers or 
recent adoptees). Archaeological work confirms the existence of a discernable native 
settlement at Klock’s house along with large quantities of trade goods such as wampum 
and pipes. William Johnson once spent a sleepless night at Klock’s brother’s house 
nearby, for “by their Singing dancing & other noise I was disturbed during the whole 
night.” The presence of this small band also suggests that there was something more to 
Klock’s diplomacy than how he brandished a liquor bottle.10

It is impossible to exaggerate how the Mohawks’ anger and frustration smoldered 
during the drawn-out controversies over possession of their lands. Their vociferous

9SWJP vol. 4: 657 (Klock); vol. 3: 562, 584, 639, 648-49, 726, 880, 945; vol. 4: 115-17; vol. 10: 
216-17, 337, 367, 487; vol. 12: 345-36.

10SWJP vol. 3: 328; vol. 4: 79 (“flathead” living at Klock’s), 316-17, 177; vol. 10: 757, 900; 
Snow. Mohawk Valley Archaeology: The Sites, 493-95 (Ganada #1).
objections over Klock's actions (and the Kayaderosseras and Mohawk Flatts patents and Stanwix line violations) frequently mark the accounts of Johnson's diplomatic meetings throughout the 1760s and early 1770s. Iroquois speakers typically presented strings or belts of wampum with every statement to solemnize and strengthen their points. But in 1763 an Onondaga speaker dispensed with wampum and instead "gave a Bottle"—one of Klock's empty rum bottles—to punctuate his requests that the German trader's traffic be stopped. "Brother," he stated, "Liquor hath been always our Ruin, for whenever any of our people go over to the house of Geo. Klock, and we send for them from thence, he fills them more." Since the Iroquois believed that peace was sustained not by treaties alone, the lack of good feelings between local communities betrayed an infirmity in the larger alliance. What caused them concern was the "unbrotherlike behaviour of the white people towards them . . . who seemed to aim at their entire extirpation,—which they added, was a most cruel, and unchristianlike return for their adherence to the English, and charitable conduct towards their Neighbours, when they were unable to assist themselves." Yet the Mohawks were incredibly long suffering toward Klock, "that old Rogue, the old Disturber of our village," and toward the New York officials responsible for rendering them justice. Despite years of government inaction, the Mohawks patiently pressed Klock to sign the release of his extensive land claims and he repeatedly refused.11

William Johnson had long been the Mohawks' powerful ally, supporting their attempts to undo colonists' egregious land grabs at Kayaderosseras, Canajoharie, and the

11DRCHNY 8: 478; SWJP vol. 3: 647; vol. 12: 167-68; on Klock's refusals to sign a release, see SWJP 4: 575, 5: 492, 616; see vol. 4: 53-54 for the 1763 meeting's proceedings; SWJP vol. 10: 220 (unbrotherlike behaviour).
Mohawk Flatts at Tiononderoge. But as a land owner, developer, and broker, Johnson himself greatly diminished the Mohawks' land base. For example, in 1761 the Canajoharie Mohawks entrusted Johnson with some of their remaining lands on the north side of the Mohawk River. The Mohawks probably intended this gift as a deed-in-trust to protect their lands, for the superintendent's gift overlapped Klock's claims. Sir William used his powers to block the German settler's attempt to patent land and urged other colonial officials to exclude him from any partnerships. After a petition directly to the crown, Johnson received a royal grant in 1768 that encompassed some 40,000 acres of prime Mohawk land. But Johnson did not protect these lands in perpetuity for the Indians; he and his associates subdivided and settled the lands with tenants. While the superintendent believed that Klock had grievously wronged the Mohawks, he eliminated a rival claim to the land "grant" he received from the Canajoharies. In response to Johnson's and the Mohawks' frequent complaints, the New York government brought two separate suits against Klock in 1763 and 1768. The legal proceedings against Klock demonstrated there were "many Difficulties in the Way to Justice" in cases involving Indian rights. In the 1763 case of The King v. George Klock, the defendant was acquitted by a sympathetic jury.

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13 SWJP vol. 3: 296, 312; vol. 10: 248-49; DRCHNY 6: 741-45, 7: 839-42, 942-43; (Mohawk gift); 3: 558, 584, 595-96, 615 (Johnson's exclusions of Klock); SWJP 10: 574 (Difficulties); SWJP 3: 649, 672-64, 943; NYCM vol. 25: 434-77; SWJP vol. 10: 587, 717, 756, 927. For records relating to the case of The King v. George Klock, see the Alexander Papers, Box 48, Duane Papers, and the John Tabor Kempe Papers, NYHS.

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Sir William was disgusted at how the German farmer was “Supported and Encouraged by a Powerfull Sett of People at New York” who were really “Creatures of Klock.” With encouragement from like-minded land speculators, Klock was emboldened enough to defy the royal governor, Sir Henry Moore, in a face-to-face encounter in 1768 during a meeting with the Mohawks at Johnson Hall. Klock defended his actions, saying that the Mohawks had sold him the land for £45 and fifty shipments of corn and that they had accompanied his sons during the survey. He refused Moore’s repeated requests to sign the release and “made use of every rude expression to the Speaker of the Indians.” The superintendent recognized that New York courts were wholly ineffectual venues for redressing Mohawk grievances. Until his death in 1774, Johnson pressed the New York Assembly to vacate the patent by legislative act and brought the matter to the crown’s attention. The Mohawks also realized that a petition directly to the king was their last resort.

Klock’s journey to England revealed other political fault lines in New York. Klock may have undertaken his transatlantic voyage for both profit and notoriety, but Johnson’s mercantile agent in London, John Blackburn, believed that Klock had “impos’d on Lord Dartmouth” with a petition to the king. Klock wanted to present his side of the story and also complain of the “Division of Tryon County” and Johnstown’s establishment as the county seat. Like other Germans in the valley, Klock chafed at the Johnson coterie’s

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14 For the 1768 charges filed against Klock, see SWJP 6: 224, 284, 743-44, 616 (“Common Disturber”), 635; 12: 365, 539-40 (confrontation with Henry Moore), 496-97, 698, 702; NYCVM vol. 26: 101-2 (July 29, 1767). For references to Klock’s political connections, see SWJP vol. 3: 288, 328, 420, 424, 374; vol. 4: 117 (Creatures), 196 (Powerfull Sett); vol. 10: 724; DRCNY 8: 305. See SWJP 8: 1201 for Guy Johnson’s perception of ineffective laws regarding Indian disputes.
preponderance of power over their Tryon County fiefdom. In a 1775 meeting of the Palatine District’s Committee of Safety, the rebellious settlers complained that the county had been “Ruled by one family the Different Branches of Which are still strenuous in disuading people from Coming into the Congressional Measures.”

The Earl of Dartmouth, the Secretary for the American Department, investigated Klock’s whereabouts in England, intending to punish him. Perhaps this cold reception prevented Klock from laying his grievances before the crown. Dartmouth believed that “the enquiries I made concerning him created such an apprehension in him of being proceeded against” that he returned to New York in April 1774. Though the Mohawk complained “bitterly of y. Imposition put upon him,” he made the most of the situation, for upon their return to New York City in May, Klock robbed the Indian of his cash and other gifts presented to him by well-wishers. When the Canajoharie Mohawks found out about Klock’s thefts, Joseph Brant led about twenty men, “broke into Klocks House, Abused him verry severly, and [took] back the money.” They killed some of his sheep and threatened Klock and his family with similar destruction. They also insisted that Klock officially sign away his claims and the battered man finally relented. But when the Mohawks later returned with a local justice of the peace, Klock had fled to Albany where he petitioned the governor to prosecute the Mohawks for assault.


16 SWJP 8: 935, 1060, 1160; NYCM vol. 26: 408 (September 1, 1774) and 414-15 (December 7, 1774), NYSA; DRCHNY 8: 416; George Klock to the Governor, July 8, 1774, Joseph Brant Papers, Series F, vol. 2: 58, Draper Manuscripts.
Klock’s triangular dispute with the Canajoharie Mohawks and Johnson thus prefigured the civil wars that erupted in the Mohawk Valley during the Revolution among rebels, Indians, loyalists, and disaffected. Some of Klock’s European neighbors, for example, supported the Mohawks in the land dispute. During a meeting with Canajoharie settlers in 1774, the Mohawks pleaded with their neighbors, “among whom we have so long lived in an uninterrupted friendship,” to help them end Klock’s long attempts to dispossess them. In delivering the settlers’ reply, magistrate Hendrick Frey affirmed that they “cannot but acknowledge the justness of your observations and claim” and wrote a petition supporting the Mohawks’ claims. According to Guy Johnson, the petition requested that the government “satisfy the Indians or that some steps be taken for freeing the Neighborhood from the apprehensions occasioned by his quarrel.” Klock was particularly aggrieved when he heard that Frey, a magistrate and militia leader, would turn a blind eye if Brant and the Mohawks happened to kill Klock and his family.17

A staunch opponent of the colonial resistance movement, Sir William Johnson did not live to see Klock punished or the Revolution destroy the patriarchal, patronage-based society he supported. On July 11, 1774, as he listened to Indians’ rumors of war over the mass murders of Ohio Indians, violations of the Stanwix line in New York, and Klock’s aggressions, Johnson collapsed. He died a few hours later. His funeral procession was led by New Jersey’s royal governor William Franklin, New York Supreme Court justices, and

other gentlemen; around two thousand local settlers and Iroquois were also present. It was one of the last unified acts of the Mohawk Valley’s inhabitants. The Iroquois, in particular, pondered an ominous future without their old friend Warrighiyagey. Sir William’s nephew Guy Johnson was appointed Indian superintendent pending crown approval. Both Guy and Sir John Johnson (Sir William’s son and heir), however, were unable to contain growing revolutionary activity in the Mohawk Valley. In the face of growing Whig pressure, they abdicated their Mohawk Valley homes and took their families and loyal tenants to Canada in 1775 and 1776. The Tryon County Committee of Safety seamlessly and bloodlessly assumed control of the mechanisms of county government.18

Both the Americans and the British initially sought only the Six Nations’ neutrality when the conflict opened. The Iroquois were more than happy “not to take any part, but as it is a family Affair to sit still and see you fight it out.” Again, local communities’ negotiations confirmed larger arrangements. In June 1775, Whigs from the German Flatts met with their Oneida and Tuscarora neighbors to reaffirm their commitment to peace. They maintained that their reason for calling the meeting was “purely on [Account] of the old frindship which has so long kept up between us; it is that friendship we want to Mantain, it is that frindship which will be an Equall Benefit to us it is as much wanted on your side as ours.” The settlers heartfiully spoke that “our meaning is for our Joynt peace

and friendship: in which we and our Children may Continue to the end of time." Like many other conflicts, however, the Revolutionary war evolved into a contagion of destruction that no one at the time anticipated. 19

As the fighting intensified and the stakes became higher, Indian nations were increasingly drawn into war. The British and Americans conducted parallel negotiations to secure the Indians' military assistance and loyalty, especially after the failure of Gen. William Howe's campaign to crush the rebellion in 1776. The Iroquois, as Joseph Brant observed, were caught "between two hells" as the British and Americans demanded absolute loyalty. In 1776, Col. Elias Dayton marched a force of American soldiers up the Mohawk Valley to contain the loyalist activities of Sir John Johnson. Along the way, he presented the Mohawks with an ultimatum that revealed how Americans would enforce loyalty: If they resisted his march, he would "burn all their houses, destroy their Towns & Cast the Mohawks with their Wifes & Children off of the face of the Earth." If they were passive and "let us alone in a Family Quarrel," Dayton promised they would be free from harm. One of Dayton's officers approvingly noted that "the only way is to strike Terror into them." 20

During the Seven Years' War, Iroquois warriors had also been under intense pressure to join French and British armies whenever they passed through Iroquoia. The


factional nature of Iroquois politics made it possible for limited numbers of Mohawks and
Senecas, for example, to fight with the British or French without endangering the
confederacy’s larger commitment to neutrality. What changed during the Revolution is
that most Oneidas and Tuscaroras sided with the Americans while most Mohawks,
Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas remained true to the British alliance. In 1777, the
British launched a campaign to reclaim New York and to isolate New England from the
rest of the colonies. Around one thousand Iroquois warriors (mainly Mohawks, Senecas,
Onondagas, and Cayugas) fought with British Generals Burgoyne and St. Leger; the
Oneidas and Tuscaroras committed themselves to the opposing American armies. 21

During the Revolution, the Iroquoian borderlands from the Mohawk to the
Monongahela valleys became an extended battleground in a war increasingly characterized
by intense racial antipathies. The 1777 Battle of Oriskany, fought in the upper Mohawk
Valley during the British siege of Fort Stanwix, inaugurated the three civil wars and the
slaughter that followed. The British and their Iroquois allies orchestrated a gruesomely
successful ambush of the Tryon County militia (in which many Klocks served) and their
Oneida allies. The Seneca warrior Blacksnake marveled at the carnage of over five
hundred dead and wounded on both sides: “I thought at that time the Blood Shed [was] a
Stream Running down on the Decending ground.” After Oriskany, the New York-
Iroquois frontiers were finally drowned in the bloody cycle of revenge that Indians and

21 On Iroquois factionalism, see Parmenter, “At the Woods’ Edge”; Richard M. Ketcham,
Saratoga: Turning Point of America’s Revolutionary War (New York: Henry Holt, 1997); Graymont,
Iroquois in the Revolution, chaps. 5-6; Jeremy Black, War for America: The Fight for Independence,
Pennsylvanians had already lived in for over twenty years. The heavy casualties (over sixty) that the British-allied Iroquois suffered at Oriskany prompted them to seek revenge against the American rebels and their Oneida allies.\(^{22}\)

Because the war was fought between kinsfolk and former neighbors, it fueled feelings of betrayal and vengeance and justified extreme brutality. One rebel soldier, for example, fought "Tories he had been acquainted with before the war." British Loyalists such as John Butler sought to destroy the American rebels who had dispossessed them and vowed that "our revenge shall be in proportion to our former loss." It was a war in which Senecas under a métis warrior named Cornplanter attacked Fort Plain, N.Y. and captured his white father, John Abeel, a blacksmith who had once lived among the Senecas and married a Seneca woman. Frontier warfare pitted white settlers and Indians against other whites. In early 1777, loyalist European farmers living in the Delaware and Susquehanna valleys flocked to Joseph Brant at nearby Oquaga and put themselves under his command (without pay). Brant's Volunteers, as the force was known, was a multiethnic company with names such as Middagh, Johnston, Ziely, and Deckert. From their base at Oquaga, Brant and his men began extorting supplies from local communities aligned with the rebels. At Unadilla in 1777, Brant and his volunteers confronted American troops under the command of Brant's old neighbor Nicholas Herkimer and adversary Ebenezer Cox, who had married George Klock's daughter. Nicholas Herkimer later fought against both

Joseph his loyalist brother Jost at Oriskany.23

In 1778, loyalist and Indian forces launched an even broader campaign to destroy the New York and Pennsylvania settlements, to rescue family members, and to win back their homes and lands. The loyalist-Indian offensives also tied down large numbers of rebel troops, forced thousands of settlers to abandon their farms, and denied precious supplies to the rebel armies. Brant’s forces, for example, destroyed Cobleskill, Andrewstown, Springfield, and the German Flatts in the late summer and early autumn. Expeditions from Fort Niagara also struck the Pennsylvania settlements in Westmoreland, Bedford, Northampton, and Northumberland counties. In the Wyoming Valley in 1778, Walter Butler’s loyalist-Indian force inflicted more than three hundred casualties on the Americans and pillaged the settlements there. Butler and Joseph Brant’s multiethnic force also decimated the Scots-Irish settlement of Cherry Valley that same year; in the chaotic action the attackers indiscriminately killed dozens of civilians. While Wyoming and Cherry Valley went down in American memory as “massacres,” they were representative of the total war that both sides practiced, in which hundreds of Americans, British, and Iroquois were either killed, scalped, mutilated, starved, or captured. An American lieutenant recorded in his 1779 journal that a scouting party “skinned two [dead Indians] from their hips down for boot legs: one pair for the Major the other for myself.” When militia colonel Peter Bellinger surveyed the German Flatts in 1778, he saw a smoldering, six-mile swath of destruction along the Mohawk River in which sixty-three houses, fifty-

23Jacob Zimmerman, quoted in Dann, Revolution Remembered, 287; John Butler, quoted in Mintz, Seeds of Empire, 47; Seaver, Life of Mary Jemison, 62-63; Kelsay, Joseph Brant, 190-92; Graymont, Iroquois in the Revolution, 116, 131, 183.
seven barns, and four mills were burned and numerous cattle destroyed. The British and Indian offensives invited American counterattacks that also focused on utterly destroying Indian villages, crops, and peoples. In September 1778, a Pennsylvania officer named Col. Thomas Hartley led two hundred militia up the Susquehanna River and destroyed the villages of Sheshecunnunk and Tioga before withdrawing; in October, Lt. Col. William Butler led detachments of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment from Schoharie to the Susquehanna to destroy Unadilla, Oquaga, and a small Tuscarora settlement. The timing of these attacks was crucial, since destroying fields ready for harvest guaranteed deprivation if not actual starvation in the winter. The Americans visited the Six Nations with even greater destruction in 1779, when Gen. George Washington coordinated a three-pronged invasion of the Iroquois homelands. In western Pennsylvania, Daniel Brodhead’s small force moved up the Allegheny River and burned eight Seneca and Delaware towns; John Sullivan advanced northwestward from the Delaware Valley to attack Iroquois towns in the upper Susquehanna and Genesee valleys. Advancing up the Mohawk Valley to link up with Sullivan was Col. George Clinton’s army. One of Sullivan’s soldiers summarized the expedition’s goal: “as I informed you in my last,” he wrote his wife, “we are to accomplish the total extirpation & destruction of our enemies amongst the Six Nations.” The Americans looted and burned some forty Iroquois villages, destroyed over 100,000 bushels of corn, desecrated Indian

burial grounds, and cut down fields ripe with corn, squash, beans, pumpkins, and potatoes, and orchards of peach trees. George Washington became known as “town destroyer” among the Iroquois. Many Onondagas, Senecas, Cayugas, and Mohawks, who offered ineffective resistance to Sullivan, huddled as refugees near Fort Niagara during the terrible winter of 1779-80. Death from disease, starvation, and the cold claimed more Iroquois lives than combat during Sullivan’s invasion.25

The Seneca leader Sayenqueraghta told a group of Wyandots visiting Fort Niagara in 1779 that the rebels “wish for nothing more, than to extirpate us from the Earth, that they may possess our Lands, the Desire of attaining which we are convinced is the Cause of the present War.” Determined to protect those lands and to seek revenge, the Iroquois and their British allies renewed their onslaught against the New York, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky frontier settlements in 1780. The Schoharie Valley had remained largely untouched for most of the war. But in 1780 Sir John Johnson led a force of loyalists and Iroquois and laid waste to hundreds of homes there; Canajoharie, German Flatts, Harpersfield, and the Oneida town of Kanonwalohale were also gutted by Sir John’s forces. When the fighting ceased on the New York frontiers in 1781-82, a Continental Army officer noted that “Everything except the soil is destroyed from Fort Hunter to Stone Arabia.” Governor George Clinton admitted that “Schenectady may now be said to become the limits of our western Frontier.” By 1782, the Iroquois and their British allies

had largely won the war on the northern frontiers.26

When Indians and Euroamericans returned to their ruined settlements in the Revolution’s aftermath, any commitment to accommodation had been swallowed up in the gulf of racial hatred that the war had fueled. Small groups of Mohawks persisted at their settlements during the war years but were “threatened by the Inhabitants” who distrusted them. Rebel and Oneida troops also plundered or destroyed Tiononderoge and Canajoharie in 1778. The Fort Hunter chapel where Mohawks had once worshiped was “turned into a tavern by the Americans and a keg of rum stored in the reading desk.” Joseph and Molly Brant’s personal belongings were stolen and their homes occupied by local settlers. Individual Mohawk families returned to their old settlements in the 1780s and 1790s, but the majority rejoined their kin in Canada or elsewhere in the Iroquois’ remaining homelands.27

The Mohawks were not alone in their banishment: the Schoharie Reformed Church, built in 1772, displayed the names of its builders on the stone walls near the doorway. In a war that divided congregations, the loyalists’ names were later chiseled out, a potent act of excommunication from the church and the new American republic.


But Euroamericans' most brutal statement that they would never coexist with the Indians, even if they were Christians, was made at the Moravian mission town of Gnadenhütten in the Ohio Country in 1782. Suspicious that the Moravian Delawares were in league with Delawares allied to the British, a force of Pennsylvania militia confronted the villagers and confined them. Then the macabre killings began, as the militia bludgeoned to death more than ninety Delaware men, women, and children with cooper's mallets. Gnadenhütten's carnage did not mark an end to conflict. Fighting on the Ohio frontier continued largely unabated for another thirty years until the U.S. had conquered and dispossessed most of the natives living in the Ohio Valley.28

In certain locales, however, Indian and Euroamerican communities continued to interact socially and economically. At Cornplanter's Tract on the Allegheny River in northwestern Pennsylvania, for example, Senecas had frequent contact with poorer white settlers living downstream. But racial antipathy had altered the atmosphere of contact. In a visit to Schenectady in 1780, the French officer Francois-Jean de Beauvoir observed that the deep hatred the Indians' attacks had generated made it "impossible for the Americans to consent to have them longer for neighbors." But he did hold out hope that the Oneidas would eventually become civilized and integrate with the Euroamericans. A decade later, Edward Walsh observed in his travels the same feeling that "The Red & white people cannot co-exist in the same place." Thomas Proctor, a veteran of the Sullivan expedition, retraced his steps years later and rejoiced at the signs of grape shot and shell damage still

28White, The Middle Ground, 389-9; Hurt, The Ohio Frontier, 91-92; Wallace, Thirty Thousand Miles with John Heckewelder, chap. 15; Dann, Revolution Remembered, 256-57.
visible on the trees. During his journey he encountered a minister at Tioga, a former
Indian settlement, who thanked him and Sullivan “for opening a way into the wilderness,
under the guidance of Providence, to the well doing of hundreds of poor families.” The
minister’s comments reflect the sentiments of historians and poets in the early Republic
who defined a national mythology about Indians that erased the ambivalent aspects of
cultural contact that settlers themselves remembered.29

While the Iroquois maintained their status as a free and independent people, the
Revolution’s aftermath greatly diminished their power, prestige, and lands. Wartime
losses from combat, disease, and starvation had greatly reduced the Iroquois population.
The United States thus achieved a preponderance of power over the Iroquois that neither
the French nor the British ever possessed. No Indians participated in or were represented
at the 1783 Treaty of Paris that ended the Revolution. Like the French in 1763, the
British abandoned their native allies and transferred to the United States their claims to
North America’s interior. American officials assumed the mantle of conqueror in their
postwar negotiations with the Iroquois. They were able to enforce punitive treaties upon
the Iroquois, such as the 1784 Treaty of Fort Stanwix, in which they extorted thousands
of acres from the natives as a condition for peace; the lands of the Americans’ Oneida and
Tuscarora allies also went unsecured as Euroamerican settlers (including some of
Sullivan’s veterans) expanded westward. With so many Iroquois living on Lake Ontario,

the metaphorical longhouse now straddled Upper Canada and the United States; two rival council fires emerged at Grand River, Ontario and Onondaga, New York.  

The Revolution also resolved many of the long-standing land disputes between Mohawk and European frontier communities in the Americans’ favor. Many Iroquois communities became, in Anthony F.C. Wallace’s words, “slums in the wilderness,” where poverty, anomie, alcoholism, and violence were rampant; under such conditions the natives’ land base further eroded. The Americans’ victory enabled the George Klocks of the frontier to possess Iroquois lands in the 1780s and 1790s. Klock and his partners—not the Mohawks or Sir William’s and Molly Brant’s métis children—obtained full rights to the contested areas around Canajoharie. In 1792, relenting Oneida sachems requested that the High Sheriff of New York permit Klock and his family “to remain on our land . . . during our pleasure.” The Mohawks’ “old Antagonist” had finally succeeded in his lifelong quest for their lands with the Oneidas’ approval.  

In a 1788 petition to the New York State legislature on reclaiming their lands, the dispossessed Mohawks raised questions that have resonated down to the present day. The Mohawks maintained their status as “one Independent People” and asked that the United States honor the treaties guaranteeing “the peaceable possession and enjoyment of their


Ancient right and Inheritance.” They contended that because of “ignorance and prejudice against the Indians we should hardly obtain our rights by Law” and asked the legislature to “do equal justice to all Men.” The Mohawks’ unanswered petition still powerfully resonates with the Iroquois peoples who still live in New York and Canada. Senecas, Oneidas, Onondagas, and Tuscaroras have maintained possession of some of their lands in upstate New York since the Revolution; by contrast, the Pennsylvania settlers’ dispossessment of natives was so thorough that there are presently no Indian reservations in Penn’s woods. Mohawks, Senecas, Onondagas, Tuscaroras, Cayugas, and Oneidas who live in New York today still wage an ongoing struggle over sovereignty (their relationships to various levels of government), land (their law suits to undo land fraud), reservations (daily living conditions), and economic adaptation (casinos). The texture of contact between Iroquois and non-Indian communities remains as relevant an issue today as it was two hundred years ago.32

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